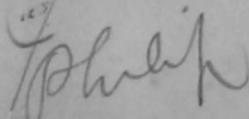


EARLY MEN AND EARLY DAYS RECALLED.

BY HAWKINS TAYLOR, WASHINGTON, D. C.

I HAVE been greatly disappointed at not getting a copy of the Journal of the first Iowa Legislature that I might be able to write up that session for the benefit of the legislature now just meeting. It might have done them good. But I fail to get the Journal. If any man in Iowa will send me a copy of that Journal I will agree to furnish him a set of *Congressional Globes* — eleven volumes, and averaging more than five thousand pages each.

I wonder that a Negus or some other lawyer of the "Old Settlers" does not give the list and "items" of the bar of the days of its minority as a territory. It certainly should be done, and when done I am greatly mistaken if it is not shown that while the state has outstripped all of the other states in almost all else, so far as the bar of the state is concerned, as a whole it is not up to what it was during the territorial days, in legal ability or brilliancy of intellect. I confess to a wonderful "hankering" for the Old Settlers. In Lee county there were Judges Eno, Viele, Reid, Johnston, Rich and Runes, Daniel F. Miller, George H. Williams, now Attorney General, Judge Beck, of the Supreme Court, and Espy. In Burlington, Grimes and Starr, David Rorer, Phelps, Milton F. Browning J. C. Hall, now living in that city; then J. C. Breckenridge, since vice-president and candidate for president of the United States, and rebel general, and his partner, Bullock, Hugins, and Mills, men of great brilliancy. Mills was killed in the charge on the City of Mexico, during the Mexican war. Francis S. Keys, Jr., afterwards killed by Sickles; Boody, now a man of position in California; J. H. Claymud, brilliant, but ruined himself by dissipation, is now dead; H. W. Starr, Judge Stockton, Judge Mason, who was then on the bench, Springer and



Thurston, at Wapello, Wright and Knapp, Howell and Cowles, Capt. Hall, Gustus C. Hall, and probably others that might be named in these three counties. I do not think they could be duplicated now in the same counties, notwithstanding the present high standing of the present bar of these counties.

The first two lawyers in Fort Madison were Philip Viele and Henry Eno, both from the State of New York, the one from the City of Troy, the other from New York City, both men of ability, but in manners very different. Judge Viele never had a peer in polished politeness, while Judge Eno was rather retiring and austere in manner — always a great favorite with those who knew him best. It was said that he dissipated badly before he left New York, but was strictly temperate, with few exceptions, in Iowa. He, many years since, removed to California, and was at one time candidate for Lieut. Governor, but was on the ticket that was defeated. While a member of the Iowa Legislature, in the winter of 1838-9, Judge Eno sent me the following draft of memorial:—

“ To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled : — The memorial of the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Iowa in General Assembly met, most respectfully represents —

“ That they are desirous of calling the attention of Congress to the expediency of constructing a railroad from the town of Fort Madison, on the Mississippi river, by the way of the town of West Point to the Indian boundary line at or near where it crosses the Des Moines river, a distance of about sixty-five miles.

“ The country through which it would pass being alternate prairie and woodland, affords, from the make of the ground, an opportunity of constructing a railroad at but a very trifling expense compared with many in different parts of the United States, or with the good that would result from it.

“Its great value and importance to the country through which it would pass is deemed unnecessary to detail at length. It would afford a channel through which the products of the industry of an enterprising, hardy, and numerous population would be sent to the Mississippi. It would enhance value of the lands through which it would run, and afford a quick and ready communication over a fertile country through which there are now no good roads. It would give additional value to government lands, as its course must be through several large prairies which will not be otherwise settled for many years; and taking into consideration the enhanced value of government lands, and the growing value of those lands which at present are of no value, the constructing of the railroad prayed for would subtract little or nothing from the revenues of the general government.

“But, aside from the great and manifest utility to the whole country through which the road would pass, your memorialists deem it of paramount importance to provide in time of peace for the safety and defense of the thousands of American citizens who are now residing in a land contiguous to large and numerous bodies of Indians.

“As a military road by means of which soldiers, provisions, and munitions of war could be sent from the Mississippi river at the commencement of hostilities on the part of the Indians, to a section of country lying on the Des Moines river, where, in all probability, they may be needed, the great importance of the road will be manifest to the most superficial observer. It would facilitate the supplying and relief of a military post now erecting by government at or near the Raccoon Forks of the Des Moines river, and would contribute materially in keeping the Indians in awe, and securing the peace and tranquility of our frontier. Your memorialists, therefore, pray for the appointment of an engineer to survey the above route, and for such a donation of public land as will enable the Territory of Iowa to complete the work.”

I think it is worth preserving.

The third lawyer was Alfred Ritch, the brightest intellect that I think I ever met. His history is that of sadness, and one that I dislike to contemplate, and never do so without deep sorrow. We were about the same age, both from Kentucky, both Whigs, and devoted personal friends. Probably to no living man did he ever more completely unbosom himself than to me. I loved him, and fairly worshiped his ability. Rich sprang from a poor and obscure family, but fell in the way, when a boy, of the gifted but dissipated W. W. Southworth, at one time in Congress, from Covington, Kentucky. With him, Rich studied law, and during the time gained the affections of the accomplished and only daughter of an ignorant landed rich man who would not give his consent to the match, because of the poverty of Rich. Rich assured the father that if he would give him his daughter he would live and work to give her daughter a position worthy of the father's wealth and the daughter's merits. The old man tauntingly told him, "Go to Congress, and you may have my daughter." The girl was ready to surrender her father and her fortune, but Rich said, "No, I will go to Congress and then claim you." Rich went to Texas but he met there a class of men that he could have no sympathy with, and started back to Kentucky, but the steamboat froze up near Shawneetown, Ill., when Rich determined to go to Burlington, Iowa, and started on foot with less than five dollars in his pocket. When he got to Equality, the home of the gifted Jeff. Gatewood, who, like so many of the noble men of Illinois, killed himself by drink, he went into a grocery to buy some cheese and crackers for his dinner. Gatewood and several others of his chums happened to be in the room, drinking. Rich rested while he ate his cheese and crackers, when he started. When he started, Gatewood followed and went with him more than two miles, trying to find out who he was and what he wanted, and offering him any assistance that he needed in any way. Rich would not tell him his name nor calling. Poor, noble Gatewood saw gifted poverty and distress and wanted

