

EARLY HISTORICAL SKETCH OF IOWA.

TO say nothing of the title to the soil of Iowa that may once have vested in the natives who claimed and occupied it, it is a matter of some interest to glance at the various changes of ownership and jurisdiction through which it has passed within the time of our historical period:

1. It belonged to France, with other territory belonging to our national domain.

2. In 1763, with other territory, it was ceded to Spain.

3. October 1, 1800, it was ceded, with other territory, from Spain back to France.

4. April 30, 1803, it was ceded, with other territory, by France to the United States.

5. October 31, 1803, a temporary government was authorized by Congress for the newly acquired territory.

6. October 1, 1804, it was included in the "District of Louisiana," and placed under the jurisdiction of the territorial government of Indiana.

7. July 4, 1805, it was included as a part of the "Territory of Louisiana," then organized with a separate territorial government.

8. June 4, 1812, it was embraced in what was then made the "Territory of Missouri."

9. June 28, 1834, it became part of the "Territory of Michigan."

10. July 3, 1836, it was included as a part of the newly organized "Territory of Wisconsin."

12. July 12, 1838, it was included in, and constituted a part of, the newly organized "Territory of Iowa."

12. December 28, 1846, it was admitted into the Union as a State.

The greater portion of the country embraced within the limits of Iowa was once occupied by a tribe, or nation, of Indians, known in history as the Iowas (or Ioways), who

for many years maintained almost a constant warfare with the Sioux, a powerful rival, who lived to the north of them. The Iowas were originally the Pau-hoo-chee tribe, and lived in the region of the lakes to the north-east, but nearly one hundred and eighty years ago they followed their chief, Mou-hau-gaw, to the banks of the Mississippi river, and crossing over, settled on the west bank of Iowa river, near its mouth, and there built a village. They called the river on which they established their seat of empire, Ne-o-ho-nee, or the "Master of Rivers." For some years they prospered and multiplied, but the Sioux began to envy them the prosperity which they enjoyed, and with no good intentions came down to visit them. Sending to Mau-haw-gaw the pipe of peace, with an invitation to join them in a dog feast, they made great profession of friendship. The Iowa chief, having confidence in their protestations of good feeling, accepted the invitation. In the midst of the feast the perfidious Sioux suddenly attacked and killed him. This outrage was never forgiven by the Iowas.

One of the most noted chiefs of the Iowas was Mahaskah (White Cloud), a descendent of Mau-haw-gaw. He led his warriors in eighteen battles against the Sioux on the north, and the Osages on the south, and never failed to achieve a victory. He made his home on the Des Moines river, about one hundred miles above the mouth, and must have been something of a Mormon, for it is said he had seven wives. In 1824, he was one of a party of chiefs who visited Washington. He left his home on the Des Moines to go down the river to join his party, and when near where the city of Keokuk is now located, he stopped to prepare and eat his venison. He had just commenced his meal when some one struck him on the back. Turning round, he was surprised to see one of his wives, Rant-che-wai-me (Female Flying Pigeon), standing with an uplifted tomahawk in her hand. She accosted him with—"Am I your wife? Are you my husband? If so, I will go with you to Maw-he-hum-ne-che (the American big house) and see and

shake the hand of In-co-ho-nee," meaning the Great Father, as they called the President. Mahaskah answered—"Yes, you are my wife; I am your husband; I have been a long time from you; I am glad to see you; you are my pretty wife, and a brave man always loves to see a pretty woman." Mahaskah went on to Washington, accompanied by his "pretty wife," Rant-che-wai-me, who received many presents, but saw many things of which she disapproved. When she returned she assembled the matrons and maidens of the tribe, and warned them against the vices and follies of their white sisters. This good Indian woman was killed by being accidentally thrown from her horse some time after her return from Washington. In 1834, Mahaskah was also killed, about sixty miles from his home, on the Nodaway, by an enemy who took a cowardly advantage of him. At the time of his death he was about fifty years of age. After his death all his surviving wives went into mourning and poverty, according to the custom of the tribe, except one named Mis-so-rah-tar-ra-haw (Female deer that bounds over the prairie), who refused to the end of her life to be comforted, saying that her husband "was a great brave, and was killed by dogs," meaning low, vulgar fellows.

Soon after the death of Mahaskah, his son, of the same name, at the age of twenty-four years, became the chief of the Iowas. His mother was Rant-che-wai-me, whose tragic death is mentioned above. He also visited Washington in the winter of 1836-7, for the purpose of obtaining redress for injustice which he claimed had been done to his people by the government, in failing to keep intruders from their lands, and in disregarding other stipulations of the treaty made with his father in 1825.

The Iowas, next to the Sioux, were once the most numerous and powerful of all the tribes between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. But before leaving the "Beautiful Land" to join their fortunes with other remnants of their race beyond the Missouri, they were reduced by wars,

whisky, and small-pox, to about one thousand three hundred souls.

