

Tacitus Hussey

TACITUS HUSSEY.

Pioneer settler in Des Moines, associate editor of "The Mail and Times", author of "The River Bend and Other Poems", &c.

ANNALS OF IOWA.

VOL. IV, No. 5.

DES MOINES, IOWA, APRIL, 1900.

3D SERIES.

HISTORY OF STEAMBOATING ON THE DES MOINES RIVER, FROM 1837 TO 1862.

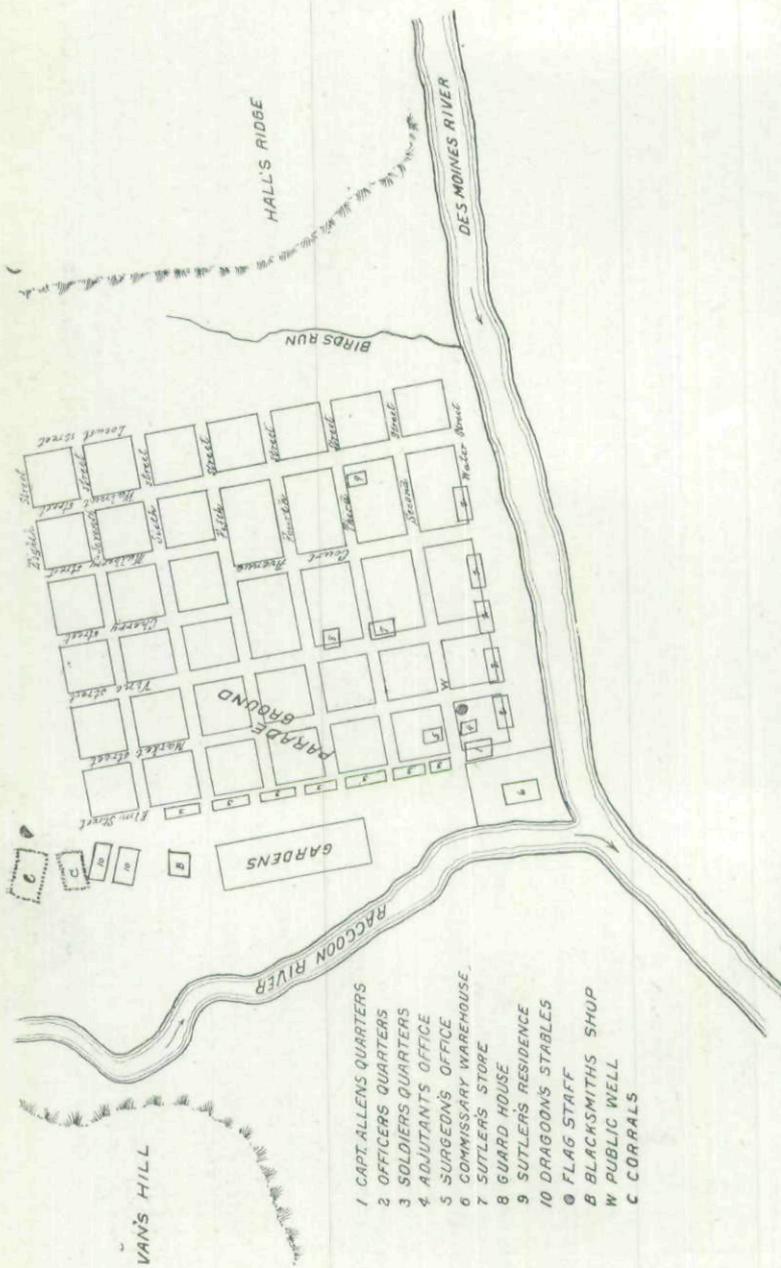
BY TACITUS HUSSEY.

The writing of this history has caused much research into the misty past, when newspapers were few, and files not well preserved. What has been dug out has come from old faded account books, diaries and memorandums, and the memories of old settlers, where their statements could be harmonized, one with the other.

There are some years in which there is not a single clue upon which to base a steamboat history, and it would seem that the old settlers' memories are equally faulty; so I have thought it best to give a history and incidents of those years which could be verified, and leave to the imagination the years which were seemingly inactive for want of water, or a lack of patronage which promised a fair remuneration to steamboatmen.

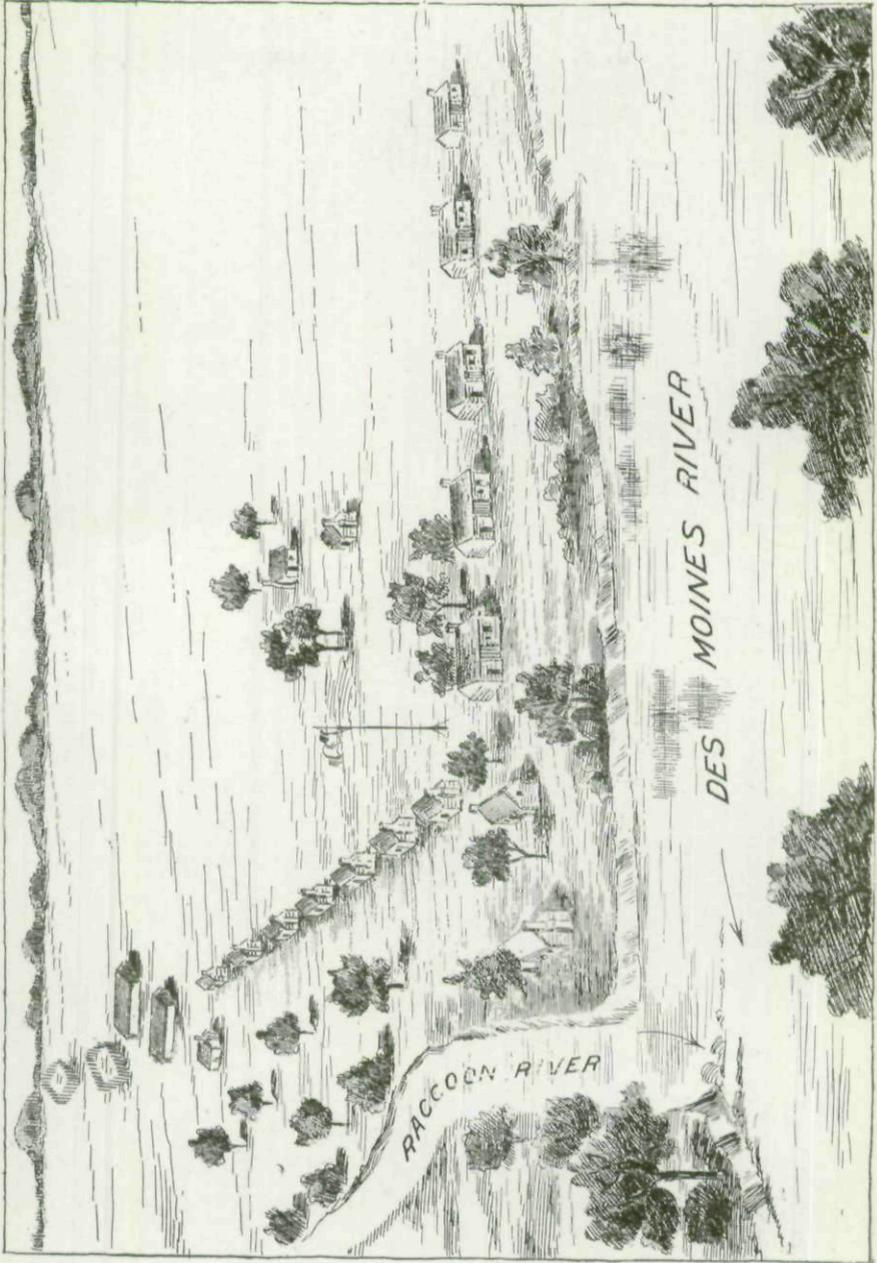
I acknowledge with gratitude the courtesy and assistance of the following named gentlemen, in the work of research:

Henri K. Pratt, Keokuk, Iowa; George C. Duffield, Keosauqua, Iowa; George F. Smith, editor Democrat, Keosauqua, Iowa; E. C. Harlan, *et al.*, Keosauqua, Iowa; Aaron W. Harlan, Croton, Iowa; H. F. and P. H. Bousquet, Pella, Iowa; W. C. Morris, McVeigh, Iowa; Captain Robert Farris, Farmington, Iowa; W. H. Kitterman, Ottumwa, Iowa; Captain F. E. Beers, Gilmore City, Iowa; Hon. F. W. Palmer, Washington, D. C.; Hon. Geo. C. Tichenor, New York;



- 1 CAPT. ALLENS QUARTERS
- 2 OFFICERS QUARTERS
- 3 SOLDIERS QUARTERS
- 4 ADJUTANTS OFFICE
- 5 SURGEONS OFFICE
- 6 COMMISSARY WAREHOUSE.
- 7 SUTLERS STORE
- 8 WARD HOUSE
- 9 SUTLERS RESIDENCE
- 10 DRAGOONS STABLES
- O FLAG STAFF
- B BLACKSMITHS SHOP
- W PUBLIC WELL
- C CORRALS

FORT DES MOINES—THE GOVERNMENT SURVEY WITH STREETS AND ALLEYS DRAWN IN.



FORT DES MOINES IN 1844.

Major Hoyt Sherman, Hon. Barlow Granger, Hon. P. M. Casady, Hon. J. S. Polk, William W. Moore, Seth Graham, and others, Des Moines, Iowa.

The assembled Congress in 1846, could not have been imbued with much prophetic vision, or it would not, on November 8th, of that year, when Iowa was yet a territory, have approved of the "Act granting certain lands to the Territory of Iowa, to aid in the Improvement of the Des Moines River, in said Territory, for the purpose above mentioned, all the alternate sections of land in a strip five miles wide, on each side of said Des Moines River, from its mouth to its source."

It is supposed that these wise men were of the opinion that the future State of Iowa would have to depend upon the uncertain transportation by water, at certain seasons of the year; and without serious thought of the future, approved the "Act," and traveled calmly on, drawing their salaries, little dreaming that they had ceded for "chips and whetstones" lands which if sold fifty-three years later would have paid the national debt and built a warship or two.

It is not to be wondered at, however. Iowa Territory was looked upon as a wilderness inhabited by Indians and wild beasts, for the most part, and farther from the national government, if measured by transportation, than is Porto Rico now. Even so learned a man as Daniel Webster, in 1855, opposed the opening of the Union Circle to receive the Territory of Oregon to statehood, for the reason that she was so far away that a member of congress elect from that state would not be able to get to Washington before congress adjourned!

The Des Moines River has played a great part in the early transportation problem; and your historian has thought best, because of the great love he has for it, to embalm the memory of its usefulness in a short "Steamboat History," that coming generations may know that, notwithstanding its waning glories, it served the founders of the Des Moines

Valley faithfully and well from the time the earliest fur traders ascended the rivers of Iowa Territory to trade with the Indians, propelling their "keel-boats" by the laborious process of poling these slow-moving crafts, well laden with beads, blankets, ammunition, looking-glasses, war paints, and perhaps, carefully hidden away, a supply of "fire water," of the fighting brand, to the year 1862, when the rapid development of our great railroad system caused steamboating to become unprofitable.

The Des Moines River has had all sorts of cognomens applied to it; but it is believed that the most appropriate one was given by a gentleman who knew the ins and outs of the "Des Moines River Navigation and Improvement Company," and who designated it as "Iowa's Stolen Highway." It is not necessary to go into detail further than to say that "Beauty unadorned, is most adorned," or that the State of Iowa would have been a few millions better off, if she had adhered to the old adage of "letting well enough alone."

* * *

In 1832 the "Black Hawk Purchase" was made. This consisted of a strip of country fifty miles wide, extending from the northern boundary to Missouri. In 1836 an additional strip of territory was purchased lying west of the first, containing 1,250,000 acres. The third and last purchase, taking in the rest of Iowa Territory, was made in 1842, granting the privilege to the Indians to remain for three years. This privilege expired on October 11, 1845, at midnight, throwing open the land for settlement.

Steamboating on the Des Moines River began probably in 1837. It is claimed that Aaron W. Harlan brought the first steamboat to Keosauqua in the summer of that year. In 1838 a keel-boat, owned and commanded by Captain Cash, made its appearance at Keosauqua, Iowa, which was at that date as far as the white man had ventured in the wild west. Tradition has it that it was a bold venture by the enterprising captain, and brought him a very good return. She was

loaded with flour, corn-meal, a small cargo of dry goods, groceries, a limited quantity of whisky, and Indian supplies.

It was understood that she was loaded at Keokuk, the then Chicago of the west, and the owner made a very handsome profit on his cargo, which he sold out to his last dollar's worth. Flour sold at \$18.00 a barrel; pork, from \$18.00 to \$20.00 for one hundred pounds; corn-meal at \$2.00 a bushel, and other food articles in proportion. The nearest mill in those days was at "Sweet Home," Mo., about thirty miles away. This mill was propelled by horse power, and the men had to wait their turns, as at a barber shop, and sometimes furnish a horse to assist in the grinding. The father of George C. Duffield, who moved to Van Buren county with his family in 1837, told his son that he had bought provisions from Captain Cash on two occasions, which is sufficient evidence that the famous keel-boat made more than one trip. The work of pushing one of these boats up a swift current with "setting poles," was very laborious business; but perseverance and muscle, in the pioneer days, seemed to be equal to any task which promised a fair remuneration.

The first steamboat to ascend the Des Moines River as far as Keosauqua, and of which there is any authentic record, was the "S. B. Science," Captain S. B. Clarke, commanding. She electrified the inhabitants by sounding her whistle when a short distance down the river, and the whole population was on the river bank when she made her landing and hospitably shoved out her gang plank. It was in the autumn of 1837, yet there was a good stage of water, and she had brought up a fair sized cargo of flour, meal, pork, groceries, and perhaps a good supply of whisky.

Probably there never was so warm a welcome extended to a captain. The people literally swarmed over his boat, and there was not a nook nor corner which did not receive the attention of these hungry and thirsty settlers. A few of them yet recall the incident, and with boyish memories cherish

the fact that they saw with their own eyes the beginning of the river traffic, which grew to so much importance in after years.

The only record found that is reliable for the year 1840, is that a steamboat (name and captain unremembered) came up as far as Pittsburg, Iowa, two miles above Keosauqua, with a barge, which was left there to be loaded with corn and other produce. Mr. Duffield, father of Geo. C. Duffield, who still lives on the home farm, sold the captain of the boat two hundred bushels of corn, shelled it and hauled it two miles to the boat landing. Corn was very high in those days and the seller netted a very handsome sum.

In giving the names of the steamboats and captains plying on the river it must be borne in mind that the captains who commanded the boats occasionally changed from one boat to another, and it was not possible to note these changes year by year. They are given, however, as found on record in early files of newspapers, old documents relating to early steamboating, and as remembered by some of the old captains, who are yet alive and have a very good memory of those early days:

NAMES OF STEAMBOATS PLYING ON THE RIVER,
FROM 1837 TO 1862.

