

I saw a man in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, offer to bet twenty-five dollars that he would take any man into a twenty-five acre field, tie up his eyes, turn him three times around in the center of the field, and then if the man taking the bet could touch the fence on either side, the twenty-five dollars were his; if not, he was to forfeit an equal sum. I saw a man take the bet on the above conditions. I went out, with a number of others, to see the curious experiment. The man was blindfolded near the center of the field, turned around three times, and then started; and he did not go ten steps straight forward until he commenced leaning to the left, and continued to do so until he made a complete circle. He went round and round, each time contracting the circle, until he came near the point from which he started. We had to roll or walk out of the way, or he would have tramped upon us. After nearly two hours' labor he gave up the bet, declaring that he could not reach the fence.

I have often thought if I had another such an opportunity, I would insist on the subject being left alone until he came to the center of the circle, to see if he would stand still, or commence enlarging, as he had contracted, the circle — what phenomenon mind would make the visible body assume, after it had finished the business of swinging around the circle.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF NORTH-WESTERN IOWA. ✓

BY N. ✓ LEVERING, GREENWOOD, MO.

(Continued from page 41.)

IN the latter part of August, 1861, the guards again became eager for the war-path, and made a campaign to Sioux Falls, returning by the way of Spirit Lake, and again we were detailed on duty at home, and had to forego the pleasure of another memorable campaign, for which the guards were somewhat notorious — their campaigns resulting in but little pain to the enemy.

We well remember the morning of their departure, as we stood in camp on the bluff in East Sioux City, and watched their military evolutions and grand display — a point in tactics in which our captain was not easily excelled. As they turned the point of the bluff, on their way out of the city, with drawn swords gleaming in the sunbeams, our gallant captain on his fiery war steed, that pranced, champed his bit, and pawed the earth, some rods in front, as if eager for the battle, our cup of admiration was full, and our mind reverted to the lines,—

“————— did you never train,
And feel that swelling of the heart you ne'er can feel again.”

And as the Sioux City brass band, at the head of the company, piped forth sweet strains of music, we were forcibly reminded of the lines of the poet,—

“Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast.”

This was a strategic movement on the part of our captain. As bullets had failed to subdue the savage, he was determined to try the force of music. It was evident, from the movements of the company, that a brilliant charge was to be made. We watched their movements with interest, expecting to see the charge of the “Light Brigade” eclipsed. Judge Hubbard stood near by, observing their movements with seemingly much pleasure, when our generous captain, in a *dry* and *husky* voice, cried out, “Halt! front face!” The order was obeyed with alacrity, as the braves evidently were *thirsting* for a glorious charge on Seltzer’s brewery, before which they were now drawn up in line of battle, when they charged upon sundry glasses of lager. After slacking their raging thirst, they soon disappeared up the valley of the Floyd — thirsting for the blood of their enemies, and each man feeling as though he could whip his weight in wild cats. When the judge witnessed the charge on the brewery, his countenance changed to that of scorn, as he said, “Confound them boys; this method of fighting Indians must be broken up.”

During this memorable campaign, a few casualties occurred to the company, some of which were from the warring elements, but none from the warring Indians. One night, while they were encamped a short distance from a bridge across a small stream, in a grove of timber, situated out on the prairie, there came up a terrible wind-storm, which caused a wonderful commotion among the tree-tops, wrenching the limbs therefrom and scattering them like straws upon the ground, many falling in the camp, and some large limbs passing directly through some of the tents where the soldiers were sleeping, doing no serious damage, however, to any one, save Jimmy Dormidy, a son of Erin, who was severely injured in his back and hip, which placed him on the sick list for several weeks after. When he was struck, his voice was heard above the howling storm, crying, "O, murther, boys I am killed! Carry me to the bridge; I'll be safe there." The storm soon subsided, when Jimmy was cared for, tents straightened up, and all sought repose again. Indeed, it was a miracle that more were not hurt.

