



L. C. Stiles

# ANNALS OF IOWA

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## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

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### THE GREAT SEALS OF IOWA.

The leading article in this number illuminates the historical area surrounding the selection and evolution of designs of the Great Seals of Iowa, Territorial and State. It also illustrates the advantage of present day writers over those of the past in investigation of subjects involving the transactions of our early officials. It discloses the thoughtful and patriotic efforts of Theodore S. Parvin to awaken interest in the true meaning of pioneer state service, effort made in season and out of season by him as a state official, as professor in the State University, as the first State Librarian and as the founder and creator of the great Masonic Library at Cedar Rapids.

But Mr. Parvin was obliged to rely largely upon memory in the instance of the Great Seals, whereas, since his noble service ended, the original materials of which he evidently spoke from a recollection of many years, have been brought to light and are now at hand. We are the direct beneficiaries of Mr. Parvin and his group of preachers of—one might almost say martyrs to—the effort to save to the future the means of knowing through the State and other archives themselves, the exact facts of all important points in our history.

Mr. Cassius C. Stiles, who contributes this article on the Great Seals of Iowa, was born in Madison county, Iowa, October 17, 1860. He was educated in the common schools of Madison county and at Simpson College, Indianola. He served as township clerk of South township, Madison county, from 1883 to 1887, as deputy county auditor of Madison county from 1893 to 1896, county auditor from 1897 to 1902 and index and corporation clerk in the office of the Secretary of State of the State of Iowa from 1903 to 1907. His work

under the Executive Council in transferring to the Historical Building the deposits of archives, and of their classification and arrangement, began in 1907 and has continued to the present time. His life has been one of devotion and his service has been a training for his present work, a work that is the fruit of the foresight and of the very nature of such as Theodore S. Parvin and Charles Aldrich.

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#### MARKERS FOR SPIRIT LAKE VICTIMS.

Few chapters of frontier hardship excel in tragic interest the story of the group of circumstances attending the massacre of the first settlers about the Spirit and Okoboji lakes in northern Iowa. The larger and more spectacular phases of the matter have received attention in one way or another. In book and pamphlet, in granite and bronze they have been legibly and indelibly written. But on a visit August 5, 1914, with the surviving participants in the different parts of that affair, the writer was struck with the thought that at least one additional act of the living is still due the dead of that luckless band—to visibly note the exact places where the cabins stood and where the respective households were broken up or extinguished.

The average human heart is controlled by sympathy—say what we may of modern greed and selfishness—and in a company of twenty persons of the average age of thirty years standing with this little group of survivors on the ground at the different places where skulls had been crushed or bodies pierced, the common question was not “Why did these people come away from civilization to these shores?” but a closer thought, most intimate indeed, was “Why did these fathers and mothers bring their little ones to this spot?” “Why did the Gardners stay at this point?” The question was of the common human sympathy seeking the motive of the individual hero.

So, in addition to the beautiful monument which Iowa erected on the sightly shores of Okoboji, to commemorate the tragedy, is the need of simple tablets at the places where the

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