- THE AGATHA, Captain J. M. Lafferty, with two keel-boats, bringing a cargo of government supplies from St. Louis, Mo., and soldiers and equipage at Fort Sanford, near the present city of Ottumwa, Iowa, to Fort Des Moines, in May, 1843. (See "Story of W. C. Morris").
- CALEB COPE, Captain Joseph Price.
- ADD HINE, Captain Gault.
- KENTUCKY, Captain J. C. Ainsworth.
- JOHN B. GORDON, Captain W. H. Farris.
- GLOBE, Captain C. F. McCune.
- LUELLA, Captain Charles Morrison.
- COLONEL MORGAN, Captain Peter Myers. This boat was owned by Des Moines men, under the corporate name of "The Fort Des Moines Steamboat Company," capital stock \$20,000, divided in shares of \$100.00 each. (See articles of incorporation of year 1854).
- DE MOINE BELLE, Captain Tisdale, Joseph Farris, pilot. Built in Des Moines in the winter of 1858. Launched in the spring of 1859. Made one trip to Fort Dodge that year. Was sunk near Ottumwa in 1860; was raised by Grant W. Hill, and was re-named "The Little Morgan," and thereafter was commanded by him.
- CHARLEY RODGERS, Captain F. E. Beers, Frank Davidson, pilot. This boat

- was built at Manchester, a suburb of Alleghany City, Pa., during the spring and summer of 1858. She left Pittsburgh, Pa., October of the same year, arriving at Keokuk, Iowa, October 28th. There had been a sudden rise in the Des Moines river, and she stayed until the next day noon, and started for Des Moines with sixty tons of freight at one dollar per hundred pounds. Two trips were made to Des Moines during the autumn of that year.
- FLORA TEMPLE**, Captain W. Farris. The Flora Temple was a "side wheel three decker," and was the largest steamboat that ever reached Des Moines. She was visited by hundreds of people during her two arrivals in 1859.
- DE MOINE CITY**, Captain Robert Farris. This boat was built at Pittsburgh, Pa., expressly for the Des Moines river trade.
- BADGER STATE**, Captain D. C. Shebble; clerk, J. P. Dixon.
- THE ALICE**, Captain W. H. Farris. This was a favorite boat and carried much freight and many passengers.
- DEFIANCE** (captain unknown). She was owned by men at Red Rock, and made a few trips in charge of Captain Gaskell.
- JULIA DEAN**, Captain Lyon.
- JENNY LIND**, Captain J. C. Ainsworth.
- ED. MANNING**, Captain Davis, of Ottumwa, Iowa.
- THE SKIPPER**, Captain Russell. This boat carried home a portion of the General Assembly of 1858, as the roads were in a bad condition for stage travel at the time of the adjournment. (See year 1858).
- THE MICHIGAN**, Captain J. W. Johnson. This was one of the smallest freight and passenger-carrying boats ever reaching Des Moines.
- THE NEVADA**, Captain W. H. Farris. She was a "side wheeler."
- DES MOINES VALLEY** (captain unknown).
- LITTLE MORGAN** (formerly the De Moine Belle), Captain Grant W. Hill.
- THE LEVIATHAN** (a keel-boat), Captain T. C. Coffin. Built at Ottumwa, and loaded with corn, wheat, pork, &c., for St. Louis and New Orleans.
- N. L. MILBURN**, Captain N. L. Milburn. Built at Iowaville by the "Des Moines River Steamboat Company," in 1853. (See year 1853).
- SANGAMON** (captain unknown).
- REVENUE CUTTER**, Colonel McQuiggan, owner; Captain W. H. Harris.
- GEORGE H. WILSON** (captain unknown). Said to be the most powerful boat on the river.
- TIME AND TIDE**, Captain Charles Morrison.
- S. B. SCIENCE**, Captain S. B. Clarke. This is the first steamboat mentioned in the history of steamboating on the Des Moines river, and was brought up by Aaron W. Harlan, in 1837, loaded with goods for Keosauqua, and going as far as Iowaville. (See Captain Harlan's reminiscences).
- ALEXANDER RODGERS**, Captain Wilson.
- THE PEARL** (a keel-boat), (captain unknown).
- PROVIDENCE** (captain unknown).
- THE MOVESTAR** (captain unknown).
- THE MAID OF IOWA**, Captain William Phelps. This is the only boat in the list which made "Soap Creek" famous by navigating it for a short distance. (See 1851).
- LIGHT**, Captain Richard Cave.
- LIGHTER** (captain unknown).
- JENNIE DEANS** (captain unknown). She was a big St. Louis packet and in 1851 made a trip as far as Croton, but fearing she would be caught by a falling river, sought the widest place for turning, and hastened back to the Mississippi.
- PANDODGING**, Captain Sweazey. The boat was a homemade affair, and was built somewhere on the river between Keosauqua and St. Francis-

ville. The captain, craft and crew afforded considerable sport to steamboatmen. (See 1853).

NEW GEORGETOWN (captain unknown).

Jesse Cave built a steamboat at Bonaparte, Iowa, about the year 1840. She was taken to St. Louis and finished up there, and made her trial trip to her birthplace in 1841, early in the spring. Name of boat not remembered.

In response to a letter to Mr. Aaron W. Harlan, living in the vicinity of Croton, on the Des Moines river, he gives the following, which I give under the heading of

AARON W. HARLAN'S REMINISCENCES.

I have been thinking, and have concluded to begin with my first experience of boating on the Des Moines river, and mention facts as they occur to my memory, admitting that I have forgotten many things. My first experience was the little keel-boat Black Hawk, and then with the Union. Both of these boats belonged to the Phelps'. This was in 1835; I do not think I did any boating in 1836. It was in September, 1837, that I shipped from Sweet Home, Mo., by the steamboat S. B. Science, Captain S. B. Clarke, a lot of goods which was landed just below Keosauqua, Iowa. The Science then went up to Iowaville and returned. She was the first steamboat to Iowaville; but in the same fall, 1837, I shipped a lot of goods on the Pavilion, at St. Louis. The boat was commanded by Bill Phelps, and we had for passengers, the celebrated Indian Chief, Keokuk, and about a dozen other braves, returning from Washington City, after having sold that small strip of land.

My goods were landed below Keosauqua, and the boat went on up to Iowaville, taking the Indians to their destination, which was near that place; so the Pavilion commanded by Captain William Phelps was the second steamboat to reach Iowaville, in 1837.

The Pavilion was up in the spring of 1838, and I think that Phelps went up as far as the mouth of Coon river; but of this I am not certain. The S. B. Science was sunk near Bentonsport; but she was raised again and left the river.

There was a man by the name of Captain Cash, who made several trips with a keel-boat, trading and freighting. There were others also, engaged in the same way but I have forgotten their names. Henry Bateman, engaged in boating stone coal from Farmington to Quincy, Ill., in 1836, in keel-boats. He built one or more old fashioned flatboats that he loaded with coal for Holmes, of Quincy, Ills. The coal was unloaded to run the mill there, and the boats were loaded with flour for New Orleans.

It was on the bottom of one of these boats that we pioneers congregated to celebrate the Fourth of July, and the birthday of Wisconsin Territory, in 1836. There were about three hundred of us. We clubbed together and bought of Bateman, one barrel of whisky and put it in care of James Jenkins, to deal out at his discretion, free! After a time he concluded that he was of no use, and asked to be relieved. Then the rest of the day any man who wished, drew and drank, when he pleased! There was but one man in the entire company who seemed the worse for the free whisky. Of all that little patriotic assembly, I know of but one besides myself now living. His name is Amos Hinke, and possibly John Bedell, of Red Rock, Iowa. I want the foregoing incident to have a place in Iowa history—for we could not do it to-day!

Now as to your main question as to the "name of the boat which carried up the soldiers and supplies in 1843." I cannot answer; but can tell something about the steamboat "Ione," of which inquiry has been made.

In 1834 and 1835, Sol. and Pearce Atchison lived on the bank of the Mississippi river, at a point that would be now about the upper corner of Nauvoo, Illinois. Pearce Atchison at that time was on the river, in the summer of 1838. He seemed to have charge of two steamboats, known as the Glaucus and the Ione. Late in the fall of 1838 the Ione struck a snag near Clarksville, Missouri, and sunk. She was still there the last I heard of her.

In February 1839, I was with Sam Atchison, a nephew of Captain Pearce Atchison, then on his way to meet his uncle at St. Louis, who was bringing up a new steamboat he had ordered built on the Ohio river, which proved to me that he had abandoned all hope of raising the sunken Ione near Clarksville. I do not remember ever to have seen any other steamboat Ione.

As to the list of steamboats sent me I can say but little. The General Morgan was commanded by Granville Hill. The Light was built at Bonaparte by Richard Cave and commanded by him. She was capsized by the wind and sunk near Hannibal, Missouri. Mr. Alfrey, of Farmington, Iowa, owned and ran a keel-boat about 1843. The steamboat Newton Waggoner, commanded by Newton Waggoner, made one or two trips about the same time. Captain McPherson was on the river at a later date, but I do not remember the name of his boat.

As to flatboating, Ed. Manning and the Steeles had a flatboat built by Samuel Morton down at Rochester, Iowa, and towed it empty up to Keosauqua, where it was loaded by Manning & Steele with about 60 tons of bulk pork. This was in the spring of 1841. I was duly installed as captain at Alexandria. I put on in addition ten tons of barreled beef and piloted the boat safely to New Orleans. In the same spring Hugh W. Sample built a small boat near where Kilburn now stands, and ran seven tons of pork to Alexandria, near the mouth of the Des Moines, and shipped the cargo to Pittsburgh, Pa., on a steamboat.

I think it was in 1847, the year of the great famine in Ireland, that I ran several flatboats loaded with corn to St. Louis. At the Athens Mill the dam was eight feet high. The mill owners had a wooden lock 25 feet wide, but the gates had been broken out by the ice. Now to run the chute left open was rather a precarious business. A failure would have been almost certain death, but by good management and a little experience as a guide I made the passage a number of times and thought very little about it, until the danger was passed.

While on the subject of early boating on the Des Moines I think it well to mention the fact that up to 1840 I had not noticed that the banks of the river were washing away; but in the year 1850 the people generally began to observe it. The great flood of 1851 killed the willows and the wash became greater, and continued until about 1890, on both banks of the river. And now, for about nine years, it has been filling in on both sides even faster than it washed away, and the willows have grown up surprisingly. It is now no more the beautiful river that charmed the stranger in early days.

I am now in my 89th year, having been born in 1811, not far from Cincinnati, Ohio, among the Indians, my birthplace being on the Indiana side of the Ohio river, so you will not wonder that my memory is failing me.

Mr. W. C. Morris, of Cedar township, Van Buren county, Iowa, is the only known survivor of the crew of the "Agatha," commanded by Captain J. M. Lafferty, which in May, 1843, brought up from St. Louis the supplies for the

garrison at Fort Des Moines. Mr. Morris was at that time a lad of eighteen years of age, and tells his story after a lapse of fifty-six years, with a conciseness as to date and incident, which is a little short of marvelous. It is given as he wrote it, with an occasional word supplied, or a phrase slightly changed, and will be entitled in the history as

THE STORY OF W. C. MORRIS.

To write a story that was made fifty-six years ago, and give dates and facts, is quite a task; but I have told the story so often, it can be told again without causing me much trouble; but I must tell it all, and I do not want it picked to pieces after it leaves my hands. This is what I know about the first steamboat that, I believe, ever ran up the Des Moines river to Raccoon Forks—for at the time the place was not generally known as Fort Des Moines.

In the fall of 1842 I left my home in Cedar township, Van Buren county, Iowa Territory, to obtain employment of some kind. I went to the Plymouth Mill, one-half mile above the town of Farmington. There I found work until winter set in, on the 9th day of November with a ten-inch snow, which never went off until the 15th of April, 1843. On that day the ice in the river broke up. I was at work at that time for a Mr. Jacob Doofman, in Farmington. A few days after the ice went out, a steamboat by the name of "The Agatha," came up to Farmington and tied up just below Death's Mill. The captain of the boat, J. M. Lafferty, was afraid of the condition of the dam at Plymouth Mill. There was a beginning of a lock for the benefit of boats but it was not in a condition for them to pass through. He made the attempt, however, and got about half way through and had to stop. As she dropped back she raked off about twelve feet of her guard against the corner of the mill. Then she went back down the river and was gone a few days, returning with two large keel-boats, which were to be used in case the steamboat could not reach Raccoon Forks with her load of supplies for the garrison there. This time she hired fourteen men to push these keel-boats up to the Forks, provided the steamboat could not get there. I give the names of the men who were engaged to take up the keel-boats, with the assistance of the Agatha, which divided her load with them:

Captain, Charlie Millard, . . .	Croton, Iowa Territory.
Pilot, Levi Millard, . . .	Croton, Iowa Territory.
Clerk, Mr. Ward, . . .	Farmington, Iowa Territory.
Charles Davis, poleman, . . .	Farmington, Iowa Territory.
Moses Davis, poleman, . . .	Farmington, Iowa Territory.
George Ten Eych, poleman, . . .	Farmington, Iowa Territory.
John Ellis, poleman, . . .	Farmington, Iowa Territory.
Jim Willits, poleman, . . .	Vicinity, Iowa Territory.
Tom Burns, poleman, . . .	Vicinity, Iowa Territory.
Ed. Slaughter, poleman, . . .	Vicinity, Iowa Territory.
Eli Sellgroves, poleman, . . .	Vicinity, Iowa Territory.
Eli Glimpse, poleman, . . .	Vicinity, Iowa Territory.
Sam Snow, poleman, . . .	Vicinity, Iowa Territory.
W. C. Morris, poleman, . . .	Cedar township, Iowa Territory.

I was the youngest of the fourteen, being eighteen years old. They had poles made about twelve feet long and two inches thick with a knob on one end to place against the shoulder, and on the other end was an iron socket and point. When a pole was provided for each pusher, the start was made. This time the steamboat took the left hand side of the island lying just below the dam, which was made of brush and stones. The three

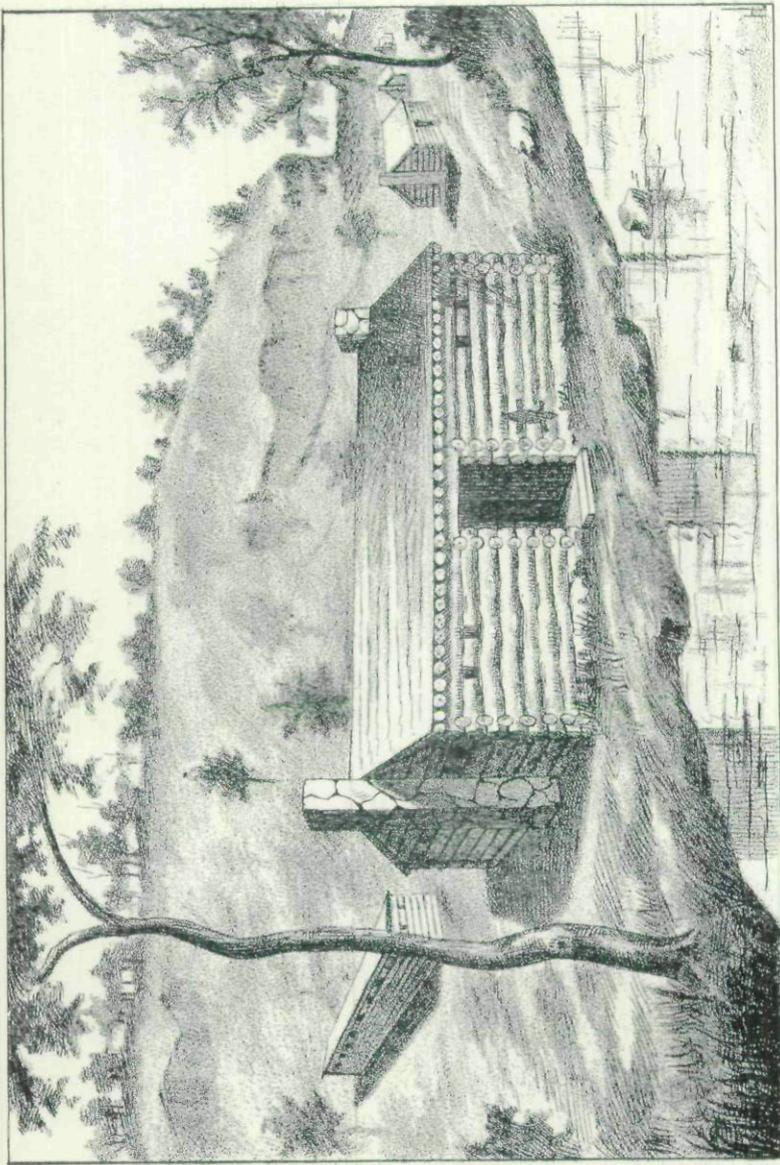
boats were pulled over the dam at this point by steam and man power, and we had a pleasant ride up to Bonaparte. There we had to get through the lock, which we did without much trouble. Here we left one of the keel-boats. Bentonsport was the next dam with a lock. This we got through without any difficulty. Next came Keosauqua. That dam had no lock, but the boats passed up through a break in the dam.

We stopped at Keosauqua long enough to take on board the families of Doctor Obers and Squire Stanley, who were going to Eddy's Trading Post, where the Doctor and Squire had gone to take claims as soon as the day should come for driving stakes. The 2d day of May, 1843, was the time fixed by Congress for settlement in the eastern part of the new purchase, as far west as a place called Red Rock, but the Indians held the balance until October 11th, 1845. The next stop we made was at Fort Sanford, a place where Captain Allen had been stationed with a company of dragoons. It was almost deserted, as most of the soldiers had gone to Raccoon Forks with their horses some days before. Captain Allen, a few soldiers, and their belongings remained until we arrived.

We had been towing a small keel-boat all the way. It belonged to the soldiers and it was brought up empty to Fort Sanford. It was there loaded with their property, and if anything was put into our boats I do not remember it. Captain Allen and a few soldiers took passage on the Agatha. A short distance above we came to an island. The pilot chose the south side, and just above the head of the island there was a sharp bend in the river. Just before we came to the turn the keel grounded on a ledge of rock which extended clear across the river, and was called at that time "Appanoose Rapids." We worked from four o'clock in the afternoon until dark and then tied up. We began again at daylight next morning and about sunrise we succeeded in shoving the boat off. This ledge of stone, which lay just below the present wagon bridge at Ottumwa, has long ago been taken away for building purposes. Before we left that vicinity they had commenced staking off the town of Ottumwa, and that city was born on the 2d day of May, 1843.

