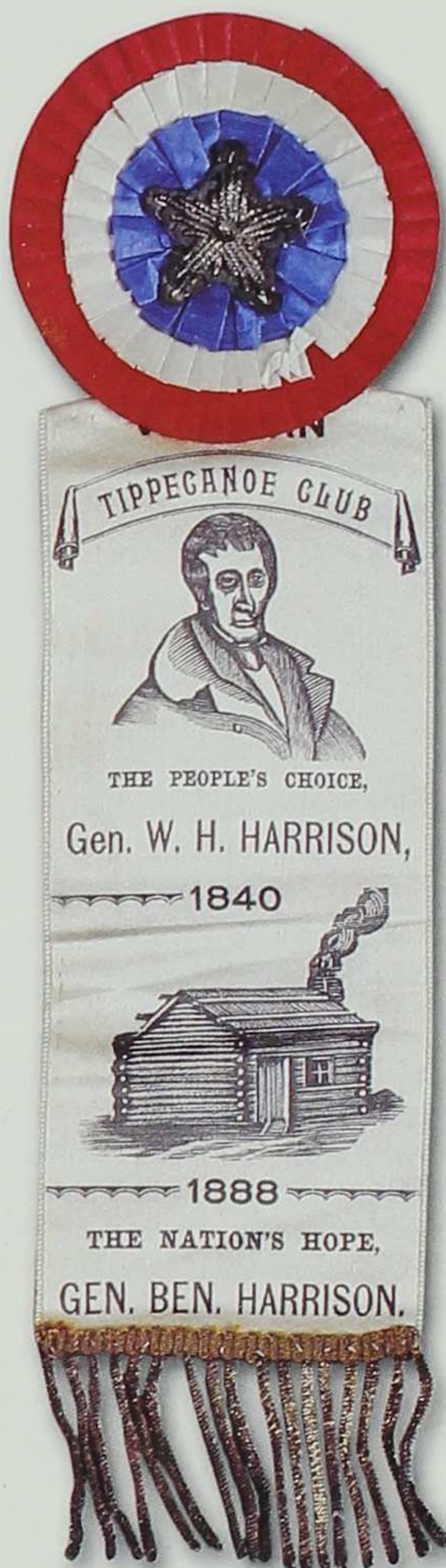


# Tragedy, Tourism, a

by Greg Olson



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As the 19th century drew to a close, many of the log homes built by Iowa's first wave of settlers began to disappear in the wake of economic prosperity. While some Iowans mourned the passing of these picturesque relics, many others were glad to be rid of the visual reminders of their humble first homes. In the years before groups like the Daughters of the American Revolution began their organized crusades to restore log homes in the state, preservation, when it happened at all, was the prerogative of a few inspired individuals. Two of the oldest surviving log homes in northwest Iowa exist today because of the efforts of two such individuals, early settlers Abigail Gardner Sharp (1844-1921) and Charlotte Kirchner Butler (1846-1932).





# and the Log Cabin

## How Abbie Gardner Sharp and Charlotte Kirchner Butler Preserved and Promoted the Past

Each used a simple log cabin as a vehicle for telling her settlement story.

The log cabin is one of the most beloved icons of our national heritage. No other image depicts American history as romantically as a simple, hand-hewn home in the woods. It is a symbol of modest beginnings and of our anti-aristocratic ideal of equality. As children we are taught that many of our most revered national heroes like Abraham Lincoln began their lives in one of these rustic dwellings. In 1840, William Henry Harrison defeated Martin Van Buren in a presidential campaign centered around the image of the log cabin. Portraying their candidate as a common man who preferred to live his life in a simple log house in the woods, Harrison's

supporters appropriated the image wherever they could. Popular songs and marches sang its praises, cabins became props in parades and rallies, and Horace Greeley published the pro-Whig *Log Cabin* weekly newspaper. Harrison's successful candidacy capitalized on the American people's belief in the image of a simple, rustic life on the frontier. The log cabin was equated with the paragon of the self-made man who reached his goals through hard work, yet never forgot his humble roots. In Charlotte Kirchner Butler's mind, her own particular log cabin in northwest Iowa resonated with these messages of hard work and humble roots.

The American log cabin also stands in our national consciousness (as it did in Butler's mind) as a symbol



CAMPAIGN RIBBON: SHSI (DES MOINES). OTHER IMAGES: SHSI (IOWA CITY). IMAGE ON FAR RIGHT: JOAN LIFFRING-ZUG BOURRET COLLECTION, SHSI (IOWA CITY).



# Tragedy, Tourism, and the Log Cabin

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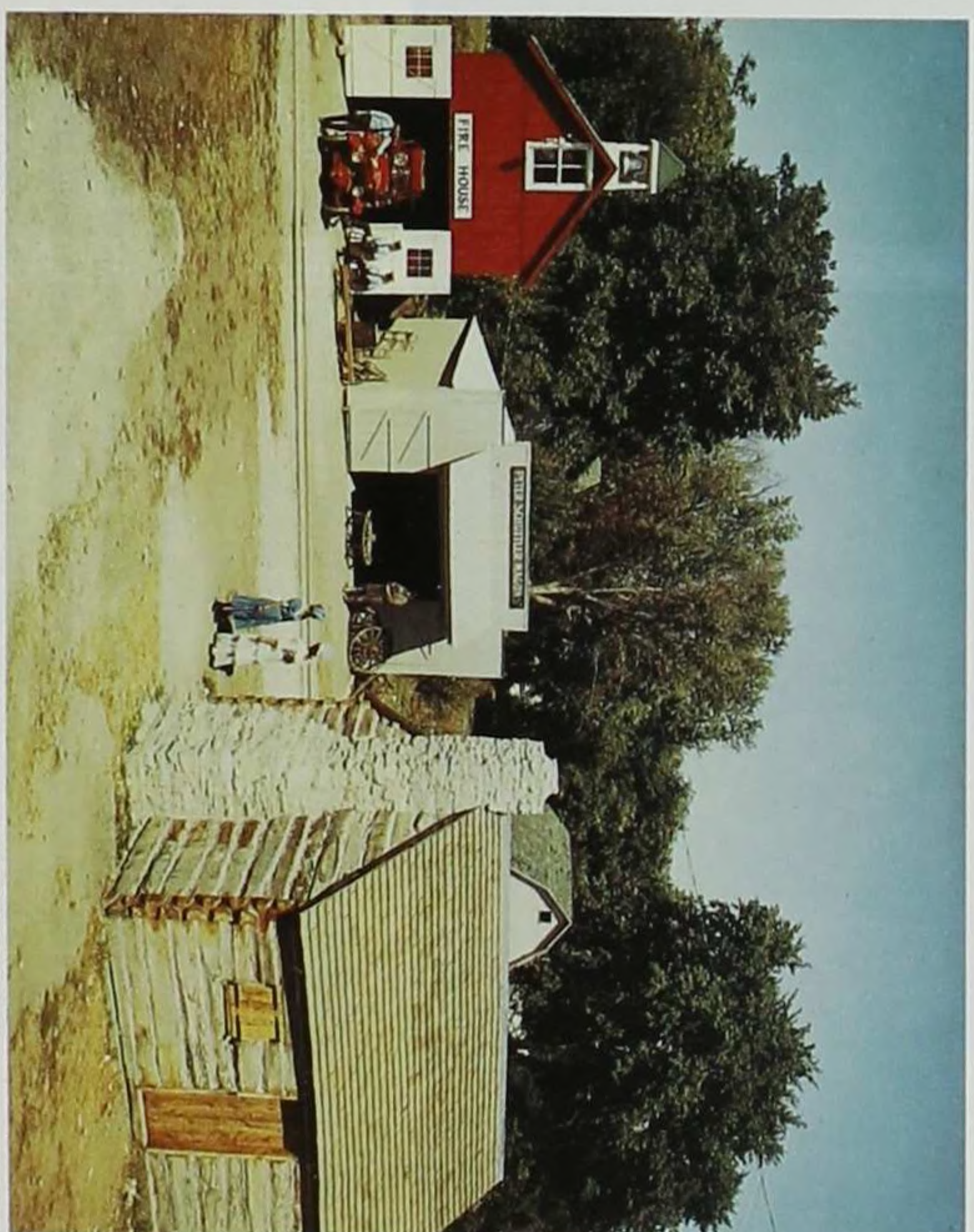
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CAMPBELL RIBBON: SHS (DEB MONES); OTHER IMAGES: SHS (IOWA CITY); MADE ON FARM RIGHT: JOAN LEFFINGO-ZIG BOQUIET COLLECTION, SHS (IOWA CITY).

