


but riding nights as well as days would not bring it. In every county I visited I gained largely over the Democratic vote, and the Democratic vote gained largely over the former vote.

*Sun. Oct 18, 1857* I stayed in my office all day today and wrote letters. My health is excellent and so my spirits. I commence boarding with A S White

*Mon. Oct. 19th 57* We had a  very few flakes of snow yesterday and a very severe frost last night. It is getting quite cold but the prospects are fair that I shall have good success in business

I am applied to to act as atty for the Iowa Central Air line R.R. Co

*Tues Oct 20th 1857* Spent my time in my office Reading law &c

*Wed Oct 21st 1857* Spent my time in my office.

 *Thur Oct 22nd 1857.* Spent my time in my office Of Age!! 26 years old

*Friday October 23d 1857* Spent my time in my office

*Sat Oct 24th 1857* I arose at 4. A.M. got breakfast, fed my horses and started for Irvington 38 miles from Fort Dodge in Kossuth County before daylight. Arrived at Irvington at 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> P.M. Attended a claim suit between Joseph Crouch and Clark W. Carr. Gained the suit and dispossessed Crouch an actual settler whom Carr was attempting to dispossess and cheat out of the house he had built on his preemption an outrageous evasion of right at any rate

*Sunday Oct. 25th 1857* I went to Algona. Had a long talk with the Algonaites, who are no particular friends of mine. Also with Judge. Asa C. Call. Stayed all night at Irvington with Geo D Wheeler

*Mon Oct 26th 1857* I took a deed of the 20 lots I had purchased in Algona. Went home to Fort Dodge.

*Tues Oct 27th 1857* Spent my time in my office We have had a beautiful fall. Iowa or the Garden of the World could not produce a better supply of food than has been produced this fall

*Weds Oct 28th 1857* To day the county Canvasses canvass the vote of the 13th Representative District. All told the 17 counties of the District give Mr Car-

penter only 41. majority while the abstracts of Dickinson County was without a certificate, date, or a seal. Also Humbolt Co had no seal. Consequently there was no legal evidence that there were any abstracts of either of these counties. Without them I had 27 majority. The Democrats would not sign Carpenters certificate and as the Republicans had a majority of the board of canvasses he got a certificate from them.

I am legally elected the Representative of the 13th Representative District. But a Black Republican Board have cheated me out of my legal rights

I will get my seat if there is a Democratic house without any doubt Otherwise Carpenter will get his seat.

*Thurs Oct 29, 57* Spent my time in my office attending to my business.

*Friday Oct 30, 1857* Spent my time in my office. Visited Colburn & my coal bank over the Des Moines River

## Glory Enough for One Day!

So read the headline announcing Republican Cyrus Clay Carpenter's election victory over Democrat John Duncombe in the 13th District Iowa General Assembly race in October 1857. Twenty-seven years old and new to politics, Carpenter had won his party's nomination as a reward for his efforts on behalf of Republican candidates in the previous year's campaigns, not because of any special vision or charisma he brought to the podium himself. But Carpenter's work ethic and easy-going manner apparently suited the district's several hundred voters, who were spread thinly across 17 counties in north-western Iowa.

Carpenter and his Democratic opponent, John Duncombe, were well acquainted at the time of the election, since both had extensive interests in the land business centered in Fort Dodge. They had also ridden together on the fateful Spirit Lake rescue mission just a few months earlier. They were similar in several ways. Both were young and ambitious. They were Yankees, both having come to Fort Dodge from Pennsylvania, and both were lawyers. Each had become involved in party politics quickly on their arrival in Iowa. However, in other respects they contrasted sharply. Carpenter's biographer, Mildred Throne, wrote that where Carpenter was described by contemporaries as warm and friendly, Duncombe was seen as cool and somewhat aloof. Even as a young man, Duncombe was clearly on his way to a fortune. Carpenter's investments often turned out badly. For example, he kept his money in the western land market too long and lost a bundle in the financial collapse of 1857. Though he got along comfortably enough in



We are getting an excellent quality of coal out of this Bank and no mistake.

*Saturday Oct. 31* In my office in the forenoon In the after noon drew 8 bushels corn from Mrs Johnsons

*Sunday Nov. 1, 1857* Went and heard Elder Dodder preach.

Beautiful fall weather.