The next stop we made was at Eddy's Trading Post, and here the Doctor and Squire took charge of their families and goods. From this point we had no stop unless it was to chop wood for the steamboat, or take on board some of the big Indian chiefs, such as Keokuk, Appanoose, and their squaws. They were on board two or three days. We found several islands before we reached the Forks, and had to stop at most of them, separate the three boats and take them through the narrow channels one at a time, as the current was very swift. We had to chop all the wood used for making steam after we struck the new purchase. About seven miles below the Forks we found the last island and just as we reached the head of it the steamboat went fast on a rock. Then we keel-boat fellows had to push the keel-boat seven miles against a stiff current, up a very crooked channel, which I afterwards learned was called "Rattlesnake Bend." We landed at the point of land where the Raccoon river empties into the Des Moines in the evening, about sundown, and set to work unloading at once. It was a big job to handle a boat load of barrels, mostly pork and flour, and it was about two o'clock in the morning when we started for the steamboat. It was one of the windiest nights I ever saw, and the river being crooked, sometimes we were going straight down, and then sometimes crosswise. When we were within two hundred yards of the steamboat the wind blew our keel-boat against the shore and on to some rocks, where she stuck fast. We had to get out into the water and lift her off with levers, and finally managed to get her alongside the steamboat. The freight was then divided, which lightened the Agatha, and we started for the Forks, which we reached by the middle of the afternoon.

On attempting to make a landing the steamboat grounded on the sand,



FORT SANFORD.

For a full account of this old frontier post see preceding pages, 273-283. The above sketch was drawn from memory by W. H. Kitterman, of Ottumwa, Iowa.

and it was dark before we got to work unloading. We worked all night and about sunrise we had the last article ashore. The temporary barracks were about four hundred yards from where we unloaded, but we did not have time to go out and see the soldiers. As soon as the unloading was done, we shoved across the river and cut a lot of wood, as there was none suitable on the point where we landed. Then with a good head of steam we started down the river at a lively pace. All we keel-boat fellows had to do was to wash out the boats, and it did not take us long to give them a thorough cleansing, and then we took things easy. Our first stop was made at Ottumwa, where we found a side-wheel boat, about the size of the Agatha, fast on the same ledge of rocks that we had been on a few days before. They were in the north chute, and had nothing but their steam to help them, and besides had burst a steam pipe which had done some damage. When we had supplied our boat with fuel, Captain Lafferty, who had been down to see what he could do for a sister in trouble, got up a full head of steam and ran the Agatha by the stranded boat with all speed, and the waves from our boat shook her loose, and she went on her way rejoicing.

I do not remember her name, if she had one. She was called Bill Phelps' boat; but I do not know whether he owned her or not. He was an Indian trader, and no doubt had plenty of money. I do not know whether she was chartered by Ed. Manning, or by any one, nor what kind of freight she was carrying, nor her destination. She may have been the boat Mr. Manning speaks of as having chartered for taking up government supplies. If she was, she was not the first boat going up to the Raccoon Forks, loaded with supplies for the soldiers. Our next stop, after leaving Ottumwa, was at Keosauqua, where we took on board a lot of smoked meat for Mr. Manning, to be carried down the river, to St. Louis, I suppose. If we took on any freight at any other towns I do not now remember.

We landed at Farmington on the fourteenth day after leaving there on the up trip. I do not remember the date, but I know that they paid us for fourteen days' work at seventy-five cents a day. I have a vivid memory of Clerk Miller clipping off the bright, new bills from a sheet of bank notes of the State Bank of Missouri, with a sharp pair of scissors, to pay us. Two dollars was the most money I had ever had at one time before, and when I stepped off the boat with ten dollars and fifty cents in my pocket, I was the proudest 18 year old lad that ever set foot in the streets of Farmington. The Agatha was the first steamboat I had ever seen, and Captain J. M. Lafferty the first steamboat captain. His home was near Palariieg, Mo. We made the trip to Raccoon Forks and back with a steamboat crew, fourteen of us "country pick-ups," and never had a fight nor even a quarrel. There was plenty of whisky on the boat but we had only one drunk.

I left Farmington on the 3d day of June, and if any other boats passed up the river that spring I never heard of it. I have never met one of my comrades since we separated. If any of them are living, they must be old men by this time.

Mr. W. H. Kitterman, who has lived for about 56 years near Ottumwa, relates some incidents which occurred in those early days which will give the present generation some idea of the customs of the early pioneers:

John Myers built a mill in Ottumwa, in 1844. I went with my father to the mill raising. I thought they would have a dinner; but instead of "victuals and drink," as at most raisings, they had nothing but "drink"—a washtub full of whisky and a tin cup; yet none of the men got drunk, as I remember it. I was at Fort Sanford in 1843. Most of the soldiers were

gone at that time. The site is in the river now. It stood opposite "Garrison Rock." All of the buildings were of logs.

James Woody was justice of the peace at Dahlonga, in 1844. He had some citizens arrested for hauling hay on Sunday, as the prairie was on fire, and they wished to save their hay. The trial took place at night, as the people said they had no time to fool away in daylight. James Broherd and Joe Kite came into court with a bundle of hickory wythes, about as big around as a stove pipe, and the 'squire looked surprised and very uneasy. Just at this moment Jack Woody, son of the justice, came in and shouted:

"Dad, the bee-gum is gone!"

Then old Jim said: "Boys, this court is adjourned."

He then made a rush for the back door and could not be found that night. Nothing more was done with the parties arrested.

The settlers had great contempt for this officer. He had sold a claim to Martin Koontz, received the money, and "jumped the claim." He took his ill-gotten gains and bought a barrel of whisky and other things in the grocery line and set up a store in a little log house. The whisky was taken out of the barrel the same night it was placed there by using a long auger which would go in between the cracks of the logs of the building where the whisky was kept. If the perpetrator was known, the secret was well kept by the settlers. I remember that my father, Peter Kitterman, and my uncle, Elias Kitterman, were burning a lime kiln by making a log heap and laying limestone rock upon it, soon after the whisky was stolen. It was hot work, as I remember it. Joseph Kite came along and after watching them work a while, said abruptly:

"Boys, you look as though you wanted some whisky."

My uncle replied: "We are likely to keep on wanting, for the 'squire's whisky is all gone."

He went away and returned in a short time with a bucket full of whisky, and setting it down, went away without saying a word.

In May, 1843, there was an Indian graveyard at the mouth of Sugar Creek, traces of which are yet to be seen. The graves had white posts in front of them and were covered with pictures of men and buffalos without heads. There was one pole about fifteen feet high, painted white, with the tail of a white horse on the top for a flag. What this meant I never knew, nor did I ever find any one who could explain the meaning of these symbols. The Indians were buried in a sitting posture. I remember that one of them had a cup of sugar, and another had three dollars in silver in his hand. The next time I visited the graveyard the tin cup of sugar, the silver, and some of the bodies of the Indians had been removed by tramps, doctors, and curiosity hunters.

The sick soldiers, the baggage, and everything belonging to the government which was movable, were taken up on a barge under command of Sergeant Howlett during the early part of May, 1843.

On March 30, 1849, the villagers of Keosauqua were electrified by the sound of a steamboat whistle a few miles below. It was the custom of steamboat captains to sound the whistle in coming up when within a few miles of their landing place, and in due time the boats would make their appearance, puffing and blowing, to the great joy of all the inhabitants, who left their houses, stores and offices, and gathered at the river as soon as possible. The staunch craft which had

sent her signal ringing over the water proved to be the Revenue Cutter, and she rounded to with many a flourish, cabling and sending out her gang plank as a welcome to the public, and the people were not slow to accept the hospitality thus offered. Owner McQuiggan and Captain Harris were in their most gracious mood. The boat had carried up a big cargo for merchants of Keosauqua, Ottumwa and Eddyville, and had promise of a big load of freight for the return trip.

Carlisle St. John, now of Des Moines, was only a little boy in those days, but he had a grown up curiosity. He had climbed to the "hurricane deck" about the first thing, and very likely if the smoke stacks had been provided with rope ladders he would have been investigating their interiors, boy like. It did not take the citizens very long to arrange with the owner for an excursion to Ottumwa and return, for one dollar each. Carlisle's father saw him walking about on the upper deck, and asked him what he was doing there, and on the boy replying that he was only looking around, he told him of the intended excursion. The boy's heart leaped to his throat as he asked:

"O! father; may I go with you?"

His father looked him over somewhat critically as he replied: "Those shoes you have on do not look quite good enough for a steamboat excursion." And then in a burst of generosity said, "go up to Bill Sheet's store and get a new pair."

The boy started at full speed for the store, which was only a short distance away; but the boat began blowing off a little of her surplus steam, and fearing she was going off without him, he ran back and getting on board did not leave her until Ottumwa was reached.

Oh, the joys of that excursion! The Keosauqua Democratic Brass Band, composed of John Swain, John D. Mitchler, F. A. Anderson, Jesse Barker and Samuel Rhodes, were aboard, and awoke the echoes all along the river. The leading citizens of Keosauqua, Seth St. John, sheriff of Van

Buren county, Dr. W. Taylor, Samuel Julien, J. J. Kinnersly, B. P. Marlow, George Mitchler, Gideon B. Alexander, Josiah H. Bonney, Samuel Fashnat, William Steele, Carlisle St. John (the boy), and others, were there, and what more could be desired. It was a very happy crowd which reached Ottumwa and received a cordial welcome from the citizens, who at once began to urge the owner of the boat to give them an excursion to Eddyville, which he consented to do after the freight was discharged. The only ones remembered as going from Ottumwa of the many who took advantage of the excursion, are Paul C. Jeffers and James F. Ward. It was a very happy and withal a hungry crowd which returned to their several destinations. The extra drain on the larder of the boat caused such a shortage that crackers and cheese had to be bought here and there, to appease the hunger of the travelers.

Among the excursionists from Keosauqua, was a gentleman from Washington, D. C., who had come out to see the country and buy a farm or two, and who was looked upon with considerable awe by the citizens of that village, because it was reported, upon undoubted authority, that he was *worth ten thousand dollars!* At one of these scanty spreads on the boat during the return trip, Carlisle, the boy mentioned, made a very bad break. The rich gentleman had a couple of baked apples on his plate as he passed it to be helped to something else, and the boy supposing as it was passed along the line, that the fruit belonged to the public, and being very fond of baked apples, scooped them both off on his own plate and made very short work with them. He did not understand for some time what the crowd found to laugh at! The rich gentleman took it very good naturedly, but the boy, when he found out what a breach of etiquette he had made, came near losing his appetite.

In addition to the load of excursionists, the Revenue Cutter carried up ten tons of freight to Ottumwa and Eddyville. On her return trip she took from Keosauqua sixty

tons of freight to be delivered in St. Louis. This boat made another trip on April 17th of the same year, carrying a heavy load of freight to Fort Des Moines, which the owner of the boat described as a village of 300 inhabitants, and "built mostly on the river near the Forks of the Raccoon." Four trips are recorded to upper and lower ports, and she seemed to be the only boat in the trade that year.

The Revenue Cutter paid no attention to the ferry ropes stretched across the river for the purpose of operating ferry boats; but whenever any of them interfered with her passage up or down the mate or some of the deck hands would cut the cable without warning to the owners. For this species of vandalism the ferrymen in particular, and the public generally, dubbed her the "Rope Cutter," and she is so remembered to this day by the early settlers along the river.

There lived in Keosauqua, in 1849, a gentleman by the name of James M. Ward, who was engaged in the tinware business. Trade was dull, and time hung heavily on his hands. One bright morning early in June, while sitting in front of his shop with nothing to do, he heard a far away steamboat whistle. He got up immediately and began to carry his tools and fixtures down to the landing. By hurrying with all his might he succeeded in doing this by the time the Revenue Cutter rounded to and made a stop. It took only a few moments to hustle them on board and start for Fort Des Moines, the capital of the new territory which had just been opened for the enterprising young men of the State, then three years old. He formed a co-partnership with Jesse Dicks & Sons, and was for some years engaged in business here. This incident is mentioned as one of the "quick transit" events of the long ago. Mr. Ward is now a resident of Humboldt, Iowa.

The year 1851 has gone down in history as the "Flood Year," and if half the stories about it could be verified and published, there would be enough to fill a good sized volume. To give some idea of its claims it is only necessary to

say that the published "rain guage for Iowa" shows a fall of 75 inches. The locks and dams were much in the way of river navigation, especially the one at Farmington. Mr. Ed. Manning has the credit of opening a way of free navigation through this obstruction. In the early spring of that year he chartered the *Jenny Lind*, which, with accompanying barge, was freighted with goods for the upper ports. When he arrived at Farmington he found the water gates in a somewhat dilapidated condition and a menace to steamboating, so he deliberately tore them out and sent them adrift. There was a loud protest by the owners which was unheeded. He accepted the consequences of the act, and so far as known was never brought to account for it. The *Jenny Lind* made several trips to the lower ports; but there is no authentic account of her having reached the head of navigation this year.

The *Jennie Deans*, a big St. Louis packet, filling the river almost full, as some of the old settlers said, came up as far as Croton; but fearing a fall in the water unloaded there, and turning around with considerable difficulty, made for the deeper and broader waters of the Mississippi.

It was in June of this year that Hoyt Sherman, Peter Myers, M. T. Marvin and J. M. Griffith went down the river in a skiff to Keokuk and thence to St. Louis by packet, where they loaded the *Kentucky* with a big cargo, intending to bring her to Fort Des Moines. On their way down they stopped at Eddyville for dinner, tying their boat to the banisters of the hotel stairs, climbed into the second story and astonished the landlord by the quantity of food they consumed. They found Ebenezer L. Smith, now the efficient agent of the United States Express Co. at Des Moines, wading around in Ed. Manning's store, waiting on such customers as were provided with boats. Customers, however, were not very numerous, so he put in most of his time in lifting the goods from one shelf to another as the water rose, and keeping the mackerel and codfish from being freshened by

the waters of the Des Moines river. Every day he would have to give his trousers an extra roll as the flood increased and look to it that the waters did not fade the calico nor melt the sugar and salt. And this was merchandising forty-eight years ago.

Major Hoyt Sherman, of Des Moines, kindly consented to tell his own story in regard to the trip by skiff alluded to, and being an actor in the historical incident it will add to its interest for all readers:

AN INCIDENT OF THE FLOOD OF 1851.

The spring of 1851 opened out cheerless and forbidding enough to the scattering settlers in the upper Des Moines valley. Settlements were few and far between, there were no established and improved roads, all the water-courses were without bridges, even the Des Moines river from its mouth to its source, when not fordable in low or moderate stages of water, had only the most primitive methods of crossing, as rope ferries or flats pushed across by poles; all the grist mills were propelled by water or horse power, and the whole upper Des Moines valley was dependent upon Mississippi river shipping points for dry goods and all the necessary supplies of life, except the familiar products of the hog, the hen, and the corn field. Such was the condition of affairs around the "Forks" when, early in the month of May, 1851, the heavens opened their flood-gates, and for nearly the whole period covered by the flood we read about as occurring in Noah's time, the rains poured down over this devoted country, soon filling all water-courses, big and little, and over-running their banks, covering all the low valleys and cutting off hope for the farmers to raise a crop that season—at least those whose farms lay in the valleys, and that formed the great bulk of the first lands put in cultivation. Keokuk, 170 miles away, was the main point of supply for Fort Des Moines and vicinity, and when the settlers saw the long continued and heavy rains, and the slow but steady encroachments day by day of the gathering flood over the long stretched-out and primitive highway to the Mississippi, cutting off the source of supplies, there was great uneasiness for the immediate future for the little town, and all naturally turned to the river running by their doors with such volume and force as the direct source from which they must look for assistance and supply.

It was well known that the merchants of Keokuk had an abundant supply of all the necessities of life required at and around the Forks—it was also well known that there were a number of steamboats in the upper Mississippi whose owners or captains would, for a reasonable consideration, make the trip up the river, and carry supplies to the points where needed; but who would put the necessary machinery in motion to bring about this result, charter a steamboat, purchase the flour, sugar, coffee and numberless other needed articles for its loading, and then taking general charge of the trip over nearly unknown waters as far as steamboat navigation was concerned, encourage the officers to reach their destination with their boat and cargo? There were no persons at the Mississippi end of this voyage to assume all the labor and risks, and it soon became apparent that the people who were to superintend and carry out such an expedition must come from the Forks. All the usual modes of travel had been, by reason of high water, discontinued, and the only method of reaching Keokuk, or, in fact, any point on the Mississippi, was by floating

down the Des Moines river. Two parties made the attempt, and after a trial of a few miles abandoned it because of uncertain and dangerous navigation. Then a party of four was formed to make the journey, and as they were successful their names are given here:

J. M. Griffith, general merchant; W. T. Marvin, proprietor of the Marvin House, then the leading hotel; Peter Myers, general operator and speculator, and Hoyt Sherman, postmaster and county clerk.