It was during this campaign that J. M. White, a member of the company and a practical joker, sought to test the pluck of the company. It was after the moon had sunk to rest, and the twinkling stars alone shed their spark, and all were in quiet repose, save the sentinels, who paced their weary rounds, when White quietly crept out by the guard unobserved, to where the horses were feeding, where he found some blocks of wood, from four to six feet in length, which he set up on end; then, quickly stealing back into camp, he approached the sentinel, and, in a low voice, said, "Do you see those Indians?" at the same time pointing to the blocks that he had set up, which were scarcely discernible; "they are after our horses." The sentinel stretched his neck, his eyes dilating to their fullest capacity, until they resembled two fried eggs. After he was convinced beyond a doubt that he could see Indians, he called out, in a trembling voice, "Who comes there? Who comes there?"

Getting no response, his suspicions were now fully confirmed, and he fired. In a moment all was alarm and consternation in the camp. "Form! form!" was the order from the gallant captain. His braves were soon in battle array, when a charge (not so disastrous as at "Balaklava") was made — when, lo! it was not Mr. Lo, but Mr. Wood. White brought up the rear in this memorable charge, with side-splitting laughter.

John Currier, one of the pioneer settlers of Sioux City, and one of the leading members of the bar of the northwest, was the first and only man to spill American blood during this eventful campaign. The premature discharge of his navy caused him a severe flesh wound in the thigh (if I mistake not), which was carefully dressed by Lieutenant Dr. Smith, a very skillful surgeon, who acted in the two-fold capacity of surgeon and lieutenant. In a few days the 'squire resumed his duty in the ranks, and soon after he was honorably discharged, when he mounted the tripod as editor of the *Sioux City Register*, a democratic organ which had formerly been published by F. M. Zebaugh. Mr. C. displayed such ability as an editor as gave him additional notoriety.

Soon after the return of the guards, an order was received from the war department to raise a company of cavalry for the frontier service in northwestern Iowa. Active steps were at once taken, and in a few days the company was full. Quite a number of the guards joined it, Governor Kirkwood having issued an order to muster out the guards as soon as the new company was ready to be mustered in.

J. T. Copelan, a member of the guards, went to Spirit Lake, in Dickinson county, to raise some recruits for the new company, and on the 18th day of September started for Sioux City with thirty-five recruits. When about midway between Spirit Lake and Peterson, in Clay county, Copelan and a Mr. Kingman were riding some distance behind the main body (who were mostly in wagons, there not being more than half a dozen mounted men in the party, and but

about three who were armed), when they observed a horseman some distance from them, on the prairie. Knowing that there was no settlement near, and supposing, from the peculiar appearance of the person, that it was, in all probability, a straggling Indian, they at once determined to ascertain. Putting spurs to their horses, they were soon near enough to confirm their suspicions, when they suddenly found themselves surrounded, or nearly so, by a large party of Sioux warriors, who seemingly, like Macbeth's witches, "sprang up out of the earth," and were endeavoring to surround them and cut off their retreat, and, if possible, add two more scalps to their trophies of war. But their supposed victims quickly discerned their object, and, by a vigorous application of the spur, amid a shower of bullets, they made a safe retreat, but not without first emptying their revolvers at these vile miscreants of the prairie. They fell back toward the wagons, returning the fire of the savages the best they could, when the recruits in the wagons unhitched their horses, and, as many as could find horses to ride, came to their relief with such weapons as they were able to muster. The Indians, seeing the reinforcements, began to retreat. Copelan and Kingman now assumed the offensive, and, with their *light cavalry*, gave hot chase to the enemy, who were now making a precipitate retreat. During the fight an Indian whom Copelan supposed, from his dress and general appearance, to be a chief, detached himself from the main body and retreated in a different direction. Mr. C. singled him out and gave chase. He was mounted on his favorite, large, bay horse, "Aleck," as fine an animal as there was in northwestern Iowa. "Aleck" was too fleet for the Indian pony—every leap he made brought his brave rider nearer the enemy. The Indian passed over a bluff out of sight, and as Copelan reached the top of the bluff he discovered the Indian sitting upon his horse, facing him, with his gun leveled, taking aim, and awaiting his arrival. Our hero at a glance discovered the dilemma in which he was so unexpectedly placed, and

divining the Indian's intent, he threw himself forward on "Aleck's" neck, who had not yet slacked his pace, when the enemy's ball whistled harmlessly by. Copelan returned the fire with his revolver, but without effect. The chase was kept up for several miles, with occasional exchange of shots, when, chiefly for want of ammunition, the pursuit was abandoned.