*Monday Nov. 2* Spent my time in my office hard at work

*Tues Nov 3* Mr Wm D Perkins of Chicago of the firm of Barrett King Co. They have a claim of about \$3000 against Woodbury and Dawley. Dawley comes into my office in the forenoon and asks me if Dr Pease would be a good indorser. I told him yes. he goes and sees Dr Pease. Dr Pease refuses He then offers to do any thing. To assign his property or any thing else He proposed to give two notes to secure the note for

1800+ dollars, at thirty and sixty days time, Mr Perkins and to turn out notes and accounts in favor of his firm for security.

Mr. Perkins told him he would take his two notes as he proposed with that security. Mr Dawley went after his books notes and accounts. He found and brought his ledger and a quantity of notes and accounts I looked them over and selected to the amount of \$2400 and over, and I asked what amount Mr Perkins would require for collateral security. He said he would require about 4000\$. Mr Dawley said he would not give it. Mr Perkins asked him what he would give. He told him the amount that had been selected.

He said then that he would take it and I made out two agreements duplicates for them.

Mr Dawley said he would make out the bills in full in the afternoon and I might write the assignment on them. He went away. I looked at my watch a few moments after and it was after half past 12. M. oclock. The dinner bell at the Wahkonsa house had rung.

SHSI (DES MOINES)

subsequent years, he never became wealthy — unusual at a time when political connections like his provided access to numerous legitimate money-making schemes. But really the essential distinction between the two candidates in the campaign of 1857 was the fundamental fact that Carpenter was a member of a party on the rise, while Duncombe remained committed to a party in rapid decline by the late 1850s.

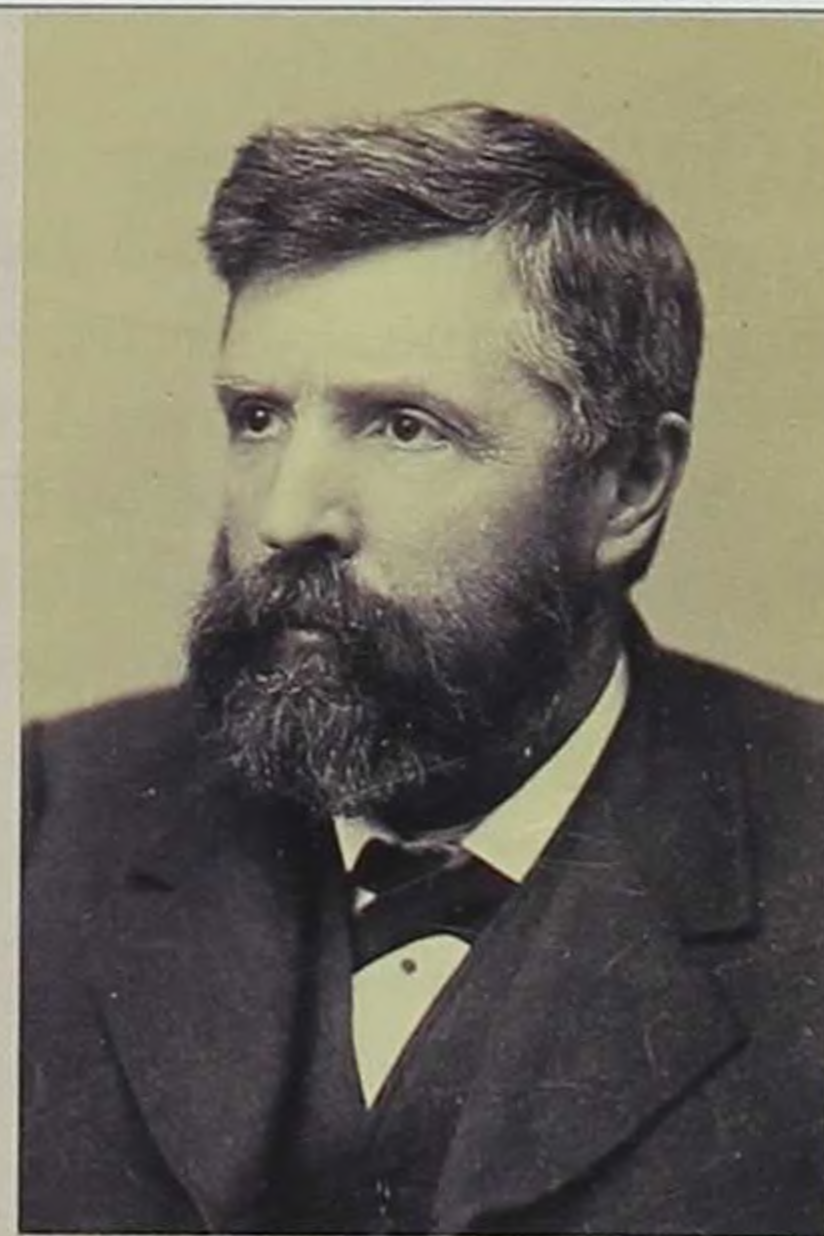
In describing Carpenter's experience in the 1858 General Assembly, biographer Throne admits he "played an unspectacular role. He voted with his party on party issues, and with the majority on non-controversial issues." Though he was liked and respected by his constituents, he may have lacked other attributes essential to political success. Simply put, wrote Throne, "as a lawmaker he did not have the necessary fire and force to play an outstanding role." Carpenter's district won no big prizes during his legislative term, though he tried to have an institution for the hearing impaired located in the Fort Dodge area. Similar efforts to establish a state-supported mental hospital in Webster County failed as well.