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of conquest over the wilderness. The log walls of the first humble homes built by settlers provided a physical and metaphorical contrast to the vast expanses of wilderness and, as historians John R. Stilgoe and Roderick Nash have suggested, became a metaphor—with ancient roots—for vanquishing evil. In European folk traditions the woods had been thought to be inhabited by both good and bad spirits. As pagan customs gave way to Christianity, society shunned these “wildings,” who took on darker, more threatening connotations, and the forests came to be feared as the home of demons. This connotation of the wilderness as evil transferred along with European settlers to the American frontier. If, as art historian Vivien Green Fryd has argued, the westward expansion of the United States can be read as an allegorical struggle “between the cultivated and the wild of nature,” the domestication of the land not only made way for fields, homes, and roads, it prepared the land to be cleansed of “evil.” (To Iowan Abbie Gardner Sharp, her family’s log cabin came to symbolize such a struggle, and she used the cabin as a stage on which to recount her story of conflict, violence, and victimization.) Many believed that in the battle to fulfill America’s Manifest Destiny, early settlers were the foot soldiers who carried the torch of civilization into that wilderness. Only after the land was settled, the wilderness domesticated, and the native population subdued, they believed, could the great resources of the North American continent be used for the good of the emerging nation.

Therefore, what had begun as a vernacular building type imported into the United States by northern European immigrants rapidly became a symbol of the very process of creating a nation or empire. Part of the log cabin’s allure was based on the fact that trees, which had to be cleared to make way for the plow, could be fashioned, through skill and enterprise, into material useful for building shelter. The builder of a pioneer log home, armed with determination and a few hand tools, could harness the vast wilderness.

The settler’s success in clearing the woods signaled victory in this battle, and the image of logs stacked in the form of cabin walls became one of the struggle’s most satisfying trophies. American painters of the early 19th century incorporated this theme into their magisterial landscapes. Thomas Cole, for example, painted various works during the 1840s in which a cabin carved out of the pristine wilderness symbolized the emergence of a new empire (*right*). In their efforts to tell Iowa history as they viewed it, Abbie Gardner Sharp and Charlotte Kirchner Butler would also adopt the powerful image of the log house.



REYNOLDA HOUSE, MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

The log cabin was already an established frontier icon by the time settlers began to populate the prairie of northwest Iowa in the mid-1850s. Arriving separately as young girls in 1856, Abbie Gardner and Charlotte Kirchner were among the first European Americans to settle this region of tallgrass prairie. Abbie’s parents homesteaded along the shores of Lake

Okoboji, in present-day Arnolds Park, and Charlotte settled with her family along the Little Sioux River 40 miles to the south, near the present town of Peterson. The first seasons in their new homes proved difficult for both families. The Gardners arrived in July, too late to plant crops and with time enough only to finish one of two log cabins needed for their extended family. The