Only the first two were directly interested in the question of supplies.

The method of navigation was a rough board skiff made by unskilled hands out of native lumber, with a flat bottom, and not at all constructed to resist the bumps from violent contact with stones or piles of heavy drift likely to be met with on the journey.

The quarters were very limited—so much so that each party had to remain seated in the same place between starting and stopping points—after starting once, there could be no shifting about or changing places till the skiff was fastened to the bank again.

Under such conditions, on a cloudy June morning of 1851, these four men started on their perilous journey of 170 miles to the Mississippi, without chart or guide, on a river running out at a higher stage of water than ever before known, the banks of which on one side were bluff and thickly covered with timber, and on the other low and overflowed so as to cover adjoining bottom lands and make the apparent width of the river miles in extent.

Their trip down was without special incident or adventure. The second day they left the river bed at Eddyville, floated out over the overflowed bottom, following as closely as possible the submerged stage road for a large part of the distance to Ottumwa. At that place they obtained from State officials a carefully prepared map of the river, and had no further trouble in guiding the boat through the proper channels. On the afternoon of the fourth day of their trip they floated into the great Mississippi, and their boat was soon safely moored to the wharf at Keokuk.

From that point the party proceeded to St. Louis by packet, and very soon after arrival the business members of the party had chartered the steamer Kentucky and loaded her with flour and other provisions to be delivered at the landing in Fort Des Moines. Owing to impassable roads and the difficulty of travel by ordinary methods, several gentlemen whose wives and families were East, arranged to have them join this party at St. Louis and come to Des Moines by steamer. That added to the passenger list three ladies, a young nurse girl, and a small baby.

The trip to Keokuk was without incident. There the loading of the steamer was completed, and it proceeded on its proposed journey up the Des Moines, passing the obstructions at Croton and Farmington without difficulty. When it reached Bonaparte a formidable barrier against further progress was met, in the shape of Meek's dam across the river. The steamboat was pointed directly at the breast of the dam, as at the two dams below, and pushed so that the full length of the boat was above the obstruction, but she was a stern-wheeler—that is, the method of propulsion was by a single great wheel at the extreme end of the boat—and when that wheel was above the point where the water broke over the edge of the dam, it did not touch the water, but flew around with great velocity, threatening a serious break in the machinery, suddenly cutting off the power which propelled the steamer. When that position was reached the boat rapidly fell back into the swift current below the dam, and was with difficulty brought again over it, only to repeat the experience of former trials. Time and again the effort was made to force the steamer over the obstruction only to be followed by failure, and as the officers in charge of the boat knew no other way of applying power to force it over the dam, very reluctantly, indeed, further trials were abandoned, and it was decided

to store the cargo in an old warehouse, and go back as far as necessary to charter another steamer with power enough to overcome existing obstructions.

Three of the party, Griffith, Marvin and Myers, went back with the boat to St. Louis, while the fourth undertook to act as an escort for the ladies, and to hunt up a means of transportation for them and their belongings over nearly impassable roads to the Fort. The usually traveled road up the valley, following as it did for the greater part of the way the low ground along the river, was simply impassable, so they were forced to adopt the ridge road between the valleys of the Des Moines and Skunk rivers, known as the "Divide." The only method of travel available in that little town was by the familiar but rough two-horse wagon. A man was found with such an outfit and a contract made with him to transport the party to Oskaloosa. The trunks were piled in the bed of the wagon, the ladies and nurse comfortably located on top of them, and as they made a full loading for the horses in the fearful condition of the road, the driver and the escort footed it along the side of the wagon. Thus began the three days weary tramp. The roads were in a horrible condition. The long continued and heavy rains, the many swampy sloughs, the little streams unbridged, the heavy service caused by forcing all travel in this direction that would otherwise have followed the river roads, all served to make the progress slow and very trying on the horses. So that at the end of the first day, after being comfortably settled for the night, the escort was not greatly surprised at being called to one side by the driver, and notified that he had a family at Bonaparte, and did not feel, in justice to them, that he could venture, in the then unsettled condition of roads and weather, farther than one day's journey from them. So bright and early the next morning the escort had to hunt around the little hamlet and find another teamster brave enough to face the impediments of the road. And the same experience was met with the following night.

The fatigue of the three days steady travel to Oskaloosa was borne by all the party very well, though the trip was especially trying to the ladies riding on top of trunks that filled the bed of the wagon, and over roads that were in many places fearfully cut up and muddy. An incident occurred on the second day out that showed how hard pressed the settlers were for breadstuffs. In the middle of the day a stop was made for dinner at a farm house by the roadside, and attention attracted to a number of farm teams gathered around a frame work in the adjoining barnyard. This frame work turned out to be an old-fashioned tanbark mill, with a horse-power sweep attached. This mill was set so as to grind corn closely, while not properly corn-meal, yet much finer than hominy, so that it would make a corn bread of coarse quality. The neighboring settlers had gathered in, each with his little sack of shelled corn, and taking turns hitched their teams to the sweep and ground out their different grists. The travelers had their dinner from bread made of this meal, with fried bacon and eggs, and enjoyed it as heartily as they would now one served in the best hotel in Iowa.*

On arrival at Oskaloosa the fatigues and hardships of the trip were nearly ended. A substantial and roomy two-horse hack was in use transporting the mail between that point and the Forks. A little official influence put the mail for a few days in a light wagon, and gave the use of the

*After a lapse of forty-eight years the historian wishes to pay a tribute of kind words to Mr. Charles Wallace, the owner of this primitive mill, who by his generosity afforded relief to many a hungry settler, free of charge, when mills were scarce and the supply of the simplest food a problem. Could the richest man in Iowa have done more liberally than he? The mill was constructed in 1848, and used until the close of 1851.

hack to this party. They and their belongings were piled into it, and after a two days comparatively pleasant journey (stopping the night of the first day at Tool's Point, now Monroe) were safely landed in Fort Des Moines, thus ending the trip for one of the original party.

The three members of the expedition who, after storing their cargo in the old warehouse at Bonaparte, returned in the steamer Kentucky to St. Louis, in order to find another boat with power enough to overcome the obstacles to navigation in the Des Moines river, and whose owners were willing to risk their vessels in unknown waters for a liberal freight rate, soon accomplished their task and chartered the steamer Caleb Cope, Captain Joseph Price.

Adding a little to the cargo already waiting transportation at Bonaparte, and gathering a few passengers at both St. Louis and Keokuk, the steamer entered the mouth of the Des Moines, still pouring out a great flood, and soon reached the point at which the other boat failed to make progress for lack of power. As soon as she had taken on board the freight stored there, she boldly and gallantly faced the great obstacle which had proved so formidable to her predecessor, and pushed her way surely and steadily through and over the surging flood of the dam to the still water beyond.

Then the men who had chartered the boat at last breathed freely—the most formidable obstacle was overcome, and the remainder of the journey was without special peril or danger of delay. Their further progress was one of succor and aid, their loading consisted largely of flour, sugar, coffee, and other necessaries of life, which they distributed to settlers in the Des Moines valley, and they were welcomed at all points on the river between Ottumwa and Fort Des Moines as deliverers and rescuers.

The Caleb Cope, chartered at St. Louis by the three other voyagers, arrived at Fort Des Moines on July 5th. Never was there a steamboat more welcome, for she had brought up needed supplies for the people who were getting short of food. Flour was a very scarce article. A few days previous, while canvassing the situation as concerning a Fourth of July

celebration, the ladies of the village found that there was very little flour to make the necessary pie crust, cake and other goodies which always go with such a celebration, but concluded to trust Providence for a future supply of flour, and use corn meal for some of the cakes. This was done, and the celebration held on court house square, under artificial bowers erected for the occasion. Two ladies, it will be remembered, came in white dresses, but the weather was so cold that they had to return home and change to the more comfortable woollens.

After the boat was unloaded, Captain Joseph Price, who had made a very neat sum on his venture, invited the people of the village to go on a short excursion up the river. He had given out the information that the bar of the boat would be closed on this occasion, so the villagers provided their own refreshments. Acting on the suggestion that one should always take enough to share with a friend, in case of sunstroke, snake-bite, or other contingency which required prompt action, there was an abundance of liquid refreshments. The news of the intended excursion spread rapidly, and at the appointed time forty or fifty of the leading citizens were on board, ready for the joyful occasion. As there was no newspaper record of the trip, memory will have to be invoked as to the names of those participating in the hilarities. Among those remembered were: R. W. Sypher, J. M. Griffith, Max Strauss, Dr. Barnett, Dr. Murdoch, Tom McMullen, Samuel Keene, Wesley Redhead, Andrew J. Stevens, Peter Myers, James Thompson, Charley Van, Tom Campbell, John Tyler, L. D. Winchester, Ed. R. Clapp, Barlow Granger, W. T. Marvin, Alex Scott, John Humstead, John Perkins, L. P. Sherman, James Stanton, Billy Moore, Hoyt Sherman, and Adam Dickey, who had come up on the boat, and others. There were also in the company quite a number of ladies, the wives, sisters, and sweethearts, who added not a little to the enjoyment of the merry company. Billy Moore had not expected to go on the excursion, as he would have had

to leave his store all alone, and at the time the boat started was down in the hold with the clerk of the boat looking for a couple of missing boxes, and did not grasp the situation until he came up and found that she was then passing Hall's water mill, where the Center street dam now stands. He begged to be allowed to go ashore, but the captain would not consent to such an arrangement. He was in his working clothes, and in his shirt sleeves, at that.

"Come and join the dance," said the clerk.

Mr. Moore demurred because of soiled hands and face.

"A little water and soap will remedy that," the clerk insisted.

"But you see I have no coat," said the reluctant Billy.

"I will fix you out with a nice black coat which will fit you, for we are just the same size."

These arrangements were quickly made and he joined the dancers. The "lemonade with a stick in it," or whatever the refreshments proved to be, was very exhilarating and some of the gentlemen became quite boisterous. It had a curious effect on Billy Moore, for he took from his pocket one hundred and eighty dollars in gold, and with the remark, "Boys, I am going to start a bank!" sowed it on the water with a liberal hand. The sum now lies as a permanent investment somewhere between Thompson's Bend and the mouth of Beaver creek, which was as far as the boat carried the excursionists. The Caleb Cope was credited with only one trip as far up as Des Moines that year. There were other arrivals, it is said, but names are not remembered.

There were other boats touching the lower ports of which there is a record. These were the Kentucky, the Movestar, the Luella, and the Maid of Iowa commanded by Captain Bill Phelps, one of the boldest navigators of the Des Moines river. The following story is told of him which is abundantly vouched for as true by the early settlers of Van Buren county:

The Maid of Iowa was making a trip during this year of

flood and after having got into Van Buren county, on a certain cloudy night, the captain supposed it would be perfectly safe to leave the running of the boat in care of the pilot, while he took a little rest, of which he was sorely in need. Therefore he gave orders to that individual who was supposed to know the river perfectly:

“Keep her straight ahead until you come to an island, and then take the left hand side.”

“Aye, aye,” said the pilot, and Captain Bill retired to take his “forty winks.” The river was at its greatest flood, and there was nothing but water to be seen. Suddenly there appeared what the pilot supposed to be the island mentioned, and true to his instructions swung his boat to the left. He had not gone more than one-eighth of a mile before the limbs of the cottonwood trees began to strike the tall chimneys and, breaking off, came down in a shower on the deck. Finally, one of the giant cottonwoods, spreading well over the channel, barred the way with one of its huge branches and came in contact with the smoke-stacks with such a crash as to bring Captain Bill on the upper deck, about half dressed, and in a somewhat dazed condition. He took in the situation after a minute or two and exclaimed:

“Up Soap, by G—d!”

The boat could not be turned around and had to back out of the difficulty as gracefully as possible, and no especial damage was done. The profane expression passed into an idiom in the lower part of the river country, and in after years, when any one made a mistake or had to back out of a difficulty, the expression came in very pat. Captain William Phelps was a large swarthy man, as brave as a lion, and notwithstanding his rough ways, was, in his day, one of the most popular captains and is so remembered by the early merchants on the lower part of the river.

The year previous (1850) the steamboat Add Hine, loaded with goods for Lyon & Allen, of Fort Des Moines, Butcher & Cox, of Eddyville, and with five hundred pairs of

wooden shoes, consigned to a dealer in Pella, to be unloaded at Amsterdam, the port of Pella, three miles distant from that colony, came up from St. Louis as far as the Croton dam, but as the dam could not be passed at that stage of water, the cargo had to be unloaded at the warehouse of J. C. Walker, in charge of the late Joseph B. Stewart, of Des Moines. All the goods were removed soon after except the wooden shoes, which were stored in an unused blacksmith shop near the river where they remained until the flood of 1851 which washed away the shop, contents and all, and the thousand wooden shoes, singly and in pairs, sailed off towards the Father of Waters, a total loss, but who sustained the loss no one has ever yet determined.

While this is in the main a history of steamboating, there is another branch, used by our pioneers in the endeavor to get the grain to market, that was closely allied and must have a place. P. H. Bousquet, of Pella, gives the following interesting chapter of flatboating in the "flood year," 1851:

My father, A. E. Dudok Bousquet, brought his family to Pella in 1849. In October of that year he had gone into partnership with a couple of Hollanders and the firm of Bousquet, Wolters & Smeenk, commenced business, carrying on general merchandising. The corn crop of 1850 being very large, the farmers had no other way of settling their store bills than with crops, or whatever they raised; the merchants of this place conceived the idea of preparing for the purchase of corn and taking it down to St. Louis in flatboats. Besides the firm named H. van Dam and Mr. E. F. Grafe, also storekeepers here, were interested in the matter. Father's firm had two flatboats built, and the other two had each a flatboat built, making four in all. John Welch and Nicholas P. Earp were the captains of our two boats. G. D. Jot was captain of Mr. van Dam's boat, and Peter Kramer was captain of Mr. Grafe's boat. We ordered gunny-sacks from St. Louis and distributed these among the farmers who agreed to sell, sack and deliver sound and merchantable corn on the banks of the Des Moines river, where boats could be loaded, at twelve and a half cents per bushel.

I was sent out by our firm to take in half a cargo of corn delivered in that shape at Whitebreast Prairie, being one of the bottoms along the Des Moines river, opposite the mouth of Whitebreast creek, about six miles straight west from Pella. I took in the corn brought to the shore there and we started down the river to take in the remainder of our cargo at what was called Curtis' Bluff, a trifle east from a course straight south from Pella. But we never reached that point. At a bend in the river where the town of Amsterdam had been laid out and platted by Mr. H. P. Scholte, the founder of this Dutch colony, our captain, John Welch, who claimed to know better than the balance of us, steered our boat right onto a snag, his thought being that it was a drift and that it was an indication where the current went and the deepest water flowed. We suffered shipwreck at that point. The boat stuck to the snag, so we carried out during the days that

followed all the corn we could, brought it to Pella, emptied it from the sacks, kept shoveling it until it was dry, and then commenced to raise hogs.

Captain N. P. Earp succeeded in getting to St. Louis with our second flatboat. Mr. van Dam's flatboat, by reason of the tremendous rise in the river, got outside the banks at some point below here, lodged between two large trees—and remained there. Mr. Grafe's boat, I think, got through. I well remember the rain which poured down upon us on May 21 of that year. I never saw such a rain, before nor after.

Our flatboating down the river the produce of our country in order that the farmers might receive the benefit of the crops they raised was very unsuccessful in that instance. Had it not been so in our first trial we might have continued, but having had no success, the idea of getting rid of our produce in that way was abandoned.

The keel of the steamboat N. L. Milburn was laid at Iowaville in the autumn of 1852, and the hull was finished a little later. It was rather a slow job as there were a good many waits for material. It was launched finally, and poled up to a little inlet where there was shallow water on the Iowaville side that it might be protected from floating ice in the spring. Next morning, to the disgust of the captain and crew, it had sunk in three or four feet of water. N. L. Milburn, the captain, became very much excited and exclaimed: "There is only one man in Iowa mean enough to do such a trick as that, and his name is A. J. Davis!" The reader will recognize the name of Mr. Davis as the famous "Will-case Davis" of Colorado. He lived at that time at Blackhawk, a rival town on the opposite side of the river. He and Captain Milburn had been at loggerheads for some time in a legal way, and were sworn enemies.

In the spring of 1853, after the ice had gone out, the hull was raised, pumped out and the bottom examined. Several augur holes were found, but it was impossible to determine whether they had been bored after the launching, or whether they were the holes bored in the logs for the purpose of pinning the raft together, and so appeared in the lumber after it was sawed, and had not been plugged by the workmen who did the planking on the bottom of the boat. The boilers were rolled on and the crew tried to pole the boat down to Iowaville, that she might be finished for the spring trade, but unfortunately there was a March gale raging and the men lost control of her, and taking the bits in her teeth,

she drifted across the river to Blackhawk, and made a lodgement in the willows of the enemy's country.