Resolving to leave politics, a world-weary Carpenter returned to Fort Dodge from Des Moines at the close of the legislative session in March 1858. He would not stand for office again for another dozen years. But after lengthy absences from Fort Dodge — he panned for gold in Colorado and then served in the Union army as a commissary under Gen. Grenville Dodge — Carpenter was back home and fully engaged in Republican politics. He accepted administrative appointments and committee assignments, and he could be counted on to help the party

on the stump in every campaign. Politics were in Carpenter's blood, and eventually, in the 1870s, he would be back in Des Moines as governor of Iowa. Two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives followed.

Webster County remained a Democratic Party stronghold throughout the 1870s and 1880s, and Cyrus Carpenter's old rival John Duncombe — who had prospered over the years — continued to challenge the Republican status quo. As the Iowa General Assembly election approached in 1883, Duncombe's local organization appeared formidable enough to prompt Fort Dodge Republicans to ask for Carpenter's help again. By then his term as governor had expired, and Carpenter was enjoying life as the Fort Dodge postmaster. Still, he was a sure bet against any Democratic opponent, and before long the 54-year-old "elder statesman" was back on the hustings, winning another election, and ensuring Republican representation for his district in the Iowa legislature. No doubt the thrill of victory had diminished over the years, but for Carpenter there was no resting with someone like John Duncombe around.

— by Bill Silag



Cyrus Clay Carpenter



I went to my dinner a few moments after, was not gone over fifteen or twenty minutes, and returned to my office. In a moment after, it might have been as late as 25 minutes past one P.M. o'clock Mr Dawley came in. He said he had concluded that he would do nothing about the notes with Mr Perkins. That he had taken [counsel?] and had been advised not to unless he would take his notes and accounts in payment, that he might go ahead take his own course, (or words to this effect) and attach. I know that he used the term attach for it struck me forcibly at that time that he intended to make an assignment.

Mr Dawley took his notes & accounts and left. Mr Perkins returned from dinner in a few moments. I told him our case had taken a new faze and that he had better see Dawley immediately. He went and returned in a few moments and desired me to get out the papers for the attachment. I did so as soon as possible, and by the time I got the bond approved and all, and the writ into the hands of the Sheriff it was by my time 15 minutes of four o'clock, P.M.

The Sheriff took the attachment, and served it

*Wednesday Nov. 4th 1857* I see the Sheriff and tell him he must be sure and see that a list or schedule of the property in the store must be attached to his return. See him about this several times.

Wisner & Co. replevy the goods from the Sheriff. I saw the Clerk and charged him to be sure and not accept of bonds of any except responsible parties.

To my astonishment he did take the "crowd".

*Thurs Nov 5th 1857* To day Dawley talked hard about me and I hear of it and went to see him in the evening to thrash him if he said what I hear he has. White tells me among other things that he said to him that he would not have been shut up if Perkins had had any other Lawyer but me.

When I went to see him he said that if I had said certain things I lied. As I had not said those things of course I did nothing more.

He said in that conversation that Perkins had stole his accounts. He said that he did not think of making sale of his property until he started away from my office, and he said he started away from my office after the dinner bell had rung at the Wahkonsa house. He denied saying to me when he returned after dinner that Perkins might go ahead and attach, but I know he did say attach for I noticed the expression under the impression that he might have made an assignment.

He said also in the conversation to day all of which was in presence of Thomas Dawley and H.

Beecher in Be[e]chers office, that he did not go to his dinner on the day of the sale.