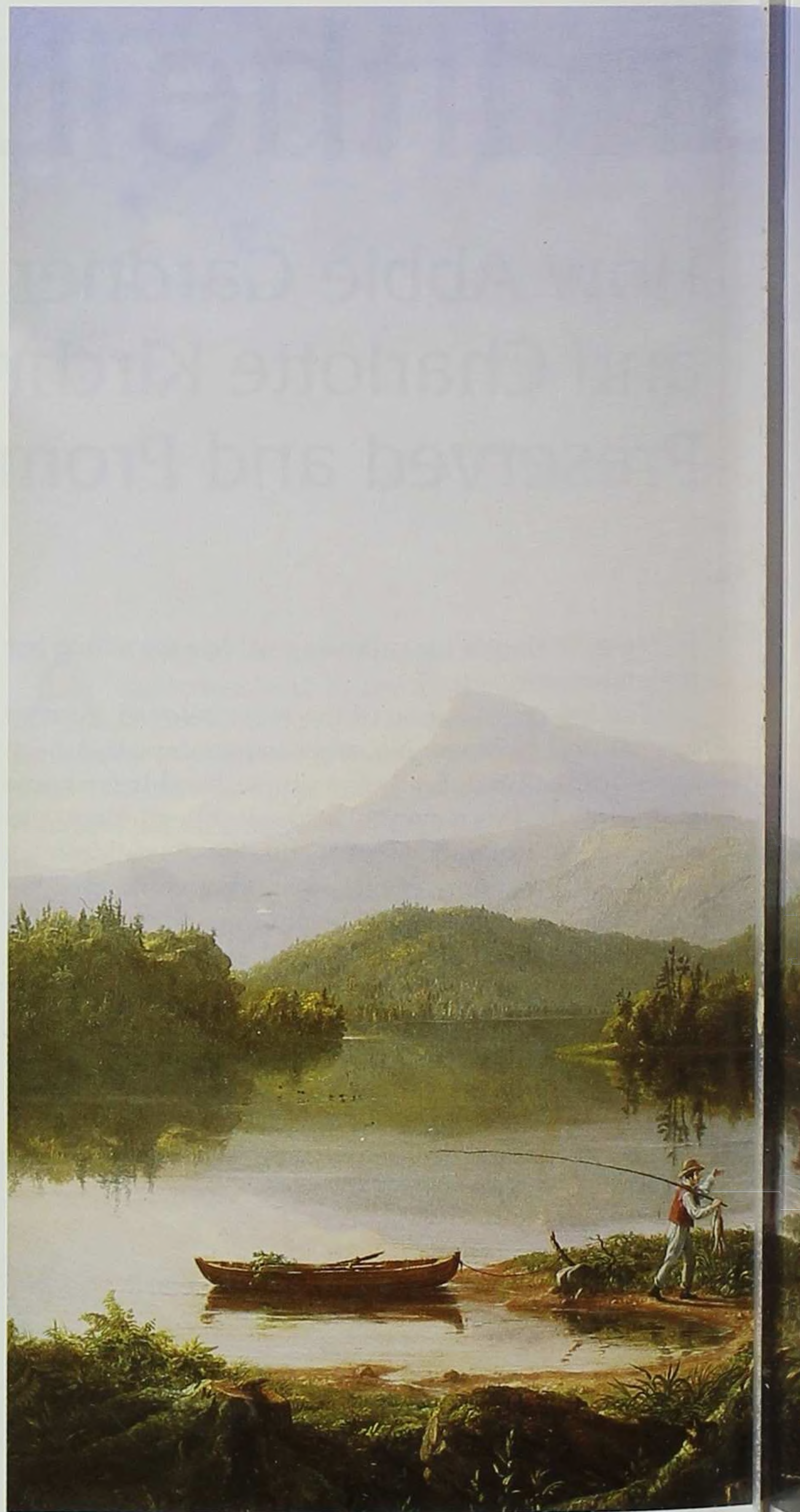
Home in the Woods (1847), by Thomas Cole, depicts the log cabin as a family’s haven in a quickly vanishing wilderness. Ax-hewn stumps, broken limbs, and fallen trees fill the foreground, while neatly notched logs constitute the cabin. The peak in the background is Mt. Chocorua, in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. The log cabin functioned as a powerful icon for a number of American painters, sculptors, writers, and their audiences.



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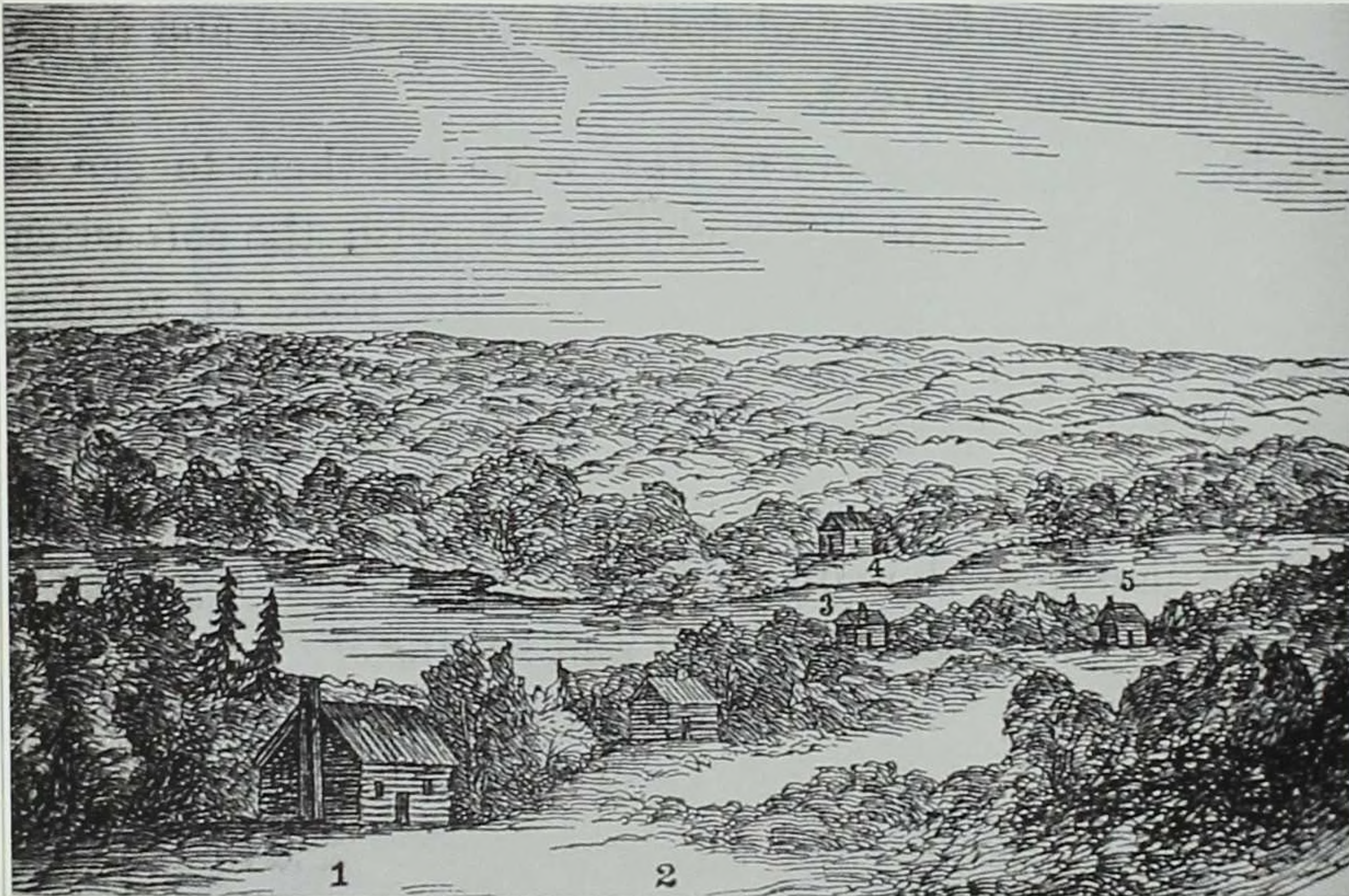


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"It was in July, 1856, that the hills around Spirit Lake, on the northern boundary of Iowa, first echoed the woodman's axe," wrote Lorenzo Porter Lee. As the first chronicler of the "Spirit Lake Massacre," Lee called the Gardner family's home (No. 1, above) "one snug little log cabin, hewed and dovetailed into shape ... on the south side of the lake."

