

tion which was fast fading out of existence. That Judge Mason so early decided that a slave brought into Iowa from that moment became a free man—that he favored the amplest protection of women in the ownership of property—are facts which are now for the first time brought to the notice of this later generation and made matters of permanent record. We are glad to present an excellent portrait of Judge Mason from a photograph of this fine painting, which is believed to be one of Mr. Yewell's best works. A facsimile of the original oath of office sworn and subscribed by Judge Mason, before W. B. Conway, Secretary of Iowa Territory, is also given. This document would seem to be in the hand-writing of Mr. Conway, for such things as blanks for that purpose were not in existence at that time in Iowa Territory.

NAMING FIFTY COUNTIES.

An abstract of an interesting paper read by Hon. P. M. Casady, at the meeting of the Pioneer Law-makers of Iowa, February 15, 1894, giving his recollections of the action of the Legislature of 1850-51 in naming fifty Iowa counties, will be found in this number of THE ANNALS. Mr. Casady was at that time a State Senator, his district comprising the counties of Polk, Dallas, Jasper, Marshall, Story, Boone, Warren and Madison. The bill naming the counties was for the most part considered in committee of the whole, of which action no record appears. It made, when complete, just fifty sections, a county being named and its boundaries defined in each. It was approved on the 15th day of January, 1851, by Governor Stephen Hempstead. The counties of Hamilton, Webster, Calhoun and Woodbury were at that time respectively named, Risley, Yell, Fox and Wahkaw, but changed by

acts of later legislatures. The three northern tiers of townships of the present county of Kossuth bore the name of Bancroft. The territory of Bancroft county was subsequently added to Kossuth. Before this session of the Legislature the naming of counties had proceeded more slowly. But the Legislature of 1850-51 finished the work, so that from that time, with but few changes, the map of Iowa has remained with regard to the names and boundaries of counties much as it appears to-day. Yell was changed to Webster and Risley added to it. At the session of 1856 the territory which had borne the name of Risley was created into a new county and named Hamilton, in honor of Honorable W. W. Hamilton of Dubuque county, who was that winter President of the State Senate, there being at that time no such officer as Lieutenant-Governor. The statement has been occasionally published that this county was so named in honor of Alexander Hamilton. This is an error, as the writer learned not only from Honorable W. W. Hamilton himself, but from other Senators and Representatives in the General Assembly of 1856—the last held in Iowa City. At the date of this publication several gentlemen are still living who were interested in the action of the Legislature upon the bill creating Hamilton county, all of whom understand the matter precisely as we have set it forth.

MAJOR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

We are again fortunate in being able to publish an excellent article of permanent interest from the pen of Ex-Governor Carpenter, in his just tribute to the life and public services of Major William Williams, who commanded the Spirit Lake Expedition of 1857. Gradually, after the lapse of thirty-five years, justice is being done to the memory of that heroic band who flew to arms in

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.