*Frid. Nov 6th* Spend my time in my office attending law business

*Saturday Nov. 7* Spend my time in my office. In the evening it commenced snowing. ☄ The first snow of any account of the season. It snowed a good deal this evening for so early a storm.

*Sun. Nov 8.* Snow about 3 inches deep this morning. This is quite a stormy morning. Spend my time in my office today.

*Mon. Nov. 9th* Snow on the ground

*Tues Nov 10th* Cold weather. Hard at work in my office.

*Wed Nov 11th* Cold weather. Hard at work in my office

*Thurs Nov 12th* Cold. Hard at work in my office. Went to Coffins to attend Koons Law Suit.

*Frid Nov 13th* Hard at work

*Nov 14 Sat.* Hard at work. Weather fair.

*Sun Nov 15* In my office. Hard at writing letters. Attended church in the evening

*Mon. Nov 16* Cool weather. Hard at work. My business has been pretty good for a month past.

*Tues Nov. 17* Cool weather.

[?] H. Busy et al remove the house built by Stevens from his place

*Nov 18th* Take up a no. of persons for riot. Have a great fight before Esq White but I get them all bound over

*Nov 19th* Last evening we have a very sudden change. The weather became intensely cold and blows the wind awfully

*Nov 20/57* In my office hard at work.

*Nov 21/57* In my office hard at work. Paid 50 per ct for \$650 six months

*Sun. Nov. 22/57* Go to Irvington to attend law suit between L[?] [D?] and A S Collins.



Travel until quite late in the evening It snows and in the evening is very cold

*Mon Nov 23d 57* The mercury is 12° below zero. Go to Algona. Am successful Return to Washington Hands. Stay all night.

*Tues Nov 24, 57* In my office hard at work. Pretty cold today but pleasant. I sold my horses and carriage to apply on a note of \$600 due Colburn. The first note due in 1859, being now fully taken up in case I should loose it or die.

*Wed. Nov 25/57* In my office, hard at work. We cross the river for coal on the ice.

*Thurs Nov 26/57* In my office Pleasant thanksgiving day

*Frid Nov 27/57* In my office hard at work. It rains. The snow is off the ground

*Saturday, Nov 28/57* In my office hard at work It commences to rain to day rains quite hard. The snow all gone. The ice will go out of the river if the rain continues much longer. Had a law suit with my particular friend Geo. H. Rogers.

*Sunday . . . I am ashamed to say that I worked nearly all day to day to catch up with my business.*

*Sunday, Nov 29* I am ashamed to say that I worked nearly all day to day to catch up with my business.

*Monday Nov. 30th 1857* I spent the day in my office hard at work. Beautiful day No snow, no wind, all looks bright. To day I went into the house of A.S. White the Editor and I found him and his wife on their knees, he with his arm around her neck. He was praying. I think I was never more surprised.

I quietly withdrew from the room. White is without a doubt in my mind, in some respects dishonest. He will tell things that are not true, and seems to pay no regard to the payment of his debts, as dozens

can testify. His paper has been stoped, this is now the 3d week. He is a Poor tool, for his own good

*Tues. Dec 1st 1857* Last night was a beautiful moonlight night. The air is warm and the weather most beautiful this morning.

I have eaten only two meals for the last 60 hours simply because I have been busy at meal times

*I aim for the largest equity for Poor actual settlers. They ought to be protected by all means.*

Attended suit for Thos [?] in his preemption contest in the Land office with G. N. Patterson.

*Wed Dec 2/57* Last night it was quite muddy. This morning it is frozen hard but it is a beautiful morning

*Thurs Dec 3rd 1857* Beautiful day. No snow on the ground. Feels almost like indian summer.

I attend the suit of Hammond vs. James Linn. I am for Linn. Hammond is trying to rob Linn of his preemption.

I want no better causes than Linn has. I aim for the largest equity for Poor actual settlers.

They ought to be protected by all means.

*Frid Dec 4th/57* Beautiful morning. Spent the day in my office. Worked hard. In the evening I went to Literary Society, was chosen a member, appointed on the [debate?] on the old tariff question.

*Saty, Dec. 5th 1857* This is a foggy morning. There is a wind from the S.E. Looks like a storm

Spend my time in my office.

*Sun. Dec. 6th 1857* I attended church in the forenoon. Call on E G Morgan and lady in the afternoon. Write a few letters. Take supper with Mr Sargents people.

Beautiful day. No snow.