(In the preceding years, encounters between the Wahpekute and settlers had ranged from conflict to cooperation; see below.)

By February, when Inkpaduta and his band stopped in Peterson, their situation had become desperate. For

Kirchners, who had to meet the challenge of moving west with ten children, did not arrive at their destination until the fall. Then, as winter set in, the settlers had to negotiate unusually harsh weather. Deep snow and bitter cold cut them off from the nearest supplies in far-distant settlements.

About 50 Wahpekute Dakota trying to wait out the winter in the shelter of the Little Sioux River valley were also suffering immensely in the cold and snow. Competition for game, which was already scarce during the particularly severe winter, aggravated relations between the newly arrived settlers and the Indians. Not surprisingly, the Wahpekute and their leader Inkpaduta called upon settlers who lived near the river, asking them to share their winter stores. While some settlers complied, many others resisted.

## A collision course towards tragedy

Compared with settlement in the rest of the state, European Americans came late to northwest Iowa, where they faced isolation and harsh frontier living conditions.

Meanwhile, the Dakota Indian nation had for years led a successful hunting and farming way of life in the same area. Relations between the original inhabitants and the new settlers were usually peaceful, but there was little friendship as the two groups competed for the land and its resources.

One of the few violent conflicts between European Americans and Native Americans occurred at present-day Arnolds Park in what became known as the "Spirit Lake Massacre." One of the major players was a Wahpekute Dakota chief named Inkpaduta. Here, briefly, is what is known about him during the years leading up to the events at Spirit Lake, and their aftermath.

- 1800–1810: Inkpaduta is born into the Cannon River band of the Wahpekute Dakota in Minnesota. His father, Black Eagle, is a chief.

- 1837: Smallpox hits Black Eagle's people, already diminished by battles with neighboring Sauk and Meskwaki.

- 1841: Inkpaduta and several hundred Wahpekute are banished from the Cannon River tribe for the assassination of Dakota chief Tasagi ("Cane").

- 1850: Inkpaduta and his brother Sidominadota lead the dissident band along the Des Moines River valley near Fort Dodge, Iowa.

- 1851: Left out of negotiations that transferred much of the Dakota nation's lands to the U.S. government, Inkpaduta refuses to recognize the

treaty. He is soon used as a scapegoat for tensions between the new settlers and the native Dakota. In the next few years, he is involved in several conflicts with settlers.

- 1854: Inkpaduta's brother Sidominadota, plus Sidominadota's mother, wife, and five children, are killed by whiskey trader Henry Lott at Bloody Run Creek (near Livermore, Iowa). Government officials recognize that Lott had started the problems years earlier, but refuse to apprehend him. Later, settlers in Homer, Iowa, hang Sidominadota's head on a cabin. Inkpaduta moves west to the Little Sioux River valley.

- 1856: In the fall Inkpaduta's band travels south, following the Little Sioux. They will winter near Smithland, as in the previous two years. Winter



several days the Indians visited the log home where ten-year-old Charlotte Kirchner lived with her parents and siblings, and where another family, the Bicknells, had joined with them in anticipation of trouble. After receiving food and searching the premises for weapons and ammunition, the Wahpekute left. Although one of the Wahpekute men killed the family dog, the Kirchners fared better than two neighboring families, whose log cabins were ransacked. The Wahpekute also killed several head of livestock and briefly held two women in their camp before releasing them.

Over the next two weeks, Inkpaduta led his group farther north along the river toward the region of Lake Okoboji. Along the way there were more confrontations between the Wahpekute and the settlers. By March 5th or 6th Inkpaduta's band had reached the lakes region. Then on the 8th of March, several Wahpekute men entered the log home of 13-year-old Abigail Gardner and her family. Struggles over food and ammunition triggered violence and ultimately led to the killing of her parents, Roland and Frances Gardner, a daughter and son, and two of their grandchildren (third daughter Eliza was in Minnesota at the time). The deaths of the Gardners were part of a string of killings attributed to the Wahpekute over the next few days. In all, 33 settlers in the area of Spirit Lake and Lake Okoboji died in

what became known as the "Spirit Lake Massacre." Four women were taken hostage, including young Abbie Gardner. (Any Wahpekute deaths went unrecorded.)

Inkpaduta held Gardner captive from early March through May 30. During that time, she witnessed the killing of two fellow captives, Elizabeth Thatcher and Lydia Noble, and the release of a third, Margaret Ann Marble. She was forced to march hundreds of miles through southern Minnesota to the James River in eastern Dakota Territory before three Wahpeton Dakota—Mazakutemani, Hotonhowashta, and Chetanmaza, supplied by Major C. E. Flandrau from Ft. Snelling—bought Abbie Gardner for 2 horses, 12 blankets, 2 kegs of powder, 20 pounds of tobacco, 32 yards of blue cloth, and 37½ yards of calico and ribbon.

Newspapers in Minnesota and Iowa that had reported extensively on the massacre now followed the return of Abbie Gardner to Iowa. The first to chronicle Gardner's ordeal in detail was Colonel Lorenzo Porter Lee, the officer assigned by the army to serve as the young orphan's escort. Lee traveled with her from St. Paul, Minnesota, the site of her official release, to Fort Dodge, Iowa. During the journey, he interviewed Gardner extensively. Later that year, back at his home in New Britain, Connecticut, Lee published a 48-page *History of the Spirit Lake Massacre!*, with the expressed

brings deep snow and bitter winds. Wahpekute women foraging for unhusked corn are accused of stealing and are beaten by settlers. Inkpaduta's son shoots a few of their cattle. A militia of Smithland settlers destroys Inkpaduta's village and steals guns.

- February 1857: Inkpaduta's band heads north, shooting livestock and stealing food and weapons. They stop at Long Grove (present-day Peterson) looking for food at the Kirchner cabin and at other settlements (Cherokee, Correctionville). At Lost Island Lake, a settler named Gillett kills and beheads one of Inkpaduta's band who had approached his cabin.

- March 1857: Inkpaduta's people arrive at Lake Okoboji and set up camp on a Dakota site, now occupied by the Mattock family's cabin.

Tensions run high as they try to get straw and supplies from the settlers. On March 8, a gunfight breaks out at the Mattock cabin, and precipitates the "Spirit Lake Massacre." Over the next several days, Inkpaduta's men kill 33 settlers and abduct three women and one girl, Abbie Gardner.

Inkpaduta's band travels north, attacks settlers at Jackson, Minnesota, and then flees west to the Dakotas. There they kill two of the four captives. Gardner and the third captive are released later that spring.