On their arrival at Sioux City, the guards were disbanded. They now were, like the army of Alexander or the guards of Napoleon, numbered among the things that once were. Their many memorable campaigns, strategic movements, and brilliant charges on Seltzer's brewery, gave them a notoriety and fame that *thirsty heroes* might well envy. No more was to be heard the clarion voice of our gallant captain, ringing forth those beautiful words that *charged* to the bottom of every soldier's heart — "Gentlemen, officers, and fellow-soldiers: I am proud to command such a company;" but this beautiful sentiment shall have an abiding place in the secret chambers of our heart until it shall cease to beat. In closing this brief sketch of the gallant guards, I will say, in all candor and justice to officers and soldiers, not a man of them ever faltered when duty called, and, so far as their courage was tested, they proved themselves as brave as Spartans.

The new company now organized by the election of the following officers: A. J. Millard, captain; J. A. Sayers, first lieutenant; J. T. Copelan, second lieutenant; S. H. Cassidy, orderly sergeant. They were soon mustered in and installed as "Uncle Samuel's boys," and were designated as the "Sioux City Cavalry," with headquarters at Sioux City. The company was stationed in squads, at different points — Sioux City, Cherokee, Peterson, and Spirit Lake being the principal places — for the protection of the settlers, who had been much annoyed by the depredations of the Indians.

This additional guarantee of safety seemed to infuse new life into our frontier, and progress again resumed her onward

march. At the October election of this year (1861), A. Pen-
dleton (heretofore spoken of) was elected to the legislature
by a handsome majority; N. Levering was, without opposi-
tion, elected county judge of Woodbury county, to succeed
J. P. Allison; T. J. Stone, treasurer and recorder, as suc-
cessor of C. E. Hedge; J. N. Field, clerk of the court, as
successor of C. B. Rustin; and F. J. Lambert, sheriff, as
successor of G. L. Tacket. The election over, excitement
subsided, peace and quiet reigned until the following spring,
when Mr. Lo again resumed the war path, and, despite the
vigilance of the Sioux City Cavalry, he would occasionally
steal in and commit some depredations.

It was during this summer that the Sioux attacked some
settlers on James river, in Dakota territory. The alarm
spread as if upon the wings of the wind, swelling in atrocity
as it went. Some of the timid settlers, not waiting to inves-
tigate the extent of the depredations, mounted their horses
and fled—some to Yankton and some to Sioux City—
spreading alarm and consternation among the people on
their way, by reporting a large body of Indians advancing
upon them, and laying waste all before them. This created
such alarm that many made a precipitate flight, leaving all
behind, and thinking only of dear life. Some ladies leaped
from their beds, and, without stopping to dress, rushed out
in their night clothes to the open prairie, where they wan-
dered for a day or two, without food or shelter, before they
found their way to a settlement. The greatest consterna-
tion prevailed. Those who fled to Yankton hastily en-
trenched themselves by throwing up temporary breast-
works and making such other means of defence as circum-
stances would permit. Many fled to Sioux City, and some,
not deeming it safe to stop there, went on eastward, and
perhaps are yet running.

The excitement in Sioux City ran high. Many of the
citizens packed their trunks, and were ready to leave at one
side of the city as the Indians should enter the other. The
greatest confusion prevailed, and a general stampede seemed

inevitable. On Saturday a meeting of the citizens was called at Cassady's hall, for the purpose of devising ways and means for the protection of the city against the invading foe, who were hourly expected by many. The hall was crowded to overflowing. Judge P. Bliss, of the United States Court of Dakota territory, was called to the chair, and the other necessary officers were chosen. Various plans and suggestions were discussed for the preservation of the citizens and safety of the town. One suggested that a huge raft be constructed, on which should be placed the women and children and sent down the river, and the men remain and fight it out; another proposed that a block house be built on the top of Prospect Hill and one on the point of the bluff in East Sioux City, while some were for throwing up breast-works around the city, and others were for erecting a fort. Such was the confusion of ideas and notions, that one was reminded of the building of the tower of Babel. It was finally decided to appoint a committee, whose duty it should be to devise some means of defence and take charge of the construction of the same. We do not now remember the names of but two of that committee — Dr. W. R. Smith and N. C. Hudson. They met, canvassed the grave situation hastily, not having much time to digest plans amid the whirl of excitement, and they decided to erect a fort. The site selected was, as near as I can now remember, at the corner of Third and Nebraska streets, near the river. About three acres was to be inclosed by a ditch four feet wide at the top, two feet at the bottom, and four feet deep, and on the embankment thrown up was to be placed posts eight feet long and eight inches wide, and boarded up on each side with inch boards, and filled between with dirt, beat down firmly. Block houses were to be built at the corners, so as to rake the ditches. This was the plan agreed upon, and every able-bodied man in the city was notified to be on the ground next morning (Sabbath), armed with the necessary tools to complete the work. Sunday morning came, and with it came the citizens, armed with all the requisite tools,