*Mon Dec 7th 1857* Pleasant day. Spent my forenoon in my office. In the afternoon I went with John M



Stockdale to defend D W Sterrett for the crime of cheating under false pretenses. The state of the case was this — Albert Wisner bought on the night of the 27th of Nov. ultimo a stock of goods belonging to D.W. Sterrett in Fort Dodge. Wisner alleged in the information that he had bought a bed and bedding, also a barrel of salt, which Sterrett had sold to him particularly, and that the property belonged to another party and not to Sterrett. This case excited a good deal of interest for the reason that Sterrett was always thought to be a good honest hearted young fellow.

We succeeded in getting him clear, and the whole crowd gave one [?] hurrah and shout. Mr Stockdale made a very good speech. He made one remark that was really beautiful. That was, a remark made by atty. Genl J.S. Black formerly of the S.C. of Pa. viz. "A mans good character is a mantle which he can throw around him in the hour of trial and peril"

The figure is really beautiful I felt a good deal of interest in the case for the reason that I really believe that Wisners were swearing falsely and that Sterrett was innocent.

*Tues Dec. 8th 1857* This morning it snows and from present appearances I am inclined to think we are about to get a little fall of snow.

*Wed Dec 9/57* Pleasant day. Attend suit before L.S. Coffin Esq. for J.H. Williams.

*In the evening I read two or three speaches on the Homestead Bill, and the play in Shakspeare called "Much Ado about Nothing"*

Caught a cold, the second cold of any account since I came to the State.

*Thurs Dec 10/57* In my office. This winter is really an anomaly or else all the winters that I have seen are anomalies. The weather is more like October than Dec.

*Frid Dec 11/57.* Attend suit before O E White for [Jesse?] Williams.

Attend Wahkonsa Lit.[erary] S[ociet]y.

*Sat Dec 12./57* In my office. Warm weather. In my office all day.

*Sun. Dec 13/57* Spent the day in my office resting. In the evening, I went to Wm. O. Ruggles office.

*Mon Dec 14/57* Warm weather. The streets are filled with mud.

Spent my time in my office and examining pre-emption cases.

*Tues Dec 15/57* Warm pleasant morning.  
Looks like April.

*Wed. Dec 16th 1857* As warm as an October day.

This is really like Southern weather. The mud is very bad indeed. I spend my time in my office.

*Thurs. Dec. 17th 1857* ☞ This morning it rains quite hard. The mud, O the mud I never saw it worse in Ft Dodge.

It is really abominable.

*Friday Dec. 18th 1857* Last evening it snowed a little, about two inches on the mud. This morning I rise determined to do all in my power to be a man, equal at least to any of my competitors, and to waste no time.

*Sun Dec. 20 1857* The ground is frozen and rough.

I attend the Catholic Church in the forenoon in the afternoon I hear Rev Firchild of the Episcopalian Church. I like his sermon very much indeed. I think he will do very well.

In the evening I read two or three speaches on the Homestead Bill, and the play in Shakspeare called "Much Ado about Nothing"

I am determined to be a man

*Mon Dec 21/1857* Pleasant morning I rise at daylight. Spend my time in my office

☞ Aply to become a Mason.

*Tues Dec. 22d 1857* Beautiful morning. I spend my time in my office in forenoon and beat Rogers in a law suit in the afternoon. Go to Literary Society in the **afternoon** evening.

Have a pleasant time. Debate the Homestead law I have the negative and in my own opinion I beat them out. C C Carpenter on the affirmative.

☞ A most brilliant meteor passes through the



skies while I am speaking so visible that every person is surprised

*Wed Dec. 23 1857* Beautiful day! I spend my time in my office.

*Thurs Dec 24th 1857* Spend my time in my office.

*I go to Webster City with Miss Hellen Ruggles. . . . We dance until about six o'clock in the morning*

This winter beats all the winters that I have seen in the North for warm pleasant weather. I ask Hellen Ruggles to go to Webster City with me.

*Frid Dec 25th 1857* I go to Webster City with Miss Hellen Ruggles. It is a pleasant day. We go in a carriage and have a pleasant ride. We have a splendid party at my old friends, D.A. Underdown. I enjoy the party very much indeed. We dance until about six o'clock in the morning

I have never seen a finer supper west of the Mississippi River.

*Sat. Dec 26th 1857* I go around the town of Webster City, call upon my friends, and a little past 2 o'clock, I start with Miss Ruggles to Fort Dodge. It is a beautiful day and I enjoy it very much. I find Miss Ruggles very pleasant company. I could ask for no better.