- In 1862, after the Dakota uprising in Minnesota is ignited by denial of annuities and supplies, Inkpaduta's reputation grows as a Dakota hero, partly because he continues to elude capture. Over the next several years, Inkpaduta engages the U.S. Army in the Dakotas and plays a major role in the



Above: The only known image of Inkpaduta (date and place uncertain).

Battle of the Little Big Horn. Later he seeks refuge in Canada with Sitting Bull, where he dies an old man about 1880.



intention of raising money to aid the young girl. Sharp later reported, however, that her share of the royalties only amounted to six copies of the book, five of which she sold for the designated price of 25 cents each.

**A**s a literary genre, captivity narratives like Lorenzo Porter Lee's have been popular in America since the 17th century. While numerous first-hand accounts were published by survivors of captivity, the subject also became common in literature and the visual arts. Popular novels, such as *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) by James Fenimore Cooper, revolved around a white woman held captive by Native Americans. Joel Barlow's epic poem *The Columbiad* (1807) recounted the abduction and death of captive Jane McCrea. Sculptures done for the nation's capitol by

Thomas Crawford and Horatio Greenough also dealt with this theme, as did paintings by such noted artists as Asher B. Durand, George Caleb Bingham, and John Vanderlyn.

Captivity narratives fed on the fear and isolation many settlers felt as they left their familiar settings of family and home and moved west, entering tribal lands. On one level, they can be read as struggles between "civilized" Christian virtue, embodied by young white women like Abigail Gardner, and the dark, evil forces of the untamed wilderness, represented by "red devils" such as Inkpaduta.

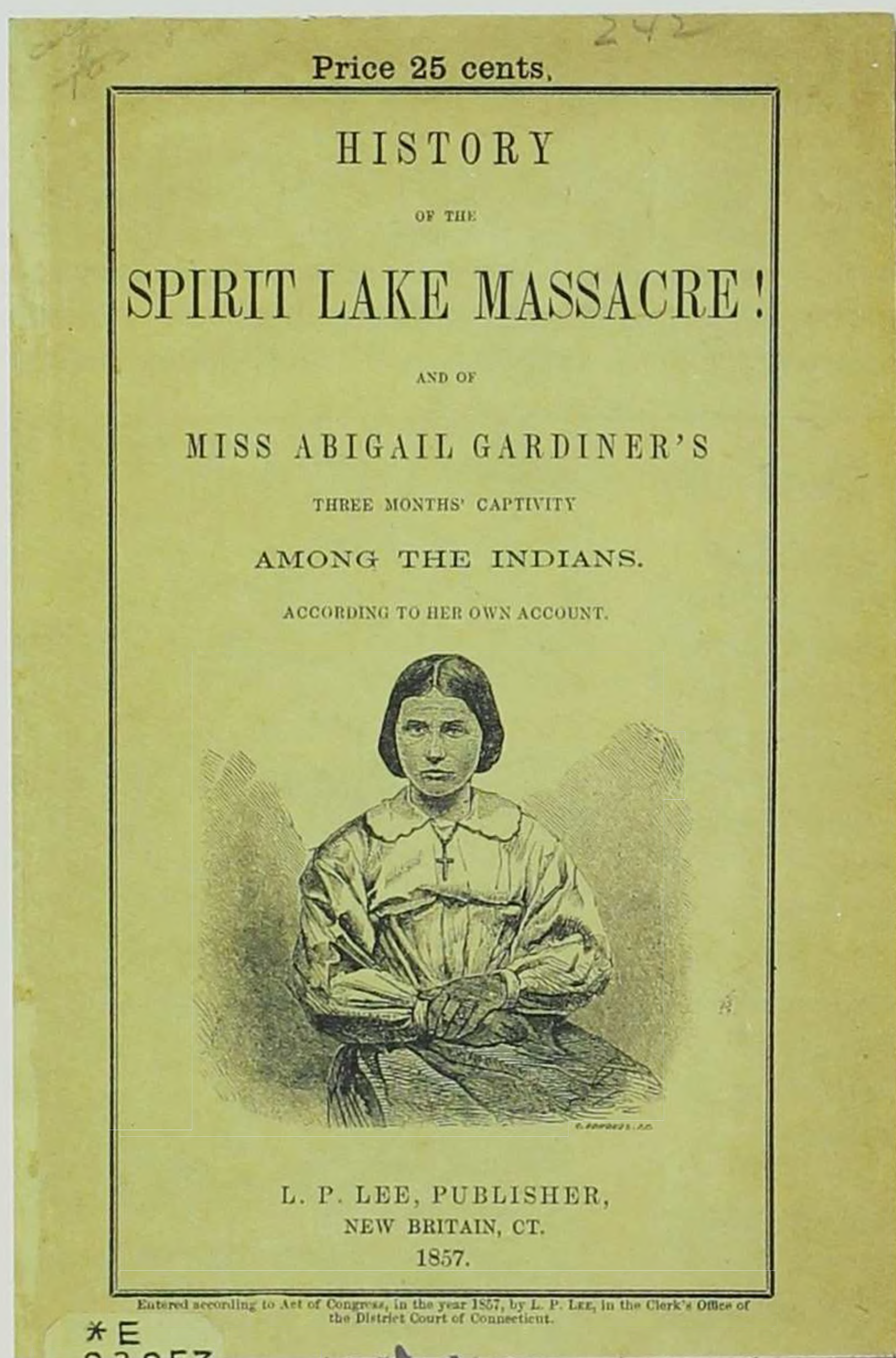
While the earliest versions were written as parables of religious faith and transformation, captivity tales in America became increasingly sensational and melodramatic during the 19th century. Lorenzo Porter Lee's *History of the Spirit Lake Massacre!* falls into this category. It features engraved illustrations, including one depicting the beating death of Gardner's fellow captive, Elizabeth Thatcher. For dramatic effect, Lee punctuated his own sensational description with quotes from Darwin, Shakespeare, and Milton. His work portrayed the event as a classic struggle between good and evil. In this drama, Inkpaduta acted out the role of arch-villain. Gardner, whom Lee presented as the paragon of virtuous youth whose innocence was "nipped off in the bud," was cast as a helpless victim whose rescue came only at the hands of others.

Historian June Namias calls this the "Frail Flower" style of captivity narrative writing. Namias discovered that the "Frail Flower," or hapless victim, was common in 19th-century narratives and may have been modeled after the heroines of popular sentimental fiction. The Frail Flower, Namias tells us, "is shocked and distressed by her capture and by the deaths and dislocations that go with it. . . . She rarely emerges from her shock, distress and misery. Frail Flower narratives include brutality, sadomasochistic and titillating elements, strong racist language, [and] pleas for sympathy and commiseration with the author's suffering."

