

had been governor of his native state, New Hampshire, well deserved for his public services the encomium given him by the great war governor, who happened to be governor again at the time of General Baker's death. Said Governor Kirkwood, "To his skill, his indomitable energy, and his tireless industry, our State owes not a little of the high reputation her military record has made for her. To the soldiery of Iowa, of whose deeds he was ever proud, and whose record he did so much to preserve, he was especially dear; and so long as that history shall be read will the memory of Iowa's great adjutant-general be perpetuated." The record to which the governor referred was indeed a happy thought of General Baker. With the aid liberally extended, although then not required, of the officers in the field, that record was made very ample. It has since been of great service in helping complete the records of the war department. Time and again has that department called upon the adjutant-general of Iowa to furnish data regarding the members of the various regiments from Iowa during the civil war, which the files of the department seemed not to have. Perhaps it was because of the value of such records in the several states that the department required the officers in the various regiments in the recent war to furnish information desired to the state authorities in order that a satisfactory record could be kept within the state from which the men came.

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#### A LETTER BY JEFFERSON DAVIS.

The following historical letter was written by Jefferson Davis to Gen. George W. Jones of Dubuque. It was published soon after in *The Herald* of that city, and the original presented to "The Aldrich Collection" in the Historical Department of Iowa, where it is now preserved. The handwriting is remarkably plain and distinct. The writer of these lines met Mr. Davis at his home at Beauvoir, Miss., about two years before his death. In a conversation he mentioned going into the country west of Dubuque in command of scouting parties, for the purpose of watching the movements of the Indians. "How far out did you usually go, Mr. Davis?" "About as far as possible and return the same day," he replied; "sometimes as far as the Maquoketa river." He mentions these reconnoissances in this letter. His peculiar spelling of the word "Dubuque" with a capital "B" was adopted by many persons, but it did not have the sanction of the man who bore it. His spelling was the same as that

now everywhere in use. As affording a glimpse of early times in Iowa, this letter is both interesting and valuable:

(Private.)

BEAUVOIR, HARRISON CO., MISS., Aug. 8, 1882.

*My very dear Friend:*—Please accept my thanks for the columns of the "*DuBuque Independent*," Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5,—two copies of the last. One of them probably sent by mistake for No. 4. If convenient, I wish you would send me the No. 4, and also the letter of Geo. Wilson,\* to which reference is made as having been recently published in the "*Independent*."

I found the sketch of the early history of DuBuque very interesting, as reviving my recollection of persons known in former times. It is, however, replete with errors, in what relates to the Indians and the military; had the writer consulted you, or Capt. Langworthy, or my good friend Mrs. Dean, now Mrs. Lawrence, or any of the Jordan family, he might have avoided many of his errors. He is quite at fault in regard to the expedition under Gen. Gaines in 1831, and it was in consequence of the council he held at Rock Island, that Black Hawk went to the west side of the Mississippi. When in 1832 he returned to the east side of the river, it was regarded as a violation of the agreement of the previous year, and as indicating a purpose to reassert his claim to the village on Rock river. This led to the expedition under Stillman, and that inaugurated the war of '32. In 1831 the Sauks sent a war party against the Sioux, and this breach of the peace they feared would bring upon them punishment by the U. S.; such at least was then understood to be the cause of their abandonment of their settlement at the lead mines of DuBuque. I was sent there by Col. W. Morgan† in the fall of that year, to watch the Indians who were semi-hostile, to prevent trespassing on the Indian territory. Smith, of Bates & Smith, had a smelting establishment on the east bank just above Mr. Jordan's residence, where they smelted the mineral brought to them by the Indians, but when the Indians left, their operations were confined to smelting the "ashes." I remained on duty there until the spring of 1832,