*Sun Dec 27th 1857* Beautiful day. I hear Elder Dodder in the morning and in the afternoon I hear Mr Fairchilds preach the finest sermon yet in Fort D

*Mon Dec 28, 57* Spent the day in my office. I have nearly made up my mind to take charge of the Fort Dodge Sentinel. I dont know about the policy but I am willing to run the risk for the good of my friends and the town. Spent the evening at Mr Ruggles house.

*Tues Dec. 29th 1857.* Beautiful morning. I rise before light, and am hard at work. I spend my time in my office hard at work. Attend suit before O.E. White D. Westerfield vs. G.H. Rogers. Heard lecture of Rev. Mr

Kent in the evening. Beautiful Beautiful weather. I think I will take charge of the Fort Dodge Sentinel as Senior Editor

*Wed Dec 30th 1857* Rather a cool day. I rise at 5 A.M. read law until nine A.M., take breakfast. Settle pre-emption suit of Crouch & Carr, attend to the foreclosure of a mortgage vs. M Morrissy. Sheriff Sale of his land. I work hard all day. Write a long [Shff?] deed, take tea with Thos Sargent. Write long letter in the Evening write some Agree with Dr Pease to try my best to [gain?] a suit for him, where patient has [?] fraud. I am to have \$100, if I succeed, if not, nothing.

*Thurs Dec 31, 1857* Beautiful weather. No snow. Spent my time in my office

*Frid Jany 1st 1858* I had a splendid time today. I called in company with A. Morrison on most all of my friends. Had a real jolly time.

In the evening I went to the dance at the St. Charles hotel, and had a good time here.

A first rate time. the party here tonight was excellent.

If New Years is any indication of this coming year, I shall have a happy one indeed

*Sat. Jany 2d, 1858.* Beautiful day. Spent my time in my office. Had a fine time.

*I think I will take charge of the Fort Dodge Sentinel as Senior Editor*

*Sun. Jany 3d 1858.* Attended church twice to day. Heard two excellent sermons from Mr Fairchilds

*Monday Jany 4, 1858* Spent my time in my office hard at work. Shaffer from Chicago gave me a claim vs Woodbury & Dawley of \$5000+.

We go to Webster City tonight

*Tues Jany 5, 1858* Spent the day at Webster City. Skinner, Shaffer & I go to Fort Dodge in the night.

*Wed. Jany 6th, 1858.* Arived at Fort Dodge early in the morning. To day we get Woodbury & Dawley to confer judgment in favor of [Story & Thomas Barrett King & Co.]



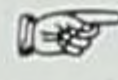
*Thurs Jany 7th 1858.* Have the sheriff levy on the store of Woodbury & Dawley. Sold to Wisner & Co, or so claimed at least.

*Frid Jany 8, 1858.* There is some little stir in town over my levy

*Saty Jany 9, 1858* Started to Fort Des Moines to get a law repealed if possible giving G.F. McClure the right to dam the Des Moines River at Fort Dodge.

*Suny Jany 10th 1858* It rained severely to day. So that the little streams are raised.

*The first Legislature that ever convened at Ft Des Moines convenes today.*

*Mony Jany 11th 1858*  The first Legislature that ever convened at Ft Des Moines convenes today. Ft Des Moines is a very scattered town of about 5000 inhabitants. This Legislature has 22 Black Republican majority and I think will elect Grimes.

*Tues Jany 12, 1858* I go up to the Capitol and hear the spouting.

*Wed Jany 13th 1858* I am busy at my ax grinding business.

*Thurs Jany 14th 1858* I am busy at my ax grinding. Saw Gov Lowe inaugurated.

*Friday Jany 15 1858* Same as above

*Saty, Jany 16 1858* Same as above

*Suny Jany 17 1858* Went to Church. Heard Rev Mr Peat

*Monday Jany 18, 1858* I have never seen such beautiful weather in the winter. [It] has been splendid. It beats any Southern winter that I ever saw. The Senate & house are getting into motion a little. Attend P[?] festival.

*Tues Jany 19 1858* Attend the Legislature Have fine time.

*Wednes Jany 20, 1858.* A beautiful time between Democrats & Republicans in the Senate.

*Thurs Jany 21, 58.* At Des Moines. The mud is deep

*Frid Jany 22, 1858* In Des Moines Electioning the Legislature or the Election of U S Senator.