Lorenzo Porter Lee's book set the tone for many subsequent interpretations of the "Spirit Lake Massacre" and cast Abigail Gardner in the perpetual role of the "Frail Flower." Lee's book also became the model for Gardner's own captivity narrative, which she published 28 years later.

**I**n the years following her captivity, Abigail Gardner's personal life was marked by many difficult and tragic events. Two months after her release, Gardner (probably still only 13) married 19-year-old

SHS: (IOWA CITY)



Lorenzo Porter Lee's account of Abbie Gardner is an example of a captivity narrative, a literary genre often characterized by racism and sensationalistic, melodramatic language.



Casville Sharp in Hampton, Iowa. The marriage produced three children: Albert (born in 1859), Allen (1862), and Minnie (1871), who died 19 months later. The Sharps moved often, living in various locations in Iowa, northern Missouri, and Kansas. On two separate occasions, house fires consumed the family's belongings. One of the fires destroyed an early version of Abbie Gardner Sharp's manuscript about the "Spirit Lake Massacre."

Sometime in the late 1870s, the Sharps' marriage failed. In 1883, Abbie Gardner Sharp returned to the shores of Lake Okoboji. Separated from her husband and suffering from ill health, she supported herself by soliciting speaking engagements. She began work again on her manuscript and by 1885 was able to finance the first printing of her own *History of the Spirit Lake Massacre*. Greatly expanded from Lorenzo Porter Lee's slim history, Sharp's 352-page book would go through numerous reprints and revisions.

Through her lectures and book, Sharp presented the story of her ordeal to the public. She did so, however, by perpetuating the image of herself as a victim. "Because the awful events of the massacre transpired here, I have, amid physical ills which have disqualified me for the active pursuits of life, devoted two years of painful labor to indicting the bitter reminiscences, and gathering the facts, dates, and events recorded in this volume," she wrote in her preface. "I would have been glad, for the sake of history, to impart my knowledge of the bloody drama to one whose gifted pen would have been more worthy of the subject; but, by sad misfortune—which has followed my captivity—the duty has fallen upon me."

Throughout her narrative, Sharp painted the Wahpekute Dakota as blindly cruel and challenged her readers' to imagine the hardships and violence endured by the victims and captives. A Gladbrook, Iowa, newspaper correspondent who read the book found it "full of thrilling incidents," and reported that it "reads like an enchanting novel, and yet is but the true, sad history of what actually happened."

By 1887, Sharp also had expanded her entrepreneurial activities at the lake. During the summer months she sold Indian carvings, pieces of her own handiwork, and copies of her book. She operated from a tent set up next to the log home built by her father in 1856, which had since passed into other hands.

Just weeks after the massacre, in fact, the Gardner claim and cabin had been jumped by a settler, J. S. Prescott, who believed the entire family had died in the incident. Upon discovering that Abigail and her elder sister Eliza had survived, he offered payment and retained the property. In 1863, Samuel Pillsbury purchased the property. He and his family were still living in the cabin in the 1880s when Sharp returned to the area. Over the years the Pillsburys had expanded the house by adding a second story and constructing lean-to additions.

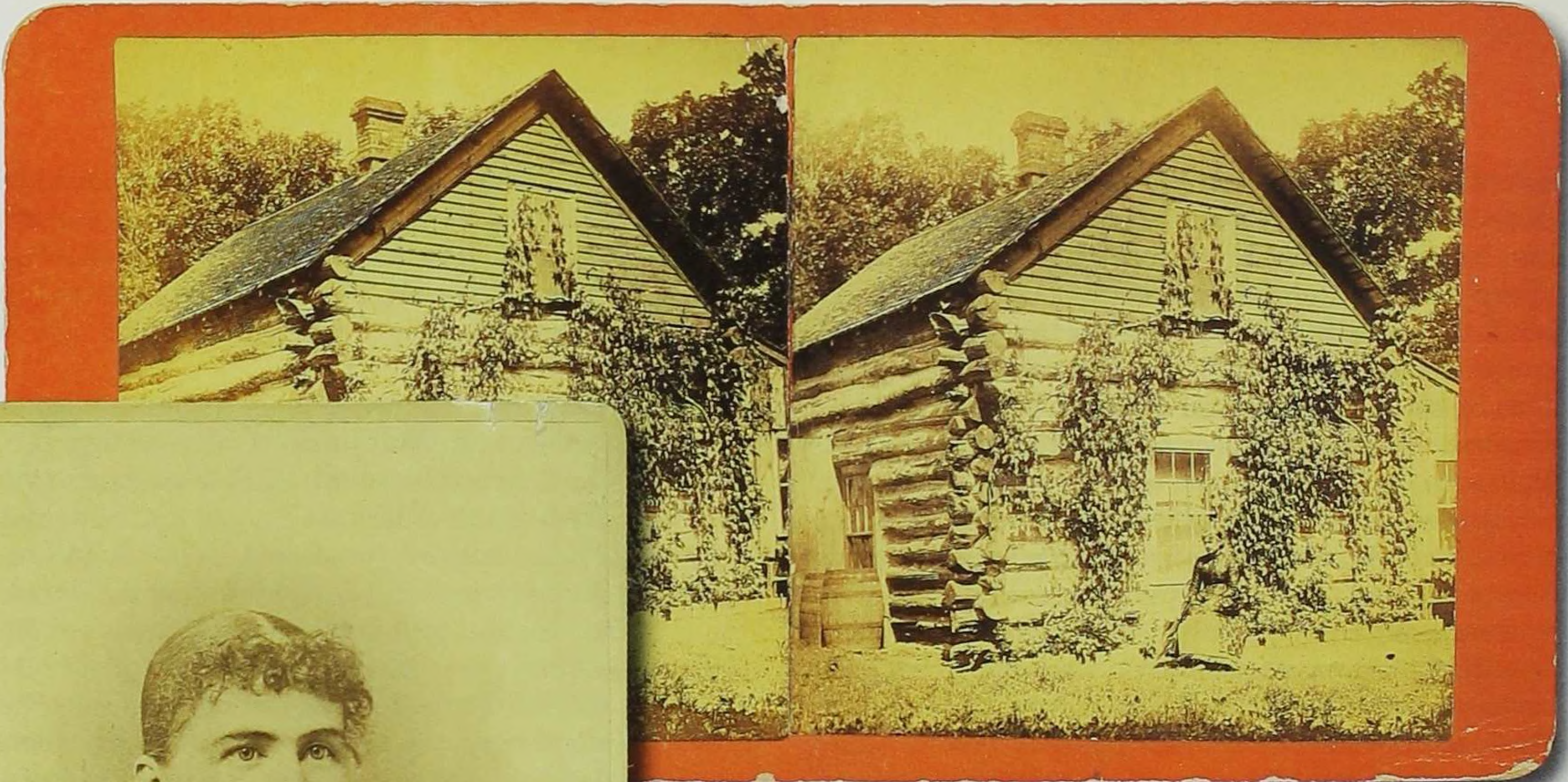
By 1891, the cabin was in danger of being torn down to make way for lake-front lots. With profits from the sale of her book and souvenirs, Sharp purchased the lot on which the cabin stood and immediately began to rehabilitate the deteriorating structure as a log home and souvenir shop. With considerable savvy, she promoted the cabin as what she called "the most prominent historic site in the state of Iowa." As the only home still standing from the time of the massacre, the cabin had been recognized as a historic curiosity even before she purchased it. Now, as its popularity increased, she proceeded to separate it from the surrounding landscape by constructing an elaborate lattice covering, which ensured that only paying customers could see