shovels, spades, axes, &c. A certain number of feet were assigned to each man to dig. Spades and shovels were plied freely to the bosom of Mother Earth, and an embankment began to loom up, while the block houses soon towered up, as if to bid defiance to an invading foe. The city fathers assembled early on Sunday morning for deliberation, and voted an appropriation of \$300 for the defence of the city. All worked with a will; jokes were freely cracked as the work went bravely on. A wag suggested that a ditch be extended to the river and let in the water around the fort, and then place on it a line of gunboats. The men worked bravely on that day; the next day the interest in the work of defence had very much abated, there being but few laborers; and on the third day there was an entire abatement, no one putting in an appearance, and the work not more than half completed — showing that another stampede was necessary to complete it.

Mr. Lo did not call around for our scalps, and the frowning walls of our fort stood there, a monument of a big scare. The writer of this sketch afterwards sold out the fort, by order of the city council.

It was soon ascertained that the alarm was false, and the settlers began to return and resume their occupations. In November of that year (1862) Governor Kirkwood ordered a border brigade to be raised, consisting of two or more companies, two of which were to be stationed at Correctionville, on the Little Sioux river, and at Estherville, on the Des Moines river. J. M. White, of the "Frontier Guard" notoriety, at once raised a company in Woodbury and Monona counties, of which he was chosen captain; C. B. Rustin, first lieutenant; — Atkins (of Monona county), second lieutenant; and Dr. Griffin, orderly sergeant. A Capt. Ingram (if I mistake not), of Polk county, raised a company. Ingersoll, of Des Moines, was appointed colonel by the governor, and Lieut. J. M. Sawyers, of the Sioux City Cavalry, lieutenant colonel, who took command of what was designated as the "Northern Border Brigade." Capt. White was sta-

tioned with headquarters at Correctionville, where a fort was built and called Fort White, in honor of the commander. Capt. White had command of the posts at Cherokee, in Cherokee county, and Peterson, in Clay county, at which points block houses were built. Capt. Ingram was stationed with headquarters at Estherville, where a very neat and substantial fort was built. He commanded the post at Spirit Lake, where a portion of his company was stationed, occupying the two-story brick court house, which was surrounded with pickets, as their quarters, and which had been built by the Sioux City Cavalry, prior to the organization of the Border Brigade.

In September of this year the writer of this sketch was commissioned, by Governor Kirkwood, a commissioner to take the vote of all the troops in Northwestern Iowa at the October election. I will here relate a little incident that occurred while visiting the different posts in the line of our duty. I had not proceeded far on my way when I was overhauled by the mail carrier from Sioux City to Spirit Lake, on his way to the latter place with the United States mail.

"Hello!" he said, as he drove up; "where are you going?"

"To Spirit Lake and intermediate points," I replied.

"Good," said he. "I would like your company, as it is long and lonely road; and, besides, there is danger of them cussed Indians taking a fellow's scalp," he added.

"All right," I said; "I'll accompany you."

He was a jolly old tar, who had for many long years been tossed on the high seas, and whose blooming proboscis indicated that much of the "critter" had been tossed beneath it. I observed a ten-gallon keg in his buggy.

"What is that?" I asked.

"The devil caged," he answered.

"Correct; but look out that he doesn't give you the slip before you get through," I added.

"You see," said he, "there is to be an election at the Lake in a few days, and old Thomas, the landlord there, wants this whisky for the occasion."

As we were thus talking, A. Paine and one or two others, members of the Sioux City Cavalry, drove up. They were on their way to Peterson with a mule team, loaded with rations for that post.