I think I never saw worse roads

*Sat Jany 23 1858* At Des Moines  
As above

*Sunday Jany 24 1858* As above

*Monday Jany 25 1858* As above

*Tues Jany 26 1858* As above. To day they go into a balot for U.S. Senator and James W Grimes of Burlington receives the nomination by nearly a  $\frac{2}{3}$  votes as the Republicans have about  $\frac{1}{3}$  more in the house than the Democrats. Ben M Samuels gets the Democratic vote in the house. He is 3 ahead of Genl Jones in [?]

*Wed Jany 27, 1858* At Des Moines. The muddy roads freeze up and are as rough as the Rocky Mountains

*Thurs. Jany 28, 1858* In the afternoon Dr Bissel Tom Dawley and I start for Fort Dodge on foot, the roads are so bad that the stage or a team cannot run

We walk to Nagles the 9 mile house this side of Fort Des Moines.

*At Des Moines. The muddy roads freeze up and are as rough as the Rocky Mountains*

*Friday Jan 29 1858* We hire Nagle to send us on to Boonsboro. We break his waggon all to pieces, cork a horse and pay him off & send him home We hire another team  
Arive at Boonsboro about dark or a little after  
Stay all night at Hoffmans hotel.

*Sat Jany 30* Start with another team for Fort Dodge. Stay all night at Homer. I play "Euchre" tonight. I have learned the use of cards in this game for the first time



All the products of the country are low, this year, and it is important that those who contemplate a removal to the West, should be here soon if they wish to avail themselves of the low price of land and other advantages of an early settlement, as every month is adding to the value and price of land. If it is delayed till the Railroad is finished, the price of land will be quadrupled. Fort Dodge has already got such an upward impulse, that it is vain to deny that it will be an important town. The land within six miles West, and twice that distance North, is already settled by pre-emptors, and, with the adjacent land on the East side of the river, already contains a population sufficient to support a good sized town, while the whole length of the river is lined with thrifty farms. Merchants of various kinds are needed, in addition to those already here, to meet the wants of a constantly increasing community.

Since the above was prepared, orders have been given at Washington to bring in all the unsold lands in this part of the State, which will immensely increase the weight of all these considerations, and render what might be thought mere conjecture, a matter of certainty.

JOHN F. DUNCOMBE,  
**ATTORNEY AT LAW**  
**AND NOTARY PUBLIC,**  
FORT DODGE, WEBSTER COUNTY, IOWA.

JOHN GARAGHTY,  
**ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW,**  
FORT DODGE, WEBSTER COUNTY, IOWA.

**SAINT CHARLES HOTEL,**  
FORT DODGE, WEBSTER CO., IOWA.

CHAS. M. WHITE, - - - - - Proprietor.

CHARLES B. RICHARDS,  
**ATTORNEY AT LAW,**  
- AND -  
**General Land Agent,**  
FORT DODGE, IOWA.

Titles examined, Plats, Maps and Abstracts furnished, Collections made, Taxes paid, Lands Located with Warrants or Cash; Lands sold on Commission.  
REFER TO:—Ex Gov. Grimes, Burlington; Gov. Lowe, Des Moines; Gen. Van Antwerp, Keokuk; Hon Geo. Richards, Warren Co., N. Y.; Isaac Munson, Jefferson Co. New York.

EGBERT BAGG,  
**General Land Agent and Justice of the Peace,**  
FORT DODGE, IOWA.

Land Warrants bought, sold and located on favorable terms. Collections made.  
I am permitted to refer to Hon. Horatio Seymour, Chas. A. Mann, Prest. Oneida Bank, Utica, N. Y.; Jos. Stringham, Cashier, Buffalo City Bank, Buffalo, N. Y.; M. D. Bagg, Esq., New York City; Wm. C. Johnson, Esq., Prest. D. R. & N. Co., Washington, D. C.; Register and Receiver Land Office, Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Duncombe's advertisement follows six pages of booster narrative in *A Brief Description of Fort Dodge, Iowa, Its Agricultural, Mineral, and Commercial Facilities and Characters*, published in early 1858 by editor A. S. White at the *Sentinel* newspaper office. Of the 26 local businesses advertised, 23 are attorneys and land agents. Fort Dodge, White explains, "is now reached by the Dubuque & Pacific R.R. as far as Nottingham, 40 miles, and thence by stage in three days travel by daylight only."

this fall or any other game of cards Stay at Old Smiths.

Sun Jany 31 Go to Fort Dodge

Monday Feb. 1st, 1858 Fine weather. I try to get the sheriff to go ahead and sell Wisner & Co goods But he will not do it unless Stockdale and myself will go on the bond.

