



PRESIDENT WILLIAM MCKINLEY.

BORN NILES, O., JAN. 29, 1843.

SHOT AND FATALLY WOUNDED BY AN ANARCHIST, AT BUFFALO, N. Y., SEPT. 9, 1901.

DIED SEPTEMBER 14, 1901.

ANNALS OF IOWA.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

CHARLES MASON AND GEORGE H. YEWELL.

Those who have read *THE ANNALS* during the past eight years have not forgotten the several articles which have thrown a most favorable light upon the character and public services of the illustrious Charles Mason. How he early took his stand upon legal and judicial grounds against the encroachments of human slavery, was set forth in the first case decided in the Supreme Court of Iowa Territory. This decision was copied into *THE ANNALS*, (3d series, Vol. 2, pp. 531-9,) from that rare first volume of Iowa Supreme Court Reports of 1839. With no thought of disparaging the labors of his associates, lawyers and judges of later years seem to arrive at the conclusion that the bulk of the work performed by the Territorial Supreme Court came from the brain and pen of Charles Mason. He was a many-sided, exceedingly able, accomplished man. He entered West Point Military Academy July 1, 1825, and graduated four years later at the head of his class. The next man below him was Robert E. Lee, afterwards commander-in-chief of the Confederate armies. Joseph E. Johnston, O. M. Mitchell, the astronomer, and several others who afterwards rose to eminence, were his classmates. Immediately upon his graduation he was promoted to brevet second lieutenant in the United States engineers, and chosen principal assistant professor of engineering in the Military Academy. He continued teaching until December 31, 1831, when he resigned. The following year he was admitted to the bar at Newburg, N. Y. He was employed as editor of *The New York Evening Post* during the years 1835 and '36. He settled in Burlington, Iowa, then in Michigan territory, in 1837, where he became aide-

de-camp to Gov. Henry Dodge. He was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa Territory July 4, 1838, in which capacity he served until May 16, 1847. In the latter year he acted as attorney for the State of Iowa in the adjustment of its southern boundary. He became one of the three commissioners to draft an entire code of laws for the State in 1848. This is what is known as "The Code of 1851," from the fact that that was the year in which it was adopted. From this time forward until his death, February 22, 1882, at Burlington, he held various state and federal offices, in all of which he gave evidence of the most distinguished ability.

We present in this number of THE ANNALS the first of two articles from the pen of Mr. George H. Yewell, N. A., giving his recollections of Charles Mason. From his boyhood Judge Mason was perhaps his closest and most valued friend—certainly one upon whose friendship he could always rely. The reader will agree with us that the writing of these articles was a labor of love upon the part of Mr. Yewell. They become the more valuable because they show a side of Mr. Mason's character—graphically told in his own private letters—of which there has hitherto been little or no public knowledge. He realized instinctively that the struggling boy had real genius in the direction of art, and made it his business to seek his acquaintance, learn his ambitions, and give him early and substantial encouragement in the prosecution of his studies. Aside from such facts as bear upon his own affairs, Mr. Yewell makes reference to a cruel slander which was circulated against Judge Mason. This he entirely refutes. At the outbreak of the rebellion Judge Mason tendered his services to the government in any capacity in which he could be useful. Having been educated by the nation, and graduated with such honors, there would seem to have been little doubt that he was fitted for active service and a high command in the army of the Union. His offer not only received no attention, but he was denounced as a "copperhead," a man whose sympathies were against the

Union and with the Southern Confederacy. He had too much pride to beg government or state officials for a mere position. This slander, as Mr. Yewell shows, was wholly without foundation. Not only was Charles Mason as loyal to the government as any man in our State, but he had distinguished himself by his judicial protection of a colored man who would otherwise possibly have been given up to an alleged owner in Missouri. He had no love for "the peculiar institution," as slavery was called in those days. It is to the lasting honor of the jurisprudence of Iowa Territory that the first decision of its supreme court discharged the alleged fugitive slave, Ralph, "from all custody and constraint," and permitted him to go free. That decision was written by Judge Mason and will remain as long as Iowa has a history.

Readers of *THE ANNALS* will prize the information which Mr. Yewell's recollections present relative to his own career, though he tells the story very modestly. The interest of Judge Mason in the boy arose from seeing his crayon caricatures of men and events in Iowa City more than fifty years ago. Some of those drawings are still preserved on the walls of the State Historical Society, where they are valued beyond price. Mr. Yewell became a student under Thomas Hicks in New York, and later a pupil of Thomas Couture, in Paris. His early pictures included scenes of common outdoor life, with many Venetian and Egyptian subjects, the most of which have found their way into the leading art galleries, but for many years he has given his time to portrait painting, in which he has achieved a national reputation. The State of Iowa now owns nine of his portraits, all of which possess very great merit. These include the following names: Governors Chambers, Lowe and Kirkwood, Gen. G. M. Dodge, Hiram Price, Theodore S. Parvin, and Judges Charles Mason, John F. Dillon and George G. Wright. The Historical Department is in possession of four of his etchings and several of his original drawings.

The articles and references to Judge Mason which have

heretofore appeared in our pages were directed more especially to his career as a jurist. They are now admirably supplemented by these most interesting chapters by Mr. Yewell. Altogether they present a record of public services, of loyalty to country, and of warm sympathy for those needing encouraging words and assistance in the path of youthful effort, of which Iowans will always be proud.

TRANSPORTATION IN WAR TIMES.

In his article on "The Battle of Athens," which appeared in the last ANNALS, Gen. Cyrus Bussey referred to Mr. Joseph Shepard, assistant general manager of the western division of the United States Express, who aided him in his hurried distribution of arms. This reference brought a letter from Mr. Shepard from which we extract the following:

No doubt Gen. Bussey refers to a shipment from Keokuk to Council Bluffs, Iowa, for the Fourth Iowa Infantry. I had charge of this business from Keokuk, and at Eddyville the entire shipment was transferred to the Western Stage Company's coaches and transported through from there via Des Moines. The time consumed was from four to five days, and there were eighteen coach loads of arms. I was superintendent of our company during the war, and everything in Iowa that went by express was carried on the stage company's coaches. I remember Gen. Bussey very well, and remember making a trip with him across Iowa about that time, when he was on his way to join some regiment in the south.

This was a still later shipment of arms, which had been sent by Gen. J. C. Fremont to take the place of those which had been appropriated by Gen. Bussey to arm the companies along the border. Owing to the unsettled condition of that section of the country no effort was made by Gen. Bussey to have the arms returned. Col. D. B. Hillis, who succeeded him as aide-de-camp to the governor, took charge of them.

Mr. Shepard is still actively engaged in managing the large affairs of the U. S. Express Company at Chicago, though he is not far from 73 years of age. Forty years ago few pioneers in Iowa were more widely known. He could

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