Old Tar now pulled up, and drew out a two-gallon jug from under his buggy seat and dexterously brought the mouth of the jug in contact with his own; after which he passed it to Paine, saying, "Here, boys, take a snort." They all "snorted," soon after which they became very communicative, and evinced much friendship for Old Tar. We had not gone far when Paine said:—

"Old Tar, s'pose you put your keg in my wagon, and I will get in and ride with you."

"All right," said Old Tar.

After the exchange, a lively drive was made, and we arrived at Cherokee just at night, where we stopped for supper. Supper over, I admonished Old Tar, who was now about "three sheets in the wind," that we should be off.

"Come, boys, let's spread sail and scud out," said Old Tar.

Paine and his comrades, who were by this time feeling overjoyful, said:—

"Drive on, old cuss; we'll come when we are ready."

Leaving the boys in their revelry, we drove on. We had gone two or three miles, when Old Tar began to think of his whisky that he had left behind, and stopped to listen for their coming. Again he started and again he stopped, declaring that he would go no farther until they came up. After waiting some minutes, we heard the rattle of the wagon and the Bacchanalian shouts and songs of the boys rolling out across the broad prairie. On they came, under the whip and on the jump. As they came up, Old Tar hailed them, but it was of no use. On they flew, making the prairie ring with their songs. Old Tar jumped into his buggy and followed as fast as his bony horse could carry him, but it was of no use, for he was soon left to snuff his rot-gut afar off. We arrived at Peterson about twelve

o'clock that night. Old Tar drove up to Paine's wagon, which stood a short distance from the soldiers' quarters, and made a hasty search for his keg, which was nowhere to be found. Paine (who had just received a kick on his leg by a mule, which disabled him and placed him on the sick list for several weeks) came hobbling by.

"Where is my whisky?" shouted Old Tar in an excited manner.

"I don't know," said Paine. "You see," he added, "as we came down the bluff on t'other side of the river, the mules got to kicking like the d—l, and I s'pose it must have rolled out, as I could not hold them."

Off ran Old Tar to the barracks, with his suspicions now doubly aroused. He made a hurried and eager search, inquiring of what few soldiers were yet up, but without success. He finally bethought himself of the two-gallon jug in his buggy, and rushed back like a quarter-house, and found that his jug had followed the keg. This was more than his poor, whisky-scorched soul could stand. A terrible drouth was now inevitable, and he groaned in the *spirits*, he raved, he cursed, he swore, until a late hour in the morning, when he yielded to the entreaties of Morpheus, and retired to his dreamy couch.

At the peep of day he was up and renewed his search, with no better success, and without awakening the sympathy of any one in his behalf. I mounted my horse and rode on, leaving Old Tar making a vigorous search for his lost spirits. I had gone about two miles, when I heard some one calling out "Stop! stop!" On looking around, I saw Old Tar coming as if his Satanic majesty was driving him. I halted, when he came up, plying the gad vigorously to the bony frame of his horse. In an excited manner, and with eyes protruding like two knots on a log, he said:—

"I found my whisky—them cusses stole it! You see," he continued, "just as I was starting, they invited me to drink with them, and, as I was as dry as a mackerel, I

couldn't refuse; and just as soon as I tasted it I knew it was my whisky."

I could not express any sympathy for him, as I never had any for the traffic.

On my return, the boys at Peterson were very commuricative upon the subject, and wished to know when Old Tar would pass that way again with liquor, as they were getting dry again. They had secreted the whisky in a patch of weeds near the barracks, and when Old Tar had retired to rest they brought it into camp and apportioned it out—filling each man's canteen, and then hid the keg and jug in a manger of one of their stables, covering it over with hay. This was the last time that any one attempted to carry intoxicating liquors in quantity along that line of military posts while soldiers were stationed there.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS IN THE
STATE OF IOWA.

BY LYSANDER W. BABBITT, COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA.

(Continued from page 656, Vol. IX.)

WEDNESDAY EVENING, December 6th, 1848.

CAUCUS met pursuant to adjournment—Mr. Corse in the chair, and L. W. Babbitt secretary.

The roll being called, all the members answered to their names.

Mr. Bradley moved that an informal ballot be taken for candidates for supreme judges, and that the person having the highest number of votes and being a majority of all the votes cast, be the candidate for chief justice.

Mr. Harbor moved to amend by striking out all after the word "judges." Which motion was lost, and the original motion was agreed to.

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