In the dusk of the evening the captain called a trusted employe, Seth Graham, who has been a resident of Des Moines for many years, and asked for a private conference. When out of hearing of the rest of the crew he said:

"Seth, I will tell you what I want you to do. Go to John Jordan, borrow his revolver, and slip over to the boat tonight and guard it, for I am sure the man who sunk it last fall will try it again tonight."

Mr. Graham obeyed orders and under cover of darkness got aboard. The sharp March wind raked him fore and aft, and as there was no shelter from it except in one of the empty boilers he wrapped himself up as well as he could and crawled into that. When he wished to make an observation he stuck his head out of the "manhole" and listened, and so watched the weary night through. There was no disturbance and not a sound save the sougning of the wind in the willows or the swash of the waves against the hull. When he crawled out of his iron sentry box next morning and examined the revolver he did not find a load in any of its six cylinders, and as a weapon of offense or defence, he might just as well have armed himself with a monkey wrench.

The hull was taken across the river at once and the work of finishing the boat was pushed with energy. A coal barge had been made previous to the finishing of the boat and was loaded with coal and sent down the river to Alexandria, and the Milburn was to follow and tow it to Keokuk. By the kindness of Mr. Graham, who furnished some data, we will follow the fortunes of the N. L. Milburn, built and owned by the Des Moines Steamboat Company, A. E. Dudok Bousquet, who furnished most of the money, president, and Geo. W. Hoover, secretary.

The boat left Iowaville on the 16th day of May, 1853, touching at Keosauqua on the 17th, at Bennet's woodyard the 18th, and at Keokuk, with coal barge, on the 19th. In

three days she had on a cargo for Red Rock, and was on her way up, touching at Churchville on the 23d, Farmington 24th, Bennet's woodyard 25th, Keosauqua 26th, Iowaville 27th, Eddyville 28th, and Red Rock, her destination, on the 29th. The unloading was done as soon as possible, and the down trip began, the destination being St. Louis, the Mecca and ambition of all steamboat captains. Twelve miles below Red Rock there was a fine coal mine, and on the return trip the boat was halted long enough to give an order for a good supply of coal. "I am going to St. Louis," the captain said with pardonable pride in his voice, "and when we come back we want a big supply of coal. Get out a lot of it and this boat will take all you have." The boss of the coal mine expressed his thanks and gave promise. When Ottumwa was reached on the 30th the boat was hailed and told that the Badger State was lying on the rocks a little below Ottumwa, heavily loaded for Des Moines, and knowing that the Milburn was above, had been watching for her arrival that the goods might be transferred as soon as possible and avoid further damage. There was nothing left for the Milburn to do but to get alongside the disabled boat and transfer the freight. This took a couple of days, and the trip to Des Moines was begun on June 1st. There were some passengers, among whom were Jesse Dicks and J. M. Griffith of Fort Des Moines, and Colonel Easton of St. Louis who had been sent up to adjust the losses on goods aboard the Badger State.

When the Milburn had arrived within four or five miles of the mine at which the coal had been ordered, the sharp ears of the pilot caught the sound of the puffing of a steamboat behind them and at a bend of the river, as he looked back, he recognized the J. B. Gordon running at a greater rate of speed than is usual for a loaded steamboat, unless the captain has some definite object in view. It flashed over the captain at once that the pursuing boat intended to try to cut him out of his promised supply of coal. Then all was excitement, and it extended to the passengers, stokers and

everybody on board. The engineer was made acquainted with the situation and laid his plans. When about a mile intervened between the Milburn and the coal mine, she being pretty well in the lead, the Gordon gave her signal whistle for passing. The engineer of the Milburn was giving his engines a "half-stroke," and was accumulating a big head of steam for a sudden burst of speed, and the race was becoming exciting. Colonel Easton saw the engineer's game and seating himself on the capstan in front of the furnace doors, superintended the firing.

"Roll out a barrel of tar!" he roared. "Knock in the head there, some of you! Stick your wood into the barrel as far you can get it and shove it into the furnace and shut the doors! More of it! More of it! Let us see her move! There, that's business! Now we are moving!"

The Gordon was creeping alongside inch by inch, while the engineer of the Milburn watched her narrowly not wishing to let her have any advantage, nor forge ahead too far. Now the two boats were running side by side, the Gordon creeping up on her antagonist little by little. The passengers and crew of the Gordon, supposing the race had been won, sent up a mighty cheer. There were about two hundred yards yet intervening. It was at this time that the design of the wily engineer of the Milburn was made manifest. He gave his engines their full stroke and opened both throttles wide! The boat sprang forward as if she had been hurled from a catapult, passing the crestfallen Gordon by two full lengths, making the landing with such a bump as to nearly throw the passengers off their feet. And such cheering from the Milburn! The officers, passengers and crew almost yelled themselves hoarse, while the victorious boat gave the defeated one several triumphant notes from her whistle as she passed around the bend out of sight. It furnished Colonel Easton a theme for congratulatory remark during the rest of the trip.*

*It was a gratification to the crew of the N. L. Milburn, as they passed the Gordon

When the Milburn reached "Rattlesnake Bend," a few miles below Des Moines, the passage looked a little dangerous, and Jesse Dicks and J. M. Griffith begged to be allowed to land and walk across the point and take the boat. Accordingly they were put ashore and the boat made the passage with entire safety. On reaching the point named, the passengers were not to be seen. The captain waited for them a reasonable time, rang the bell and blew signal whistles, but as time was precious finally gave orders to go ahead. An hour or so after the boat had landed at the "Point," or junction of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers, the missing passengers appeared on the Raccoon river side, Mr. Dicks puffing and blowing, for he was quite a heavy man, and Mr. Griffith serene and unruffled by his long walk, for he was then, and is today, one of the best walkers of his age in Des Moines.

When the boat was unloaded, the prow was turned down stream June 4th. She Sundayed at Amsterdam, June 5th, and the officials dined with the owners and stockholders at Pella, Iowa. She reached Iowaville on the 6th, and after passing Eddyville, Ottumwa, Keosauqua and Farmington arrived at St. Louis on the 9th. On the way down the Des Moines, the pilot steered her a little too near an overhanging limb, which caught the smoke-stacks and held her fast, tearing away the forward stay rods. The damage was slight and the delay was short.

At St. Louis, before taking on a cargo, it was found necessary to place her in the dry dock and partially re-sheathe her. While Captain Milburn was sitting in her cabin, in company with another steamboat captain or two, one of them asked: "Milburn, do you know what I would do if I owned this boat?" The captain addressed was at a

a little later, to see the entire crew of the defeated boat upon a drift pile in the middle of the river gathering a supply of fuel with which to feed her furnaces. Not an uncommon sight, however, when fuel ran short and there were no wood-yards near by from which to replenish. Such was life in those days of early navigation of the Des Moines.

loss to know and so expressed himself. "Well, I'd cut her in two—and throw both halves away!" There was a coolness between those two steamboatmen ever after. When the repairs were made the Milburn took on a large cargo, piling it in the hold, or wherever a place could be found. On the forward deck was a big pile of a hardware, stoves and sheet iron in bales for McNie & St. John, Keosauqua. The start for the various ports on the Des Moines was made on the 18th.

A packet by the name of "Altoona" plied between St. Louis and Alton daily. This boat was the fastest on the river, and her captain had a sense of humor peculiarly his own. He would wait until there were many boats on the up trip, and then putting on a good head of steam would wind in and out among them, causing their decks to be washed by the waves and the huge swells which invariably followed. In running past the Milburn, sitting low in the water because of her heavy lading, the waves of the "Altoona" completely deluged her decks, seriously damaging the stoves and almost ruining the sheet iron lying in packages on the deck. To make the ruin more complete, the captain ordered the sheet iron taken apart and the sheets greased.

On the 23d the boat arrived at Plymouth Lock, and in trying to get through stuck on the "miter sill," and breaking her "hog chains" had to back off. Repairs were made and a second trial was had with the same results. The boat was then lightened of her cargo and succeeded in getting above, but six days were consumed in the operation. On July 1st the boat was again stuck at Newport Rifles, where she struggled for nine days, abandoned her freight and left the Des Moines river, "shaking the dust off her feet," and found the broad Mississippi.

In the spring of 1854, the N. L. Milburn was chartered for a three months' cruise on the Missouri river and its tributaries by a party of fur traders who wished to go into the Indian country as far as possible. The trip was successfully made and the fur traders realized handsomely on their ven-

No 393rd Iowa, Iowa, May 14th 1853

This **CERTIFICATE** will entitle *Seth Graham* or order to *two* Shares in the Stock of the **DES MOINES STEAM BOAT COMPANY**, at Twenty-five Dollars per share.

A. E. Dudok Bousquet

PRESIDENT.

George W. Hoover

SECRETARY.

CERTIFICATE OF STOCK, DES MOINES RIVER STEAMBOAT CO.

ture. On her return to St. Louis she was again chartered for a cotton buying expedition in the South. She loaded with freight for New Orleans, and after the delivery of her cargo started across the Gulf of Mexico in August to fulfill her mission, but meeting with an accident or mishap was sunk. There were no lives lost, and as she was well insured her owners or managers left her to her fate. These particulars are given to the end that our present and future generations may appreciate the difficulties their fathers and grandfathers experienced in founding so great a State as Iowa.

Mr. A. E. Dudok Bousquet, owner of the N. L. Milburn, was one of the founders of the Pella Colony, coming to that place in 1849. He at once entered into the development of his adopted State with great enthusiasm. In his steamboating venture he was unsuccessful, being unfortunate in his associates in the business, and in a train of following circumstances which the wisest man could not have foreseen. His accumulations of earlier years were spent in trying to develop the community in which he lived, rather than for any selfish motive. He loved the new country in which he had cast his lot; for its prospects seemed golden to his eyes. He had considerable means when coming to Iowa, and deemed it the better part to spend his money in developing the country rather than in buying great quantities of land and making himself rich by advancing prices. In writing of this subject to a brother one day he used this sentence, which seemed to be the keynote of his life: "If I should do this I should be as great a curse to my community as the eastern speculators!"

There have been few nobler pioneer lives in Iowa than that of A. E. Dudok Bousquet. Deceived and cajoled he doubtless was in his steamboating venture. This made the ending of his days very sorrowful, hastening his death, it is feared, in the year 1856, while yet in the prime of life. He left an unsullied name as an inheritance to his children, and one which will grow brighter when the true history of Iowa is written.

During one of her trips in 1853, between St. Francisville and Keosauqua, the Milburn witnessed a funny catastrophe of a home-made craft christened the "Pandodging," built by her owner somewhere on the lower river. Captain Sweazey owned a saw mill on the river and concluded to try his luck at steamboating; so he built this nondescript craft and taking his engine out of the saw mill fitted it into the boat as well as possible. The engine was too weak for the boat and this made her "yaw" from one side of the river to the other in a most puzzling way. It kept the pilot of the Milburn dodging and guessing which side of the stream the little boat was going to take. When within a quarter of a mile of this boat there came some sounds to the ears of the pilot of the Milburn, which were likewise mysterious: "Swing her to the right!" "Swing her to the left!" "Steady! Straight ahead!" When the boats came closer together, the "yawing" and the commands were explained. The Pandodging had no rudder, and was being steered by a son of the captain who was down in the hull in the dark, and with a long plank, unable to see ahead, was steering in accordance with the commands which he received from the captain on deck.

Finally, just above a large island, she "yawed" to the left a little too far and the current caught her sideways and she began to drift helplessly toward the island covered with driftwood. The captain, in order to keep her from striking against the island and breaking in two, hastily threw out the anchor, but unfortunately he had forgotten to attach any cable to it. When it fell overboard with a splash he realized his mistake, and throwing up both hands in despair cried out: "My last hope is gone! My last hope is gone!"

The boat struck the island fair and square, but the accumulated driftwood acted as a fender, giving away gradually, and so doing the craft little harm; but the strong current held her there as in a vise. She was "warped off" later by a hawser, being carried ashore and tied to a tree; then

the capstan, manned by a willing crew, did the rest, and she continued on her zigzag journey to Keosauqua, for which place she was freighted.

Sometimes a big St. Louis packet would bring up freight to the mouth of the Des Moines river and there transfer it to smaller boats which carried it to its destination. The Pandodging did some of this business, and on one occasion went down to receive a portion of freight brought up by the Kate Kearney. She arrived in the night, and coming close to the big boat made fast, ready to receive her load in the morning. In the uncertain light of the morning the crew were hustled up from below to make the transfer. One of the Irish deck hands tumbling up rubbing his eyes saw the strange little craft and shouted to one of his companions who was a little slow in responding to the call: "Jemmy! Jemmy! Come up here as quick as ye can! Be gobs, Ould Kate has a colt!"

From an old journal of 1853, doubtless kept to record arrivals and departures of steamboats at Keosauqua, the following is taken:

Friday, April 22, 1853, the Globe arrived from Keokuk, and departed next day for Bentonsport.

The Jenny Lind arrived on April 23d, from Keokuk, and departed for Eddyville.

Monday, April 25, Globe arrived from Bentonsport, and departed the same day for Ottumwa.

Tuesday, April 26, Globe arrived from Ottumwa, and departed next day for Bentonsport.

April 30th, the Jenny Lind arrived from Fort Des Moines, and departed for St. Louis.

May 2d, the Globe arrived from Bellefontaine, and departed for Keokuk. The same day the Badger State and John B. Gordon arrived and departed for Fort Des Moines.

May 5th, the Globe arrived from Keokuk, loaded down to the guards with freight for Fort Des Moines.

May 8th, Badger State and John B. Gordon arrived from Fort Des Moines, and left same day for Keokuk.

Wednesday, May 11th, Globe arrived from Fort Des Moines, and left same day for Keokuk.

May 12th, Jenny Lind arrived from St. Louis, and departed same day for Fort Des Moines.

May 15th, the Jenny Lind arrived from Eddyville, bound for St. Louis.

May 15th, John B. Gordon No. 2, arrived and departed on the 17th for Fort Des Moines.

May 17th, the N. L. Milburn arrived from Iowaville on her trial trip. This

boat was built at Iowaville, by the "Des Moines Steamboat Company," especially for business on our river. She departed on the same day for Keokuk.

May 26th, the N. L. Milburn arrived from Keokuk, heavily loaded for Red Rock.

May 27th, the Badger State arrived from Keokuk, and left same day for Fort Des Moines. On this trip the boat struck a rock below Ottumwa and sank in five feet of water. She was heavily loaded with flour, dry goods and groceries, and was insured at St. Louis for \$5,000. Goods were taken to Fort Des Moines on the N. L. Milburn. The boat was afterwards raised and taken to St. Louis for repairs.

June 8th, the N. L. Milburn arrived from Fort Des Moines, to which place she had taken the cargo of the sunken Badger State. Her destination was St. Louis.

The first arrival at Fort Des Moines in the year 1854 was the Luella, with freight and passengers. On her trip down the Luella carried, among other passengers, Colonel Barlow Granger of Des Moines, and Hon. Lewis Todhunter of Indiana, who were booked for Keokuk. On account of a heavy windstorm and fog the boat was tied up at Dudley for the night. Uncle Jerry Church, who during his life enlivened as many old settlers' meetings by his fiddling as any man in Iowa, came on board carrying his beloved fiddle. He was the founder of Dudley, and deemed it only courtesy that he should entertain his unexpected visitors with a little music. Captain Morrison, of the Luella, was a fine performer on the violin and had no trouble in rasping in a very good second to Uncle Jerry's corduroy fiddling.

"Now you lead off once and I will play second," said Uncle Jerry.

Then the captain began a fine musical composition entitled "The Lord's Prayer," in which he made the violin repeat in sound and accent the solemn words. Uncle Jerry essayed to follow him but became lost in the mazes somewhere. When the piece was finished he threw down his instrument and exclaimed:

"I wonder if I ever learned to play the fiddle or not!"

The arrivals at Fort Des Moines chronicled in May and a part of June, as taken from an old diary, were:

Badger State, May 12, 1854; Globe, May 14, 1854; John

B. Gordon, May 14, 1854; Luella, May 25, 1854; Globe, June 1, 1854; John B. Gordon, June 3, 1854.

On Sunday evening about the middle of June the John B. Gordon made a third arrival, at "early candle lighting." It is probable that this arrival gave rise to the story that the worshippers at the various churches slipped out at the sound of the whistle far down the river, and headed for the landing, sexton and all, without waiting for the benediction, leaving the ministers to put out the lights and follow in a more dignified manner if they wished. It was once said by a humorous pioneer that he supposed if at a wedding the minister had gotten so far along in the ceremony as the question, "Will you have this woman—" and a steamboat whistle should be heard in the distance, he would by force of circumstances be compelled to say, "the remainder of the service will be completed at the steamboat landing."

