

A POLITICAL LETTER OF 1854.

MIDDLETOWN, DES MOINES CO., IOWA.

OCT. 28, 1854.

DEAR SIR: On my return from the State Fair at Fairfield I found a letter in the post office at this place from you, informing me of reported trespass upon government timber in Louisa county. I expect to go to Wapello in a day or two and see what is going on there relative to this matter.

The State Fair was perhaps a very good affair for a first effort in Iowa, a great variety of cattle, horses, mules, sheep and hogs were exhibited, together with agricultural productions and fine specimens of mechanism, equal perhaps to anything of the kind to be found in the west.

Eleven ladies from different parts of the State entered the arena for the prize watch, worth \$150, all of whom rode well. After making a trial for the prize on a part of two days, the prize was awarded to Miss Turner of Lee county. Among them was a little girl by the name of Hodges from Iowa City, 13 years old, who made the best time and the greatest display of bold riding of any of the contestants, yet not so graceful. Public expression demanded for her the prize, but the committee decided otherwise, when immediately upon the ground one hundred and forty dollars was made up for Miss Hodges and six months' tuition and board at the Female Seminary at Fairfield.

Many of the leading men of the State were present, not excepting Gov. Grimes, whose bulls and heifers were about as far behind among the fine stock at Fairfield as he will be with the people at the end of his executive term.*

General Dodge has been quite unwell with chills, but was so much better that on Thursday last he ventured to go to Fairfield. I left him there from whence he expects to go further west.

There appears to be some trouble with the straight-haired whigs and free soil whigs and sore-headed Democrats, in relation to who(m) they will unite upon for United States Senator. They seem to be afraid of each other. I am thinking they will have more trouble in getting together at Iowa City next winter than at the last election. I am inclined to the opinion that the chance of Henry Fitz Warren† will be the best for senator, if one is elected at all, and this cannot be unless Browning and his friends unite with the free-soil members of the legislature in senatorial election. My hope is strong that they may quarrel throughout the session, and that

*This prediction was not fulfilled, for Gov. Grimes was not only re-elected, but chosen by the State Legislature of 1858 to the United States Senate for his first term of six years.

†Hon. Fitz-Henry Warren, later on second assistant postmaster general, serving also for a time as first assistant. He edited *The Burlington Hawkeye* for a while, and was also an editorial writer on *The Tribune and Sun* of New York City. He was understood to have written the famous "On to Richmond" editorials in *The Tribune* which led to the disaster to the Union cause at the battle of Bull Run. During the Civil War he raised and commanded the 1st Iowa Cavalry. He rose to the grade of brigadier-general and became a major-general by brevet. He was a man of learning and many accomplishments, prominent as a politician, a brave soldier, an able incisive, sarcastic writer, but possessed of a somewhat irascible temper.



Photo by Prentiss

Eng. by J. G. Bunker

Fitz Henry Warren
BRIG. GEN. FITZ HENRY WARREN.

the Democrats may by some honest cunning elect General (A. C.) Dodge. But let this matter result as it may, I am still one of that kind who believes that the General will as certainly rise in the affections of the people as that he has been defeated in the last election. Indeed, I believe that if he could come directly before the people now for Senator he would be elected by a majority of thousands over any man of any other party in this State. His friends are not alarmed for any supposed danger his political adversaries may imagine him to be in. His fame is fixed in the hearts of the people not only in Iowa, but all over the Union, and I look with as much certainty (if his life is spared) for him to go back to the Senate in a proper time as I do for the coming of a new year.

Write to me whenever it will suit your convenience and post me in relation to what is going on in your part of the State. Receive my kindest regards for yourself and family and believe me,

Yours very obediently,

L. SUMMERS,

United States Marshall,
Le Claire, Iowa.

ROBT. ROBINSON.

THE DIVORCE BILL.—A few days before the close of the late session of the legislature, a bill divorcing nineteen couples, having passed both branches of the legislature, was presented to the Governor [John Chambers] for his approval. On the 14th instant the Governor returned it to the house in which it originated, without his signature, and accompanied with his objections thereto. . . . It was afterwards passed by the requisite majority in both houses and became a law.—*Herald, Bloomington, Iowa, February 24, 1843.*

CHOLERA AND BUSINESS.—The prevalence of this fearful scourge has operated to prostrate commercial business on the Mississippi. The St. Louis market is deserted almost, so that one of the city papers says the levee looks more like a churchyard than the mart of a great city. Very few boats are running, and they are doing little besides carrying the fugitives from the epidemic. This of course operates unfavorably upon the business of the entire Valley.—*Democratic Enquirer, (Muscatine) July 14, 1849.*

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