It must have been about the year 1824 when the Sacs and Foxes, who had previously inhabited the country on Rock river, in the present state of Illinois, began to make encroachments upon the Iowas, under the renowned chief, Black Hawk. In a great battle fought on the east bank of the Des Moines river, near the present village of Iowaville, in Davis county, the Iowas were vanquished, and the Sacs and Foxes took possession of their hunting grounds. Then the Iowas sullenly moved towards the west, and finally passed beyond the Missouri. When civilization began to dawn along our eastern border, the Sacs and Foxes were the occupants of the soil in all the eastern and southern portions of the territory, while the warlike Sioux held undisputed possession of the northern portion, about the head waters of the Des Moines and the lakes. After the close of the "Black Hawk war," in 1833, the power of Black Hawk waned, and his rival, Keokuk, who had favored peace with the whites, was recognized as chief of his nation. Many of the pioneer settlers of Iowa still remember him and his subordinates, Wapello, Appanoose, Kishkekosh, Pashepahaw, and Hard Fish. Black Hawk died in October, 1838, on the Des Moines river, near the scene of his conquest over the Iowas.

Perhaps the first white man who ever had the pleasure of beholding this "Beautiful Land," was Father Louis Hennepin, a Franciscan priest, who, as early as 1680, with two fur traders, ascended the Mississippi as far as the Falls of St. Anthony, which he so named. We have, however, less authentic accounts of one or two other *voyageurs* prior to this date. Soon after this the French government took formal possession of all this undefined and unknown region, and established trading posts at several points. But for one hundred and fifty years after this, the country remained in the hands of the natives, and almost unknown to our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, who were laying the foundations of an

empire along the Atlantic sea-board. On the 22d of September, 1788, a Frenchman named Julien Dubuque, who had an Indian wife, made a purchase from the Indians, and engaged in mining and trading at the place where the important city that bears his name is now located. Others afterward engaged in mining lead at the same place, forming the nucleus of the first white settlement within the limits of Iowa. On the 30th of March, 1799, Louis Honori obtained permission from the Spanish government to establish himself at the head of the "rapids of the river Des Moines," for the purpose of trading with the Indians. This place was subsequently known as Montrose, and is situated a short distance above Keokuk. Honori built houses, planted an orchard, and cultivated a tract of land. This was the next white settlement in Iowa, if indeed that can be called a settlement, which was only a grant for the purpose of trading with the Indians.

In 1832, immediately after what is known as the "Black Hawk purchase," being the first purchase of lands from Indians in Iowa, a few white persons began to settle on the west side of the Mississippi. A military post was established at Montrose, and the place was called "Fort Des Moines." It remained a military post until 1837, when the troops were removed to Fort Leavenworth. Traces of the primitive occupancy of Iowa soil at this point by the white man are still visible, and there are those who remember the old apple trees at Montrose, planted by Honori seventy years ago.

Iowa remained from 1836 to 1846 a separate territory, during which time the office of governor was held by Robert Lucas, John Chambers, and James Clarke. Congress made provision, by an act approved March 3d, 1845, for its admission into the Union as a state, with boundaries quite at variance with those finally established. By this law the state was to extend north to the parallel of latitude passing through the Mankato, or Blue Earth river, in the present state of Minnesota, and west to the meridian of 17° 30'

west from Washington. This western boundary would very nearly correspond to the line between the present counties of Ringgold and Taylor, and its adoption would have deprived our state of all that fertile portion denominated the "Missouri Slope." In October, 1844, a constitutional convention had been held at Iowa City, and a constitution framed which embraced boundaries far more extensive than those of the present state, taking in much of the southern portion of the present state of Minnesota. The people of the territory disapproved of the reduction of these boundaries by Congress, and at the election held August 4, 1845, rejected the constitution—the vote being seven thousand two hundred and thirty-five for, and seven thousand six hundred and fifty-six against it. In 1846, Congress proposed the present boundary lines, and another constitutional convention convened at Iowa City, on the 4th of May of this year. A session of fifteen days resulted in the framing of the constitution, which was sanctioned by the people at an election held August 3, 1846—the popular vote this time being nine thousand four hundred and ninety-two for, and nine thousand and thirty-six against the constitution. This constitution was agreed to by Congress, and on the 28th of December of the same year, Iowa was admitted into the Union as a sovereign state.

GILMAN FOLSOM.

FROM the Iowa City *State Press* we copy the following sketch of the life of the late Gilman Folsom, who died at his residence, near Iowa City, July 15, 1872:—

"At three o'clock on last Monday occurred the death of one of the first of our pioneer settlers, and one who, in ability and acquirements, was foremost of our citizens,—Hon. Gilman Folsom. He was born at Dorchester, New

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