On June 1st of this year the Globe brought up to Fort Des Moines, besides a heavy cargo of freight, Colonel T. A. Walker, of the United States land office, and family; Joseph B. Stewart, Mrs. Dr. J. W. Morris and children, Landon Hamilton, trapper and founder of a museum recently bequeathed to the State Historical Department, James Campbell, and others.

The second boat to arrive at Des Moines this year was the Globe, about the last of April, with a big load of goods for the merchants. In May there were more arrivals—the Time and Tide, Colonel Morgan, Luella and Julia Dean. This latter boat brought up an immense cargo of freight for Burnham & Lusby grocers, Billy Moore, R. W. Sypher, B. F. Allen, and others. Mr. E. L. Burnham, who came up from Ottumwa with his goods, reported that there was much trouble in finding water enough and that the progress was slow and unsatisfactory. At "Rattlesnake Bend" the boat had to be "warped" through by means of ropes fastened to trees, stumps and snags in and about the river, and by using the capstan, or man power, to draw her up where steam could

not be used. It took about a day to get above this difficult spot, dreaded by all steamboatmen. It was successfully accomplished and the goods unloaded at the landing about the last of May.

The Sangamon, Alice, Luella, Nevada, and others made frequent trips to lower ports during the boating season. The Julia Dean on her last trip up showed a new style of "heaving the lead." The captain, when coming to a suspicious looking place in the river, would order his tallest deckhand overboard who would wade in front of the boat seeking out the deepest water and the pilot would "steer for him." Navigation under such circumstances would necessarily be slow but sure. The season is said to have closed in July of this year.

The Julia Dean on her return trip from Des Moines to Ottumwa covered the entire watery distance in one day, owing to a sudden rise in the river. This is looked upon as being one of the swiftest trips made by any boat carrying freight and passengers on the Des Moines river.

In 1854 Fort Des Moines caught the "steamboat fever," and the merchants and business men sent Mr. Peter Myers to the nearest steamboat market and purchased the Colonel Morgan. It was a very proud day for Fort Des Moines when the Morgan steamed into port, loaded down to the guards with all sorts of freight. A corporation had been formed in February previous, in order to be ready for spring business. The venture was probably successful, but there are few of our early settlers who will admit that they were owners of stock. Among the known owners of stock were B. F. Allen, James Sherman, R. W. Sypher and James Campbell.

The following are the articles of incorporation in substance:

"In conformity to chapter 44 of the Code of Iowa, approved February 5, 1851, a steamboat company was formed under the name and title of The Fort Des Moines Steamboat Company, with the place of business at Fort Des Moines, to continue for twenty years, and to be renewed at the expira-

tion of that time at the option of the stockholders and directors. The object, as set forth in the corporation papers, was to buy, build, navigate and run a steamboat or boats on the Des Moines and Mississippi rivers and tributaries. To build docks, warehouses and storerooms, and do a general forwarding and commission business. The capital stock of this association shall be \$20,000, to be divided into shares of \$100.00 each, to be subscribed and taken under the direction of the directors of the incorporation. The capital stock may be increased or diminished, as may be deemed necessary to carry out the affairs of the incorporation. The business of the incorporation to begin February 4th, 1854.

"Directors: Addison S. Vorse, Samuel Gray, Reuben W. Sypher.

"Incorporators: Samuel Gray, Curtis Bates, Otis Briggs, Reuben W. Sypher, P. M. Casady, A. Newton."

No official record of stockholders. All private property exempt.

There is a record of the arrival in Des Moines in 1855 of the New Georgetown, Julia Dean, Add Hine, Badger State, Globe, Little Morgan, and perhaps others. At the lower ports there were at least twice as many arrivals and departures. According to the newspapers of that year the river was not in a very navigable condition, and the season was short.

The Michigan, a very small steamboat, made the first arrival at Des Moines during the season of 1856, coming in on April 16th with freight and passengers. Captain J. W. Johnson was a very clever gentleman, but a little sensitive about the size of his boat. It is reported that at Keosauqua, where he landed to leave some freight, he was visited by the villagers and took great pride in showing them his craft. Among them was a well known wag, who asked, with a look of deep concern:

"Captain Johnson, how long is your boat going to lie here?"

"About two hours," the captain replied.

"Well, now look here," said the sober-faced man, "my wife has never seen a steamboat, and she is sick in bed. Now can't you let me put your boat on my wagon, take it up to my house and show it to her? I promise to take good care of it and will be back with it in two hours."

There was a burst of laughter from the spectators but Captain Johnson did not join in it. The joke stuck to the boat and is still remembered by the early settlers of Van Buren county.

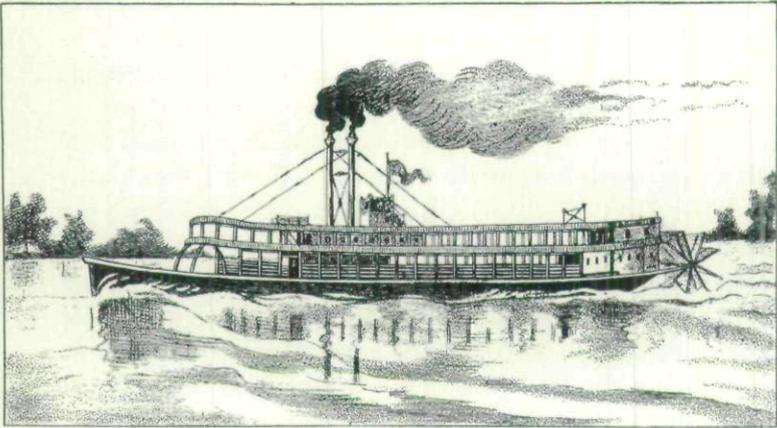
On April 8th the Leviathan, a keel-boat, Captain T. C. Coffin, left Ottumwa, Iowa, with a heavy cargo of pork and lard consigned to a St. Louis firm, which was delivered without mishap a few days later.

On May 22, and at later dates, the Alice, Badger State, Michigan, and the Julia Dean, with barges, passed the lower ports headed for Des Moines, arriving and departing in their regular order.

A new boat was on the river that year, the Des Moines Valley, built at St. Francisville, Iowa. She reached Keosauqua on her trial trip June 15th, but came no higher, having no freightage for the upper ports. So far as can be learned, the Badger State, the Alice (a general favorite), Gordon, Nevada, Add and Clara Hine, Globe and Little Morgan, made more trips to the upper ports than any other boats.

There were a good many arrivals at the lower ports about the middle of March, 1857. The first arrival at Des Moines, so far as can be learned, was the Alice, which received the usual welcome. The Michigan closely followed on April 8th. The Badger State arrived on April 11th. From an old faded copy of the manifest of this boat, the following is given to show the average cargo of our Des Moines river steamboats:

G. M. Hippee & Co., 68 boxes glassware.
Little, Garrison & Co., 104 plows, 3 casks glassware.
Laird Brothers & Co., 5 sacks of coffee, 1 doz. buckets, 2 bbls rice, 1 box



TYPICAL DES MOINES RIVER STEAMBOAT—CLASS I.

of loaf sugar, 2 bbls syrup, 1 box of soap, 2 boxes raisins, 10 drums of figs, 2 boxes sundries, 20 sacks dried apples, 2 sacks of dried peaches, 12 boxes codfish, 3 boxes herring, 1 sack of twine.

Childs, Sanford & Co., 2 ice chests, 4 packages of furniture, 2 boxes iron bands, 2 stoves, 2 boxes hardware.

Galbraith, Latslaw & Woodwell, 6 packages of mdse.

W. F. Burgett, 200 sacks of salt.

Cavenor, Ayres & Co., 7 casks of glassware.

J. & I. Kuhn, 11 boxes merchandise.

Newton & Keene, 67 pkgs mdse.

Lovejoy, Thompson & Co., 68 pkgs mdse.

S. M. Collins, 18 packages of goods.

Redhead & Dawson, 4 boxes of stationery, 2 boxes curtains and fixtures.

Without name, 300 barrels of whisky.

The Des Moines Valley came up as far as Ottumwa in the same month, but no higher, not having freight for points above. The Clara Hine, the Skipper, the Alice, the Michigan, Morgan, Badger State and Add Hine made regular trips during the boating season. The Morgan steamed into the port of Des Moines late in the autumn of this year, and lay at the junction of the two rivers. In the spring, after doing some repairing, she took on a cargo of pork for St. Louis.

On June 10th of this year the people of Farmington had a celebration to welcome the first railroad train running into that little city. It was said to be a very joyful occasion and similar to the one celebrated by the citizens of Des Moines when the first train reached them in August of 1866. These celebrations along the river as the old Des Moines Valley R. R. crept slowly up toward the future capital city were the handwritings on the wall to the steamboatmen, and warned them that their glory was departing. The season closed early in June.

The year 1858 was a good year for steamboating. The rains were almost unceasing in their downpour from April to August. According to some of the old settlers at Keosauqua, the red birds which came up from Missouri in great numbers, sang in the branches of the trees along the Des Moines river:

"Wet, wet year! Wet year! Wet! wet! wet!"

The first arrival was the Col. Morgan. This boat had wintered here and had taken a load of pork down to St. Louis as soon as the ice was out, bringing back a cargo of dry goods and groceries. From March 10th to the close of the season there was a procession of boats passing up and down, among which were the Clara Hine, the Delta, the Ed. Manning, the Skipper, the Des Moines Valley, Alice, Add Hine and others. Some of these boats made as high as twelve round trips, while the lower ports had many more arrivals.

One of the social events of that year was an excursion given by the steamboat Ed. Manning to the citizens of Ottumwa. The invitation to ride up to Eddyville and return was accepted by about 150 ladies and gentlemen. The Ottumwa Sax Horn band accompanied the boat and enlivened the trip with excellent music. The occasion still lingers in the memories of some of the early settlers as a very pleasant incident. It is to be regretted exceedingly that newspaper editors in those days did not enter a little more into particulars. Nothing but the plain, bare facts were recorded, leaving the details to the imagination of the writers who were to come after.

It was in this year that the Morgan met with a serious accident. In passing through the locks at Keosauqua she filled with water, but being loaded with lumber did not sink. She was hauled ashore, unloaded and baled out; repairs were made and she continued her journey to Des Moines, as if nothing had happened. That same year the Skipper brought up at one load 69,000 feet of lumber. The Defiance was in evidence that year and brought up two heavy cargoes. Mr. George C. Duffield, who kept a woodyard at Pittsburg, near Keosauqua, from 1854 to 1861, says he has a more vivid remembrance of the Defiance and her captain than of any other boat on the river, as the captain still owes him for five cords of wood which went up in smoke more than forty years ago. Carlisle St. John, of this city, who was at the time an

iron worker at Keosauqua, has a similar remembrance of the little Michigan. He topped out the chimneys of that saucy little craft and trusted to the honor of the captain for the money; but it was never paid, although the captain was bombarded with bills at his every known address. When Mr. St. John learned that the much trusted captain had joined the confederate forces, taking his boat with him and repudiating all northern indebtedness, that creditor gave a sigh and quit wasting postage on him.

In order to give the reader an idea of the frequency of the arrival of boats in this watery year, the following record for a week in May is given from an old diary:

Sunday, May 2, Clara Hine, arrived and departed.
Monday, May 3, Defiance, arrived and departed.
Wednesday, May 5, Alice, arrived and departed.
Thursday, May 6th, Colonel Morgan, arrived and departed.
Friday, May 7th, Ed. Manning, arrived and departed.
Saturday, May 8th, The Delta, arrived and departed.

There is no record that the G. H. Wilson ever came up so far as Des Moines. Record has it that she brought up freight as far as Ottumwa and perhaps Eddyville. The Wilson was a powerful boat and her captain was not afraid to tackle dams or locks on the lower river, and it was seldom he did not accomplish what he set out to do. A story is told of him at the time he was wrestling with the dam at Keosauqua which shows his resoluteness in the face of difficulties. His boat stuck in passing the dam several times on the occasion mentioned, and had to fall back and try it over again. Getting desperate, the captain ordered the engineer to get up a big pressure of steam, open the throttle valves wide, and shouted his commands so that they could be heard half a mile: "Send her over—or blow her to hell!" The boat went over amid the cheers of the spectators. The engineer said afterwards that he rather expected the other alternative.

On March 23 there occurred an event which has taken place only twice since the admission of our State into the Union. At the adjournment of the legislature that year, the

roads being impassable by stage or mud wagon, all the members of the legislature who could by any possible means reach their homes by boat did so by going down the Des Moines river in the little steamboat Skipper. It was a somewhat perilous journey, the river being very high and filled with floating driftwood. The captain very prudently tied up at night, landing his passengers at all points desired and carrying those destined for the Mississippi river packets as far as Bentonsport, the terminus of the D. M. V. R. R. A list of the passengers so far as can be ascertained is as follows:

Senators, John R. Allen, John W. Rankin, Lee county; David T. Brigham, Lee and Van Buren counties; William F. Coolbaugh and Lyman Cook, Des Moines county; John A. Johnson, Wapello county; O. P. Sharradan, Keokuk county; A. O. Patterson, Muscatine county; Nicholas J. Rusch, Scott county; Jonathan W. Cattell, Cedar county; Geo. M. Davis, Clinton county; William G. Thompson, Linn county; J. W. Jenkins, Jackson county, and others.

Representatives, Theophilus Crawford, Lincoln Clark and Dennis A. Mahony, Dubuque county; W. S. Johnson, Dubuque and Jones counties; Thomas Drummond, Benton county; E. D. Waln and Ellsworth N. Bates, Linn county; Phillip B. Bradley and T. Millsap, Jackson county; Howard Anthony and Thomas Watts, Clinton county; John W. Thompson and Benjamin F. Gue, Scott county; Freeman Alger, Muscatine county; Royal Prentiss, Louisa county; Justus Clark and W. H. Clune, Des Moines county; D. M. Sprague, Des Moines and Louisa counties; Theron A. Morgan, Keokuk county; W. McGrew, Washington and Keokuk counties; Israel C. Curtis and Martin B. Bennett, Marion county; Squire Ayers and J. J. Cassady, Van Buren county; William Campbell and William McCormick, Wapello county; C. C. Bauder, J. A. Casey and William W. Belknap; Lee county; George W. McCrary, Lee, Henry and Van Buren counties.

Mr. Ira Cook of Des Moines gives this little incident to

show the uncertainties of steamboat travel and the slowness of stage coaching in 1858:

In August, 1858, my wife was in Davenport on a visit, and I found it was simply impossible to get her home by stage coach on account of the famous "Skunk bottom," and so in that memorable year when we had "water, water, everywhere," I decided to bring her home by water. The steamboat Clara Hine, Captain Patton, was then making regular trips from Bentonsport to the "Forks." I boarded her one day intending to go to Keokuk, having written Mrs. Cook to come down on the packet from Davenport and meet me there. Just before we reached Ottumwa Captain Patton suggested that if I crossed over to Burlington in the stage, and telegraphed Mrs. Cook to start at once we could get down there in time to come back with him on the return trip.

I thought this a good scheme and acted accordingly. I arrived in Burlington, telegraphed my wife and received answer that she would be down on that day. The boat arrived that afternoon and I went on board and found my wife and her sister. We reached Montrose some time in the night. We rose very early next morning to take the train for Keokuk. Almost the first man I met that morning was Captain Patton, who lived at Montrose. He said he should stay in Keokuk until the afternoon train for Bentonsport, where his boat was, and advised us to do the same. We went up to Bentonsport by train and found out that the boat had been sent off an hour before by Captain Hine in charge of the mate. Here was a dilemma. However Captain Patton said we could hire an extra coach and would overtake the boat at Keosauqua. This we did and eight or ten of us piled in and started. But, alas, the mud was deep and our progress very slow. When we reached Keosauqua, the boat was "out of sight." It was then nightfall. After supper six of us hired two carriages and made another start, Captain Patton assuring us that we could overtake the boat at Ottumwa. Our drivers made fair headway and we thought our prospects good. At 11 o'clock at night and when about two miles from Libertyville on the stage road from Burlington to Ottumwa, there came up a tremendous thunderstorm and we turned into a farm-house where we stayed until morning. Then we went over to Libertyville the following day and stayed until 11 o'clock that night when the two Western Stage Company's mud wagons came along which we boarded for home.

I shall never forget that stage ride. The streams were all out of their banks, and many times we were compelled to put the baggage on top of the coach while the passengers climbed on top of the seats to keep out of the water. As an instance of our progress, we were five hours going from Eddyville to Oskaloosa, a distance of ten miles. I also remember that we had dinner, supper or breakfast at every station between Ottumwa and Des Moines. This must represent my first steamboat ride on the Des Moines river. My last was in 1862 as far as Ottumwa.