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\*George Wilson was a brother of Judge Thomas S. and Col. David S. Wilson of Dubuque. He was born in Ohio, in 1809, and entered West Point Military Academy in 1825, graduating in 1830, No. 35 in a class of 42, entering the service as brevet second-lieutenant in the 1st U. S. Infantry. He served in the Black Hawk War, participating in the battle of Bad Axe, Aug. 2, 1832. He was at Ft. Crawford, Wis., in 1833-4, and at Ft. Armstrong, Rock Island, a part of the latter year. Returning to Ft. Crawford he remained there until 1837, when he resigned. He settled at Agency City, Iowa, where he held many public offices. He surveyed some of the public lands and was in the Wisconsin legislature in 1838-9. He was register of the U. S. Land Office at Fairfield, Iowa, 1849-51. He removed to Lexington, Mo., in 1851, where he became a banker and resided until his death in 1880. His sword, which he carried through the Black Hawk War, was recently deposited in the Historical Department of Iowa, by his son, George Wilson of Lexington, Mo.

†Willoughby Morgan, a Virginian, was appointed from civil life Captain in the 12th U. S. Infantry April 25, 1812. He rose through the intermediate grades to Colonel of the 1st Infantry in 1830. His service was in the west, and he died at Fort Crawford, Wisconsin Territory, April 14, 1832.

and though I made frequent reconnoissances into the country, never saw an Indian, or any indication of their presence in that neighborhood. In the spring of 1832 I was relieved by Lieut. J. R. B. Gardenier,\* as private matters required me to go to Mississippi, my home. In a short time reports of Indian hostilities caused the withdrawal of Lieut. Gardenier, and soon followed the crossing of the river by the little war party mentioned in the sketch. After the campaign of 1832 Lieut. Geo. Wilson with a few soldiers was sent to DuBuque, for the same purpose as that for which I had been sent there in the previous year; but on his reporting to the commanding officer at Prairie du Chien, that trespassers were, in despite of his prohibition, crossing the river, a larger force was despatched to enforce the orders of the government, and the laws relating to intercourse with the Indian tribes. Lieut. J. J. Abercrombie† and I were the officers of this re-enforcement. It was in the winter, so cold that we went all the way on the ice. I had known many of the miners when they were on the east side of the river, and on me mainly devolved negotiation with them, to induce them peaceably to retire. I went to their residences, explained the entire absence of any power on our part to modify, or delay the execution of our orders; and being an intimate friend of Capt. Legate, the superintendent of the lead mines, volunteered my services to secure through him to every man, the lead or prospect then held; if, and as soon as, the treaty should be ratified, to extinguish the Indian title. It has always been to me a happy memory, that the removal was accomplished without resort to force; and, as I learned afterwards, that each miner in due time came to his own.

Please give my affectionate remembrance to your good wife, whose gentle smile of welcome at Sinsinnewa has not been clouded by the many and sad years which have intervened. May God bless you and yours, is the sincere prayer of one who through all the changes of life has faithfully loved you.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

HON. GEO. W. JONES.

P. S. The romantic story of how DuBuque got the gift from the Indians, if true, is worthy of a place in history. The captives gave as a reason for crossing the river in '32, that the "Prophet," a nephew of Black Hawk, offered them land and they wanted to leave Keokuk and be rid of the Fox tribe.

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\*See note p. 169.

†John J. Abercrombie, of Tennessee, entered West Point Military Academy as a cadet, in 1817, and graduated No. 37 in his class of 40, in 1822. He served first in the South, but in 1828 became first lieutenant in the 1st U. S. Infantry, participating in the Black Hawk War. He was afterward stationed at Forts Armstrong and Crawford and at Jefferson Barracks, Mo. He bore an honorable part in the Seminole and Mexican Wars, and was wounded in a fight with the Indians and at the battle of Monterey. He rose through the grades of captain, major, lieutenant-colonel and colonel, which last rank he attained, in 1861. He served with great credit through the War of the Rebellion, becoming a brigadier general of volunteers and brevet brigadier general in the regular army. Retiring from the service in 1865, he died at Roslyn, N. Y., January, 1877, at the age of 79.

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