to give relief, but Rich was too proud to accept assistance. In the middle of the winter Rich got to Fort Madison, and put up at Mrs. Krupp's tavern — his last penny gone, and he one day's journey from his place of destination. In the morning, too proud to acknowledge his poverty, he inquired for work, and took a contract to split rails. He had no fit clothing for that climate at that season of the year, and was suffering from ague and fever, contracted in the south. He made a few hundred rails, but some friends took an interest and got him a little school, where he had been teaching a few weeks when a desperate rough, an article very common at that time along the rapids, was arrested at Montrose, for assault and battery with intent to kill, and brought to Fort Madison for trial. Both the Fort Madison lawyers were out of town and the prosecutors brought with them their lawyer — Henry Austin, now of Peoria, Ill. The defendant and his friends were in great tribulation for a lawyer. At dinner, Rich heard of their trouble, and quietly said he would defend him. That was the first intimation that he was a lawyer. At the trial he made a most brilliant and successful defense, creating a perfect furore in his behalf. At that time Fort Madison made large pretensions to be the leading town in the territory, and there was then from twenty to thirty of the most fascinating, polished gentlemen living there that I ever knew, most of them Kentuckians, the others from Philadelphia. At the head of this set was Gen. J. Brown. Among the number were Dr. Morris, of Philadelphia, a near descendant of the great financier of that name, and Col. J. A. Clark. Almost all of these gifted men now fill drunkard's graves. Why does God let men live to make and sell liquor? This brilliant set of men took possession of Rich at once, after this speech — a set of men that few young men escaped safely, and poor, gifted Rich was not an exception. In 1839 Rich was elected to the legislature by a large majority, and in 1840 he was nominated as the Whig candidate for delegate to Congress. He made a noble fight and ran several hundred votes ahead of

the party, but was beaten by Gen. A. C. Dodge, by all odds the most popular man at that day of his party. During Rich's canvass a rather amusing incident occurred in Jefferson county, a large part of which was then Indian territory. Dick Quinton lived on the Indian border, on Walnut creek; he had a large field of corn, but no fence, except a pack of dogs. As Rich rode up, the dogs attacked him, but Dick acted as peace-maker. Rich inquired the news. Dick did not know Rich's name, but directly commenced denouncing the Whig candidate. When he got through, Rich inquired where he got all the information just communicated. Dick said that he got it from the *Burlington Gazette*. Rich said, "A truthful paper," and rode off without telling his name. He did not get Dick's vote. This defeat had a powerful effect upon him. It left him poorer than when he commenced the canvass, although he was then poor enough; but it seemed to leave him hopeless. He showed me many letters from the young lady to whom he was engaged, urging their marriage, and getting the father's consent afterward. If the father had been poor Rich would have gladly acceded to the terms, but the father was a rich, purse-proud man, and poor Rich had not a single quality calculated to save money. He was the poor man's friend. No client had to go without a defense in court, because of his poverty, when Rich was at hand. He rarely collected a fee unless voluntarily paid. No man ever knew him to do an unmanly or mean thing. He was in all things honor itself. He was naturally despondent and his unfortunate position increased that despondency, which tended to make him join his companions in a night to kill time. This naturally wore upon a constitution naturally delicate, until consumption ended his days in early spring of 1842. Thus ended one of the noblest and brightest intellects of the Early Settlers of Iowa. A noble spirit and sad ending. Of all his brilliant "set," few now live, and all that do have left the state. General Brown, the head of the party, has time and time again, with tears rolling down his cheeks, condemned himself for his

worse than wasted life in being the ruin of all his noblest and best friends. He truly said that few young men ever escaped his friendship. In these moods he would, in the most touching and melting manner say that the only unpardonable offence that he had committed was the destruction of his friends — his noble, trusting, generous friends. In later years he would say, counting them over, score upon score, winding up in the very depths of despair, "They are all gone, gone; I am still left." He is now gone too. All gone. Where are they now? If they are not in the good land, where is the whisky maker and whisky seller who ruined them and millions upon millions besides? The legislators who make laws to punish crime, but make laws to protect the man who promotes crime, where are they?

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF NORTH-
WESTERN IOWA.

BY N. LEVERING, GREENWOOD, MO.

(Continued from page 708, volume 9.)

THE "little unpleasantness" with the "Lo family," at Correctionville, spread as if on the wings of the wind. The whole country for miles around was in a blaze of excitement. The guards especially, were burning to emulate the deeds of fallen heroes. "They smelt the battle afar off." The news spread rapidly — like a snowball rolling down the mountain's side, the farther it rolls the more it accumulates. The most exaggerated reports of the affair were soon after read in the New York journals. The risibles of the guards were uncontrollable when they read these reports, to see how easy it was to become a hero.

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