On an old map of Fort Des Moines, published in 1854, there is a picture of a steamboat ploughing her way boldly up the Raccoon river. The picture, of course, existed in the imagination of the artist, yet he "buildded better than he knew," for early in June, 1858, the Colonel Morgan made a trip a short distance up the Raccoon, turning around at about the location of the present Des Moines water works plant. It

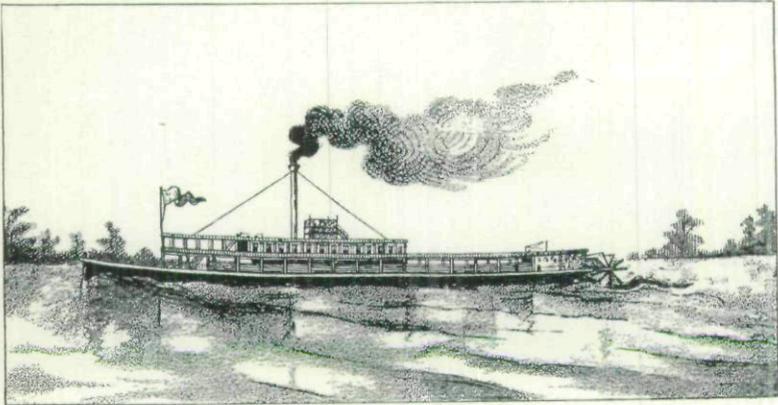
was a very pleasant occasion, and the novelty was much enjoyed. The excursionists, as remembered, were James Sherman, J. M. Dixon of the *Register*, Will Porter of the *Journal*, Ed. Marsh, Tac. Hussey and others. The river was high and there was little difficulty in navigating the crooked and narrow stream.

There was also an excursion on the Alice this year down the Des Moines. The projectors were Messrs. John Mitchell, Ed. Downer, Alex. Talbott, Ed. Marsh, J. A. Woodward and others. About fifty couples were on board. The Alice steamed down to a point a little below Palmyra. On the return trip, after getting above "Rattlesnake Bend," the boat was tied up and the company allowed to roam about in the woods, singly or in pairs. Supper was served on the boat, after which dancing was resumed until Des Moines was reached about midnight. It was a very happy company and Captain Patton was voted the most popular steamboatman on the river.

Hon. Geo. C. Tichenor, of New York, who became a resident of Des Moines in 1858, contributes the following to the history of steamboating on the Des Moines river:

Although my life has been a very busy one throughout, and perhaps, also, more than ordinarily eventful, the circumstances attending my first journey to, and arrival at Des Moines, are as fresh in my memory as if they had occurred but yesterday. They were in brief as follows:

Having decided to follow dear old Horace Greeley's advice to "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country," I started early in March from my birthplace in Kentucky to seek a new home somewhere "away out West, beyond the Mississippi." I had not fixed decisively upon any particular place, but had St. Joseph, Missouri, Keokuk, Des Moines, and Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Yankton, Dakotah, in mind. I journeyed by stage coach and rail to St. Louis, Missouri, and from the latter city to Keokuk by steamboat. I found Keokuk exceedingly dull, the town being at a dead standstill, and having devoted some two weeks in the vain endeavor to obtain employment at my trade (painter) or as a bookkeeper, which profession I had also learned, or at almost anything else that would afford food and clothing, I was casting about as to what course I should pursue, as my purse was running quite low, when one morning as I was straying along the river front (at Keokuk), still endeavoring to secure some employment that would yield me a few dollars, a young man in a grocery store pointed out to me a little steamboat lying at the wharf which he said was going to make a trip up the Des Moines river, and would try to ascend to Fort Des Moines. He proffered to introduce me to the captain who might let me work my way on the boat or carry me at low fare. The captain (named Patton), a tall, raw-boned man of few words and determined manner, said he already had more



TYPICAL DES MOINES RIVER STEAMBOAT—CLASS II.

"help" than he needed on the boat, but that he would take me as a passenger for ten dollars, which included my berth room (a "pallet" in the cabin, or sitting and eating compartment, adjacent the pilot house), and "grub," with the understanding, however, that I would "lend a hand" in case my help was needed at any time. The vessel was the Clara Hine, a little stern-wheel "wheezey" craft, which gave out a sound as she moved along like a wind-broken horse or victim of a bad case of asthma.

The boat's cargo consisted of groceries and dry goods, consigned in small lots to the few little towns, such as Keosauqua, Ottumwa, Eddyville, Oskaloosa, Knoxville, Indianola and Monroe, lying along or adjacent to the Des Moines river, and to Fort Des Moines, Adel, Guthrie Center and Boonesboro. There were five passengers from Keokuk besides myself, namely: Mr. Chance, an elderly man in the stove and tinware business at Adel; a young man, a tinsmith he was taking home with him; a young saddler, named Burton, and his bride, who debarked at Eddyville, and a merchant of Boonesboro named Daniel Barnes. We were eight days and nights making the trip from Keokuk to Des Moines, as we had to run very slowly, particularly nights, not only to avoid snags but also overhanging limbs of trees when we had to hug the current along the banks, which was frequently the case. We anchored time and again in order to cut away the limbs of trees to keep them from carrying away the little smoke-stack, the pilot house and the cabin.

We landed at "Campbell's Point," at the junction of the Raccoon and Des Moines rivers just at sunset on the 19th of April, 1858. "Runners" for the "Des Moines House," the "Collins House," and the "Morris House," rushed aboard the boat as soon as she landed and loudly solicited the patronage of the passengers for their several hostelries, each declaring that his was the "principal hotel in the city." After some haggling with the representative of the Collins House he agreed to take my trunk to his hotel for "two bits" and to board and lodge me for \$2.25 a week, if I would remain a week or longer, or at the rate of seventy-five cents a day if I only stayed a day or two. The Collins House was a long, narrow, low, two-story, white frame house with adjoining "office" and "parlor," dining room and kitchen on the lower floor, and about a dozen sleeping rooms, about 6 by 8 feet square, on either side of a narrow hallway on the second floor, and was situated between Third and Fourth streets near the Coon river. After eating supper that evening, I took account of my purse and found that after paying the "two bits" for carrying my trunk to the hotel, I had exactly an old fashioned three cent piece left, which I invested in a "Principe" cigar, found in a little show case about two feet square on the counter in the hotel "office."

Thus I found myself, a youth in my 20th year, with not a cent in my purse, with two very fair suits of clothing, a suit of blue cotton overalls, half a dozen plain shirts (only one with plaited bosom, however), a half dozen pairs of home-knit socks, a copy each of Josephus, Plutarch's Lives, and Seneca's Morals in my trunk, and an old-fashioned open-faced gold watch in my pocket, in a strange place a "thousand miles from home." Des Moines then was in the midst of the depression resulting from the panic of 1857, and was about as dead a town as one could imagine. It had been made the capital of the State a year or so before and the chief employment of the principal people on either side of the Des Moines river was to abuse each other, according as to whether they resided on the "East Side" or the "West Side." The river was spanned, near the foot of Locust street, with a primitive and quite unstable sort of pontoon bridge, which was the only means of passage except by small ferry, skiff, or canoe. During a part of that spring and in the early spring and flood season of 1859, the river really extended from the western shore, or Front street in West Des Moines, to the bluffs, or "Capitol Hill," on the East Side. I remember having made the

passage time and again in a skiff from the landing at the "Des Moines House," in West Des Moines, to the landing near the "Walker House," in East Des Moines.

In after years, as chairman of the bridge committee on the board of aldermen for the city of Des Moines, I contributed my influence and labors towards building two substantial free bridges across that river, although since then when I visited Des Moines, after I had become "a wanderer on the face of the earth," I found that river so destitute of water that it seemed to me a good sized minnow would have to stand on its head in order to get a drink.

I am glad to learn that you contemplate the preparation of a history of steamboating on the Des Moines river, and trust you will extend the scope of your work to the other rivers in the State, whether navigable by steamboats or not, for having crossed and recrossed many of them on horseback, in stage coach and otherwise during my residence in Iowa, all engage my friendly interest and hold a place in my memory, particularly the fragrant and deceptive Skunk, the tortuous Raccoon, and the spreading Nodaway.

The year 1859 was considered "a boss year" for steamboating and will be remembered by merchants and others from Keokuk to Fort Dodge. To the latter point two boats, at least, made trips. The season opened very early and did not close until late in August or early in September.

The first boat to arrive this year at Des Moines was the Clara Hine with sixty-four tons of freight. The Charley Rodgers followed her, arriving the same day, with fifty tons of freight. The Flora Temple, the largest steamboat ever coming up as far as Des Moines, made two trips this year, bringing up freight and passengers. The heart of the average Des Moines man beat high, for on one April day there were lying here at one and the same time, unloading and taking on cargoes, five boats. Tradition, and considerable search among the steamboat archives, gives the names of these five boats as the Flora Temple, De Moine Belle, Clara Hine, De Moine City and Charley Rodgers. This last named boat made several trips to Fort Dodge, carrying heavy freight. She cost \$3,000 and was intended for river work. She was a very powerful little boat, sitting low in the water and equipped with sufficient steam and engine power to go where she pleased. This boat carried a great deal of produce down the river in her thirteen round trips made that year, between March 9 and some time in June.

On June 25th a meeting of the passengers of the De

Moine Belle was held on board during one of her trips and Captain Farris and Robert Martin, clerk, were complimented and given a vote of thanks for courteous treatment. The boat and officers were recommended to the public. C. Bauder acted as chairman and W. F. Turner as secretary. The Clara Hine was also a favorite boat on the river and carried many passengers. On one of her up trips this year she carried among other passengers Hon. George G. Wright and daughter Mary, now Mrs. F. H. Peavy, of Minneapolis. Mr. Wright returned to his home in Keosauqua on the De Moine City, in company with Caleb Baldwin, H. C. Caldwell and others.

In order to give the reader an idea of the activity of steamboats this year, a partial list of the arrivals and departures is given which will indicate the names of boats most active in the trade:

March 9, Clara Hine.	March 9, Charley Rodgers.
March 12, Colonel Morgan.	March 14, Charley Rodgers.
March 18, Clara Hine.	March 31, Defiance.
March 31, Colonel Morgan.	April 4, Charley Rodgers, with freight to Fort Dodge.
April 7, Colonel Morgan.	April 10, Charley Rodgers, return trip from Fort Dodge.
April 8, Flora Temple.	April 16, Colonel Morgan.
April 12, De Moine City.	April 21, Flora Temple.
April 14, Clara Hine.	April 26, Clara Hine.
April 19, Charley Rodgers.	May 8, Charley Rodgers, return trip from Fort Dodge.
April 26, Charley Rodgers.	
April 27, Charley Rodgers, with Fort Dodge freight.	

The Charley Rodgers is credited with five round trips to Fort Dodge. This is about a fair estimate of what took place during the boating season which comprised March, April, May, June, July, and a part of August of that year. There were many heavy rains and they seemed to occur at about the right intervals to keep the river in good boating condition from start to finish.

The Republican State convention met in Des Moines this year and held its sessions at Sherman's hall, June 23, 1859. Many of the delegates living east, or near that portion touched by the Mississippi and Des Moines rivers, took boats as they could find them coming in this direction, especially after reaching Ottumwa, the then railroad terminus. Among the

delegates remembered were J. S. Dimmitt of Jones, Col. Fitz Henry Warren, Willis Drummond of Clayton, and Frank W. Palmer of Dubuque.

On addressing an inquiry to Hon. Frank W. Palmer not long ago in reference to his experience in traveling to Des Moines at that early date, it was assumed that he came by steamboat, to which he replied:

You are correct in assuming that I arrived in Des Moines on a steamboat on the Des Moines river. It was my first visit to the Capital City. I was a delegate to the Republican State convention, called to nominate candidates for State officers. I started from Dubuque, where I then resided, crossed the Mississippi river on a ferry boat to Dunleith, Ill.; there took passage on a train on the Illinois Central Railroad to a point opposite Burlington, Iowa; crossed the Mississippi river to Burlington; took passage on a train on the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad to Agency City, at that time the western terminus of the road. Agency City was a small settlement about six miles, as I remember, east of Ottumwa. From the former place I proceeded by stage to Ottumwa. At the latter place I embarked on a stern-wheel steamboat lying at the bank of the Des Moines river, for the city of Des Moines.

I do not remember the name of the steamer or that of the captain, which is not a matter of wonder, considering the lapse of nearly forty years since that time. I have only a vague remembrance that the steamer was small, was flat-bottomed, and drew only a little water. Most of the passengers were bound for Des Moines and, like myself, held credentials as delegates to the State convention. I have a remembrance now of the names of only a few of my fellow passengers. Among them were Willis Drummond of Clayton county, afterwards commissioner of the general land office, Fitz Henry Warren, and a young man named Lane of Burlington, and my associates of the Dubuque delegation. I cannot now tell at what hour we embarked on the steamer, nor how long the passage took. I only remember that the passengers and crew watched with intense eagerness all the possible obstacles in our passage, in the form of sand-bars, abrupt bends in the channel, floating trees and hidden rocks. No detention worth mentioning happened to our craft, and we landed on the banks of the Des Moines at Des Moines in safety.

A committee of citizens was in waiting to assign the delegates to the several private residences selected for their temporary stay in the town. It was my good fortune to be assigned to the residence of Dr. S. C. Brownell, then a practicing dentist. Then and there commenced an acquaintanceship with that genial companion and good citizen which continued until his death at Medina, in the state of New York, many years afterward.

In the foregoing I have, my good friend, complied with your request to give you a statement of the incidents connected with my first visit to Des Moines, as I now remember them. I would be glad to give them more in detail if I could, but it is not possible for the human mind to retain impressions of events, seemingly at the time unimportant, for a long series of years.

On June 24th the Democratic convention was held in the same hall, many of the delegates coming up the river from Ottumwa on the steamboat De Moine City. Col. N. G.

Hedges of Keokuk headed the delegations from the lower part of Iowa. The trip was a very enjoyable one, and the passengers one and all were very jolly. One little cloud marred their pleasure somewhat, it was reported. The river water was too muddy for drinking purposes so the captain had to carry along a supply of well water with which to mix their cholera medicine. The return trip was made in the same boat.

These two conventions coming so close together gave very grave apprehensions to one of our waggish citizens, Jim Devault, who expressed himself as much dissatisfied with the condition of things: "Yesterday the Republican party came in on us and ate up everything we had, and today the Democratic party have come in and are drinking up everything we have! And taking it all around it's going to be a darned hard winter on the poor!"

The copy of an old manifest of the Clara Hine, dated March 26, 1859, is given here to show some of the merchants doing business in those days in Des Moines:

Laird Brothers, 300 sacks of salt, 31 bags of coffee, 9 hhd. sugar, 20 sacks of dried fruit, 29 kegs of nails, 9 bbls. of molasses, 13 kegs of soda, 183 packages of merchandise.

George Okell, 30 barrels of ale.

C. P. Luse & Co., 365 kegs of nails, 110 boxes of glass, 25 bales of sheet iron, 270 kegs of assorted hardware.

W. S. Barnes, 1 bale of bags.

Harry Stephenson, 77 pkgs. of assorted merchandise, 5 sacks salt, 25 boxes merchandise.

McKee & Yerger, 22 pkgs. assorted merchandise.

F. W. Woodruff, 54 boxes drugs.

Keyes & Crawford, 99 bbls. salt, 140 sacks of salt, 40 sacks of coffee, 6 bbls. ass't mdse., 14 boxes soap, 7 hhd. sugar, 177 bales ass't mdse.

H. Beekman, 1 bdl. bags.

Forty-two passengers.

The steamboat enthusiasm of this year extended to Fort Dodge, by reason of the arrival at that place of the plucky little steamboat Charley Rodgers on April 6th. There had been much agitation in that region on the subject of river transportation, and the first arrival of a steamboat heavily laden with goods for waiting merchants overshadowed all events in the previous history of that ambitious village. Let

the story be told by the editor of the Fort Dodge *Sentinel*, J. F. Duncombe, in the issue of the 7th of April, 1859:

Yesterday will be remembered by many of our citizens with feelings of extreme delight for many years to come. By the politeness of Captain F. E. Beers, of the Charles Rodgers, in company with about one hundred and twenty ladies and gentlemen of the town, we enjoyed the first steamboat pleasure excursion on the Upper Des Moines river. The steamboat left the landing at Colburn's ferry about two o'clock and after crossing the river and loading with coal from the mines, started for the upper ferry. All our citizens are well aware of the most shallow ford on the river at the rapids at this place which is at the head of the island at the mouth of Soldier creek, where the river divides into two equal channels. The steamer passed over the rapids with perfect ease in the west channel. At the mouth of the Lizzard the boat "rounded to" and passed down the river at race-horse speed in the eastern channel. The scene was one of intense interest. The beautiful plateau on which our town is built was covered with men, women and children. The river bank was lined with joyful spectators. Repeated hurrahs from those on the boat and on the shore filled the air. The steamer passed down the river about six miles and then returned.