Tues Feb. 2d 1858 Commence the sale of Wisner & Co or Woodbury & Dawley goods. They [replevy Wisner?] Tom Snell swears he is worth over 50,000\$ clear of all liabilities.

Wednesday Feb. 3, 1858 At Fort Dodge in my office

Thurs Feb. 4, 58 At Fort Dodge Fine weather but it is a little colder than it has been before

Frid Feb. 5, 58 In my office.

Sat Feb. 6 58 In my office.

Sun Feb 7, 1858 Attend Elder Didders Church.

Mon Feb 8, 1858 At Fort Dodge I neglected to



note? the Ball at the St. Charles hotel on the 3 It was a proud affair for this new County. The Webster City people were all on hand.

*I wonder if I am always to live this cold half living life. . . . It is wrong*

Tues Feb. 9 1858 [At] home, if I have a home. I wish I had a good home and a good wife.

Wed Feb 10, 58 At Ft Dodge.

I like this cold winter weather, it is healthy and bracing

I wonder if I am always to live in this prison of monotony, without any home, without any wife or family, without any dear one to love, to live to let my heart dry up with selfishness

I wonder if I am always to live this cold half living life. If I am I care but little how soon I die. It is wrong wrong wrong

Thurs Feb 11, 58 In my office.

Feb. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 23. On 22 Joined the Masons

At home in my office most all of this time and but very little worthy of notice.

Wed 24 Feb 1858 J.D. Burkholder and I start for Fort Des Moines to prevent T. 90. being stolen from our County.

A hoar is sent off at the same time with us by some of the Fort Dodge hoar masters. I know her character and keep aloof from her. I never touched a leud woman or any other woman illicitly and by the help of Providence I never will. I despise them, and I love a virtuous woman above all living things on Earth.

Thurs Feb 25, 1858 We start from Boonsboro early. The hoar tries to become very interested with me but it is of no use. I am impurturable to such temptations

We arive at Des Moines after dark and Burkholder and I stop at the American house.

Sun Frid Feb 26, 1858, Feb. ~~2, 3, 4~~, 27, 28.

March 1, 2, 3, 4. I worked hard, had two real quarrels with Ed McKnight fought with words and election-eered my best for R.R. bills T. 90 and all other projects that I felt an interest in.

The tide is in our favor, but court is coming on

## “How much happier I should be”

When he arrived in Fort Dodge in 1855, John Duncombe was a heartbroken young widower. He had married Carrie Perkins in 1852 in Erie, Pennsylvania, soon after opening his legal practice there. Within two years of their wedding, however, his young wife had died, and Duncombe struck out for the West in hopes of beginning his life anew. In his first years in Fort Dodge, he was prone to miserable bouts of loneliness and depression. “I wish my heart was as happy as it once was,” he complained on April 13, 1856.

His mood brightened later in the year, around the Christmas holidays, when he met Ella Richards during a trip east with Bernhart Henn. Never given to understatement, Duncombe declared on December 27, “I am really in love with Ella,” noting in his journal that he had not seen such happiness in recent years. But this happiness proved elusive — Ella’s name does not appear again in the journal — and on August 16, 1857, Duncombe again found himself in a funk. “Oh, if I only had a pleasant home and a true hearted sweet wife, how much happier I should be!”

Historian Ellen Rothberg, author of *Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America*, would probably describe John Duncombe’s feelings as typical of 19th-century middle-class

men in the United States. According to Rothberg, the mid-1800s saw the emergence of modern notions regarding romance as an essential part of courtship and as the basis of marital intimacy. Once considered youthful folly, romance had become socially respectable. “Everyone wanted to fall in love, and men especially seemed to feel a sense of obligation, even of desperation, about it.”

These were years of a widening gap between the spheres of home and work, Rothberg explains, when “middle-class men were becoming increasingly identified by their involvement in the world away from the home.” If marriages were to succeed, couples needed to establish the “mutuality, commonality, and sympathy” required to bridge men’s and women’s spheres. For this reason, men were well advised to find partners who brought to marriage an understanding of the world of work along with a commitment to establishing a peaceful refuge from its physical and mental demands.

Duncombe’s journal reveals that he too was looking for a “virtuous and lovely” woman who could be “the great source of all virtue” in his life, not only to “assist [him] to be happy” but also to protect his “taste for refined Society.” References to his high-minded romantic pursuits fill pages of the journal, and they in-