Sharp built a lattice work around the cabin, thus restricting its view to paying visitors only. Advertising on the roof promised tourists "the sights of a lifetime."

SHSI (IOWA CITY)





STEREOGRAPH, COURTESY PAUL JUHL. CABINET CARD, ALBUMEN PRINT: SHSI (IOWA CITY), POSTCARD: SHSI (DES MOINES)



*Mrs. Abbie Gardner Sharp.*

THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF THE SPIRIT LAKE MASSACRE IN 1857. She was then a girl of fourteen years, and captured by the Indians. Out of forty persons who were then residents of Dickinson county, she is the only one now living who was at home when the Savages came. [Copyrighted 1884.]



As 19th-century photographic technology expanded, so did the opportunities to market images of Abbie Gardner Sharp and her cabin, which appeared in formats ranging from stereographs, albumen prints, and cabinet cards, to color postcards.

In the center right image, the woman in the plaid dress is probably Sharp. She sits outside a tent marked with a banner reading "Massacre of 1857.")



Interior of the Gardner Log Cabin Okoboji Lake, Ia.

Copyright,

Made in Germany for Mrs. Abbie Gardner Sharp, Arnolds Park, Okoboji Lake, Ia.





At the dedication of the monument in 1895, Abbie Gardner Sharp (center) is flanked by Chetanmaza (Iron Hawk), one of the Wahpeton who rescued her, and Charles Flandrau, the Sioux Indian agent at the time of her captivity.

the cabin. A bold sign painted on the lattice roof advertised: "Within this lattice work you see the sights of a lifetime! The only log cabin and historical relics of the Indian Massacre of 1857." Stepping through the proscenium of the front gate and into the shelter of the lattice, visitors experienced a sacred, shrine-like atmosphere carefully created and controlled by its proprietor.

A popular postcard from the period (*opposite*) shows the interior of the Gardner cabin museum. Sharp and her son Allen are shown with a display of souvenirs, artifacts, and pictures. On the wall behind the counter hangs one of five paintings illustrating the events of 1857. (The largest ones may have been painted by her.) These "memory paintings" depict in explicit detail the bloody deaths of the Gardner family, the burning of a neighbor's cabin, and the killing of a fellow captive. She used these paintings to vividly illustrate the massacre

and captivity to visitors, and she also reproduced them in later editions of her book.

Sharp spent the winter of 1893/94 in Des Moines lobbying the Iowa legislature for funds to construct a monument dedicated to all the victims of the Spirit Lake Massacre. She succeeded. On the 37th anniversary of the killings, the state appropriated \$5,000 for the construction of the monument and appointed a commission, which included Sharp, former Governor Cyrus Carpenter, attorney John F. Duncombe, Dickinson County settler R. A. Smith, and former state representative (and first curator of the state's historical collections) Charles Aldrich, to oversee its completion. Sharp wrote: "All those who have ever stood by the grave wherein lie six of my family near the cabin door . . . will rejoice with me to know that . . . the hearts of statesmen have been touched by the story of . . . tragic death, and



the quiet bravery which inspired these people to seek homes in the wilderness." A 55-foot granite obelisk was erected next to the cabin on a lot purchased by the state. The bodies of 17 of the victims were removed from their original graves and reinterred at the foot of the column.

Some 5,000 people attended the dedication of the monument on July 26, 1895. Presiding over the ceremonies were the monument commission and others, such as Charles Flandrau and Chetanmaza, a Wahpeton Dakota who was involved in the effort to buy Abigail in May 1857. In his remarks, commissioner R. A. Smith emphasized the cultural virtues of bravery, endurance, and sacrifice, and compared the Spirit Lake monument to the new Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Des Moines: "While [the state of Iowa] is spending her hundreds of thousands of dollars in giving fitting

recognition to the glorious deeds of her brave soldiers and sailors who fought and bled on so many battlefields, [Iowa] should also . . . give recognition to the . . . band of patriots and heroes, who, taking their lives in their hands struck out on her northwestern border and after braving dangers such as fall to the lot of but very few, finally gave their lives as a sacrifice to their intrepidity and courage."