Old grudges were settled—downcast looks brightened—hard times were forgotten—everybody seemed perfectly happy. We had always believed that the navigation of our river was practical; but to *know* it, filled our citizens with more pleasure than a fortune. We felt like a boy with a rattle box—"only more so." The Fort Dodge steamboat enterprise has succeeded, in spite of sneers and jeers! Long may the friends of the enterprise live to remember the first steamboat pleasure excursion at Fort Dodge!

The interest was so great that on the evening of that memorable day a meeting was called at the school house. Major Williams was called to the chair, and A. Taylor appointed secretary. On motion of J. F. Duncombe, Messrs. E. Bagg, A. M. Dawley and John Haire were appointed a committee to draft resolutions, whereupon F. E. Beers and his associates were highly complimented for their enterprise.

A vote of thanks was also tendered to Captain Beers, Henry Carse, T. A. Blackshere, and all those associated with them in the project of constructing and running a steamboat to this place. And a recommendation was also made to business men and merchants to give the Charles Rodgers freight and passengers in preference to other boats.

A resolution was also passed asking that a petition be prepared requesting the next session of the legislature to strike from the statute books the unconstitutional law, passed by the last session, declaring the Des Moines river navigable

only as far as Fort Des Moines, and that proper legal steps be taken to require a draw to be placed in each of the bridges at Fort Des Moines; and that the legislature be also asked to make an appropriation from the lands heretofore granted for that purpose, to clear the river from such obstructions as exist between Fort Dodge and Fort Des Moines; and that the counties bordering on the Des Moines river from Fort Dodge to the State line be invited to co-operate with that town in the above petitions. These resolutions with some others of minor importance were adopted after remarks by J. F. Duncombe, Hon. Sam Rees, J. Garaghty, and others.

At a subsequent meeting the citizens offered one thousand dollars as a bonus to any steamboatman who would agree to run a boat to Fort Dodge for three seasons when the river was in navigable order.

The Charley Rodgers made five trips, ending in June, carrying up great quantities of freight. The De Moine Belle made one trip, arriving on the 12th day of June, the date of the arrival of the Charley Rodgers, and these two steamers lying at the wharf unloading, caused the hearts of the citizens to beat high with hope for the second time during the boating season; but with these two departures the season forever closed, as the next year was a dry one and no boat, however venturesome, would attempt a trip which was almost sure to turn out disastrously. And Fort Dodge turned her determined face hopefully towards the coming railroads.

In speaking of some of the passengers, Captain Beers says: "I do not recall the names of many of the passengers who traveled on the boat. I remember one of them especially who so filled up on Charley Rank's beer at Fort Dodge, while helping in the celebration, that I had to detail two men to watch him on the return trip to see that he did not fall overboard. His name will not be given, though well remembered. I stayed in the Fort Dodge trade as long as there was any money in it, and left the Des Moines river for good the last of June, 1859."

In the columns of the *Fort Dodge Sentinel*, of April 16, 1859, may be found the following card:

DES MOINES RIVER PACKET.

Steamer Charles Rodgers,
F. E. Beers, Master,
Henry Carse, Clerk,
Will make regular trips between Fort Dodge
and Keokuk.

For freight or passage apply on board.

The "Des Moines River Steamboat" fleet in the year 1861 had been narrowed down to three boats; the Add Hine, De Moine Belle, and De Moine City. These boats ran between Des Moines and the railroad terminus. There was plenty of work for them to do and they arrived and departed with freight with great regularity while the water lasted. The civil war had begun, and all boats which could carry freight and passengers were engaged in transporting troops in southern waters where compensation was greater and there was an abundance of work.

To make a short history of the steamboat year, the first arrival was that of the De Moine Belle, April 10. The next the De Moine City, on April 15th. The Add Hine on the 19th. In summing up the entire season's work by these three boats the trips were as follows:

The De Moine Belle, six trips.

The De Moine City, twelve trips.

The Add Hine, sixteen trips.

The following advertisement appeared in the *Daily Register* of February 16, 1861:

KEOKUK & DES MOINES R. R. PACKET LINE.

There will be a line of boats on the opening of navigation, running between Eddyville and Des Moines, in connection with the Keokuk & Fort Des Moines Rail Road. This line will be the only R. R. Packet Line on the Des Moines river. Merchants and shippers of freight, give us all your business and it will enable us to do your shipping at very low rates. Contracts given to all points east.

H. G. PEASE, Agent,
Des Moines, Iowa.

In March, 1862, Adjutant General Baker made arrangements with the entire line of steamboats running to Des



SHIPPED BY

Chattanooga Mr. Grant's
Ketchikan

ON BOARD

Steamboat DEMOINE BELLE.



Marks.

Whereof *Grant Hill* is Master,
near in the port of *Ketchikan* and bound for

60	60	Meat	Short Do	Wines
"	"	"	76	Boxes Dry Goods
"	"	"	44	" " " " " "
"	"	"	6	Rolls Carpets
"	"	"	10	Sacks Coffee
"	"	"	6	Keypunch Sugar
"	"	"	150	Barrel Salt
		Said	100	Boxes
		"	40	Boxes " Sundries "

Being in good Shipping order, and marked and numbered as in the margin, and to be delivered in like order and condition, (damages of the River excepted,) unto said Consignees *Short Do* or to their assignees, he or they paying Freight and Charges thereon.

In Witness whereof, the Master of said Steamboat hath affixed to said Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date, one of which being accomplished, the others to stand void.

May 7th 1861.

Moines from Ottumwa for carrying to their homes on the upper river all wounded, disabled or discharged soldiers. The order was very sweeping and included all the boats on the "Des Moines City Line." Half fare was arranged for soldiers presenting proper credentials from commanding officers. The names of the boats, so far as can be learned, making regular trips, were the De Moine Belle, De Moine City, Little Morgan, Nevada, Alice and Clara Hine.

This year the flood raged from April 1st to 16th, and the members of the legislature had to be carried across the bottoms from the west side of the river to the capitol. The senators and representatives thought it great fun, and many were the jokes put up in commenting on the watery ways of the capital city.

On April 5th of this year the Little Morgan arrived with a cargo of goods for several merchants on the west side of the river, and a consignment, also, for Isaac Brandt, who had a store at that time in the old Griffith Block, on Locust street, northeast of the place where the Chicago & Northwestern depot now stands. As there was no communication by wagon on account of water at that particular time it was a query with the captain as to how the heavy consignment of queensware, salt and glassware, direct from St. Louis, was to be delivered. The saucy Little Morgan was equal to it, however. She cruised down the river a little way, and striking just the right place in the overflowed bottoms, nosed her way up to the store, which stood on the "second ledge," or bank, tied up almost at the door, threw out her gang planks and unloaded the goods as if it were an every day occurrence. A large crowd collected to see the sight, which, so far as known, was never witnessed before nor since. It was an excellent advertisement for Mr. Brandt, and also for the enterprising steamboat captain. When the goods were unloaded, there not being room to turn around, the boat backed gracefully out, found the channel a mile or two below and was soon on her way to the lower ports. The circumstance was

chronicled by the newspapers of that date as a great event in steamboat history.

The "Manifest" of the Little Morgan has been dug out from a newspaper file and is given here. It is probably the only one which was published and preserved of that year:

Latshaw & Woodwell, 6 cases of hardware, 50 kegs of nails, 20 boxes castings.

Keyes & Crawford, 30 cases of dry goods, 12 cases hats, 4 hogsheads sugar.

Rollins & Harmon, 4 barrels dried fruit.

W. W. Moore, 13 cases dry goods.

John McWilliams, 2 hogsheads sugar, 6 kits mackerel.

H. M. McAlister, 12 cases boots and shoes, 6 cases dry goods.

Laird Brothers, 10 sacks coffee, 30 boxes soap, 4 cases dried fruits, 14 boxes candles, 20 crates wooden ware.

Isaac Brandt, 8 casks glassware, 14 cases dry goods, 2 boxes boots and shoes, 100 barrels salt, 2 hogsheads sugar, 4 crates crockery.

At the adjournment of the legislature that year all the members who could by any possibility go in the directions of their homes by water, took passage on the steamboat De Moine City, running between Des Moines and Ottumwa. The following is a list of the legislative passengers so far as can be learned:

Senate Ninth General Assembly: Senators Frederick Hesser, George W. McCrary, Lee; Abner H. McCrary, Van Buren; James Pollard, Davis; Nathan Udell, Appanoose; E. F. Esteb, Wayne and Decatur; J. C. Hagans, Ringgold, Taylor, Page, Union, Adams and Montgomery; Harvey W. English, Fremont, Mills and Pottawattamie; John G. Foote, Des Moines; Theron W. Woolson, Henry; J. Monroe Shaffer, Jefferson; J. W. Dixon, Wapello; Warren S. Dungan, Monroe and Lucas; James S. Hurley, Louisa; William G. Woodward, Muscatine; W. B. Lewis, Washington; H. H. Williams, Mahaska; Jairus E. Neal, Marion; Benjamin F. Gue and Joseph B. Leake, Scott; Norman Boardman, Clinton; James M. Kent, Cedar; Jesse Bowen, Johnson; George F. Green, Jackson; W. H. Holmes, Jones; H. G. Angle, Linn; George W. Trumbull, John D. Jennings, Dubuque; D. Hammer, Clayton; D. C. Hastings, Delaware; Lucian L.

Ainsworth, Fayette and Bremer; George W. Gray, Allamakee.

House of Representatives Ninth General Assembly: Representatives Charles W. Lowrie, T. G. Stevenson, Martin Thompson, Godfrey Eichorn, Lee; George Schramm, Joshua Glanville, Van Buren; Harvey Dunlavy, David Ferguson, Davis; George B. Stewart, Edward J. Gault, Appanoose; Hartley Bracewell, Wayne; Racine D. Kellogg, Decatur; J. Wilson Williams, Franklin Wilcox, Calvin J. Jackson, Des Moines; W. C. Woodworth, John P. West, Henry; Peter Walker, Abial R. Pierce, Jefferson; Joseph H. Flint, Thomas G. McGlothlen, Wapello; Oliver P. Rowles, Monroe; John D. Sarver, Lucas; William M. Calfee, Clarke; John Cleves, Louisa; Thaddeus H. Stanton, John W. Quinn, Washington; John Wasson, Louis Hollingsworth, Keokuk; Hiram D. Gibson, W. E. Wetherall, Marion; George C. Shipman, Michael Price, Muscatine; Rush Clark, Samuel H. Fairall, Johnson; Henry M. Martin, Iowa; James T. Lane, Joseph R. Porter, Joseph H. White, Scott; George W. Parker, John S. Maxwell, Clinton; H. C. Loomis, James H. Rothrock, Cedar; Otis Whittemore, John Russell, Jones; Joseph B. Young, Isaac Milburn, Linn; James McQuinn, Benton; Leander Clark, Tama; Thomas Hardie, William McLennan, F. M. Knoll, Christian Denlinger, Dubuque; Salue G. Van Anda, Delaware; Jed Lake, Buchanan; Warner H. Curtis, Black Hawk; George L. Bass, D. W. Chase, Clayton; W. B. Lakin, Levi Fuller, Fayette; Joseph O. Hudnutt, Bremer; J. F. Wilson, Chickasaw; Joseph Burton, Allamakee; W. H. Baker, Ole Nelson, Winnesheik. "A big, fat legislator" is mentioned by an Ottumwa paper of that date as having slipped off a plank into a ditch after the boat landed at Ottumwa, with his umbrella and carpet bag. He was fished out in a damp condition, and in a somewhat irritable frame of mind. No name was mentioned; but the spectators are inclined to smile about it, even after the lapse of thirty-seven years.

An unknown correspondent of the *Daily State Register* of April 26th, 1862, tells the story in this way:

About four o'clock, we swung into Eddyville, where the captain concluded to stay until morning; but we finally coaxed him to drop down through the bridge, and steam away to Ottumwa, where we arrived at 6 p. m. Here a little incident happened. The gentleman from Delaware (S. Van Anda), who weighs about 225 pounds, and who set his religion down as "barbarian," concluded to join the Baptist church. It was in this wise: Where we landed was near the railroad track. To get from there to town, we had to cross a ditch containing about four feet of muddy water. Over this was placed a slab, with the round side up. In crossing this, the gentleman from Delaware fell in and was completely immersed. He came up blowing and panting like a porpoise, and crawled out on the other side. Senator George F. Green, of Jackson, who by the way is a very small man, thinking he could make as big a noise as the gentleman from Delaware, or perhaps supposing that was the way to town, plunged in after him, and came out on the other side looking more like a drowned rat than a grave and reverend seignor. Seeing which, the gentleman from Delaware told him that they then belonged to the same church; and called him Brother Green.

The legislature adjourned this year on the 8th of April, and at the time of its adjournment the wife of Representative Joseph B. Young, of Linn, who had been sick for some time at the residence of Dr. A. Shaw, whose house stood where Father Nugent's church now stands, near the Soldiers' Monument, was taken to the store of Isaac Brandt, and being placed in a skiff there, was rowed to the steamboat landing at the junction of the two rivers, and placed in care of her husband on the steamboat *De Moine City*, carried to Ottumwa, thence by railroad to the Mississippi, by boat to Lyons, and from there to their home in Marion, Linn county.

The year 1862 virtually closed Des Moines river navigation by steamboats. The near approach of the railroads made the business uncertain and unprofitable; besides there was great demand for steamboat service on all the rivers of the South during the civil war, which now began to assume alarming proportions and required much service in the way of transporting troops and supplies from one place to another; so our steamboat captains withdrew their boats to more profitable fields.

In the spring of 1862 Keyes & Crawford of Des Moines built a large flatboat and loaded it with forty-one tons of

pork and lard, intending to take it down the Des Moines river to Ottumwa, the then railroad terminus, and thence by rail to its destination. It was placed under the command of Captain C. W. Keyes, with a crew of five men. The trip was made successfully until within one mile of Red Rock, where the boat ran upon a sharp rock and sank in ten feet of water. The captain and crew saved themselves as best they could, but were obliged to sleep on the river sands, eat raw pork, and drink river water for forty-eight hours. An appeal for help was sent to Ottumwa, which was responded to by the good flatboat "Captain Byers," which was brought up by push poles with a crew of men, who fished out the cargo and delivered it safely at Ottumwa to its consignees. The Keyes & Crawford flatboat was a total loss.



A FRAGMENT OF "GENERAL" KELLEY'S FLEET.

The last act of importance in which our Des Moines river played a part was that of relieving Des Moines and Central Iowa of "Kelley's Army" of about one thousand tramps, which was beating its way across the country on a pretended visit to Washington, to be presented to President Cleveland as a "petition in boots." The army arrived in Des Moines on Sunday, April 29, 1894, and finding the railroads would not carry it across the State, and having "vowed a vow" that it would not walk, it entered into the brains of some of our citizens to suggest that the army build flatboats and float down the river to the Mississippi. The idea was a solution

of the problem and the fleet was immediately built and the army departed from the junction of the two rivers on May 9th, 1894. The trip to the Mississippi consumed about eleven days, including stoppages, camping and foraging.

It has been thought best to end the history with this episode, so interesting to the residents along the entire length of the stream that they flocked to its banks for miles to see the sight, while generously providing a thank offering in the way of food for the hungry voyagers; for of all the generous acts of the Des Moines river, as a factor in solving transportation problems, this was the best appreciated by a long-suffering people.

THE FIRST APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF IOWA.—While the territory of Iowa had only three governors, of whom Robert Lucas was the first, it is a fact not generally known, indeed it may be said to be universally unknown, that another person was appointed to that position, and that too before any of the others. That person was Brevet Brigadier General Henry Atkinson. He had entered the army in 1808 as a lieutenant, became captain about the beginning of the war with Great Britain, and was in 1814 made colonel of the 4th U. S. infantry from which he was transferred in the same year to the 37th. The following year he was made colonel of the 6th infantry, which position he held until his death in 1842, which occurred at Jefferson barracks. He was then sixty years old. He had been for several years a brevet brigadier general, and at one time, while yet holding his field office, adjutant general of the army. Gen. Atkinson declined the office of governor, although the announcement in the public prints of the appointment of Governor Lucas speaks of Gen. Atkinson having "resigned." The latter was a native of North Carolina. Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, and Fort Atkinson, Iowa, were both named in his honor.—*Plain Talk, Des Moines, Iowa, February 3, 1900.*

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.