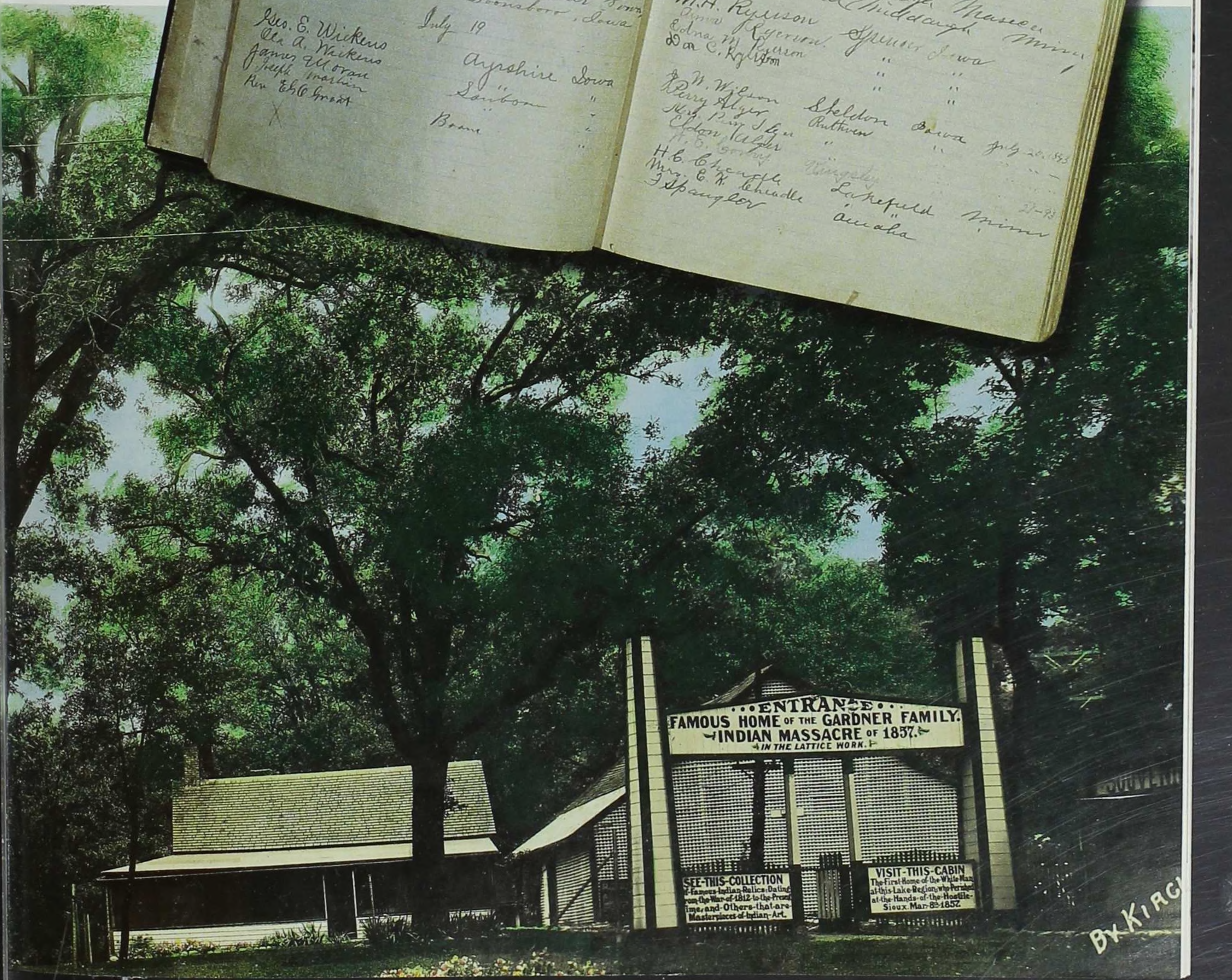
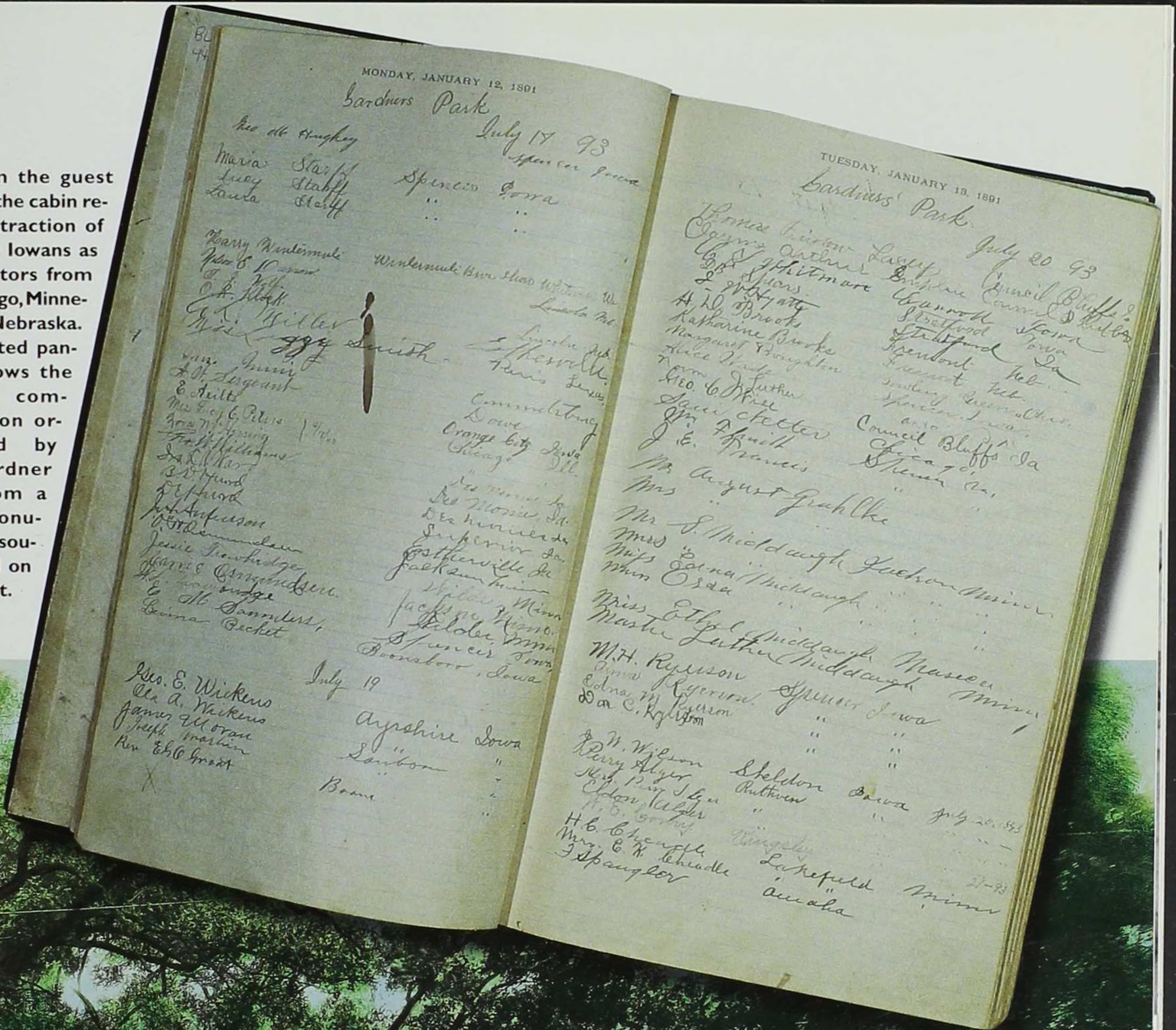
**W**hile the preservation of history might have motivated her original decision to open the doors of the cabin to the public, it was the flow of tourism and commerce that allowed them to remain open. The enduring popularity of the Gardner cabin was partially predicated on the titillation of the

SHSI (IOWA CITY). BOOK PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHARLES SCOTT





Pages from the guest register at the cabin reveal the attraction of the site for Iowans as well as visitors from Ohio, Chicago, Minnesota, and Nebraska. A hand-tinted panorama shows the range of commemoration orchestrated by Abbie Gardner Sharp, from a granite monument to a souvenir stand on the far right.



BY KIRBY



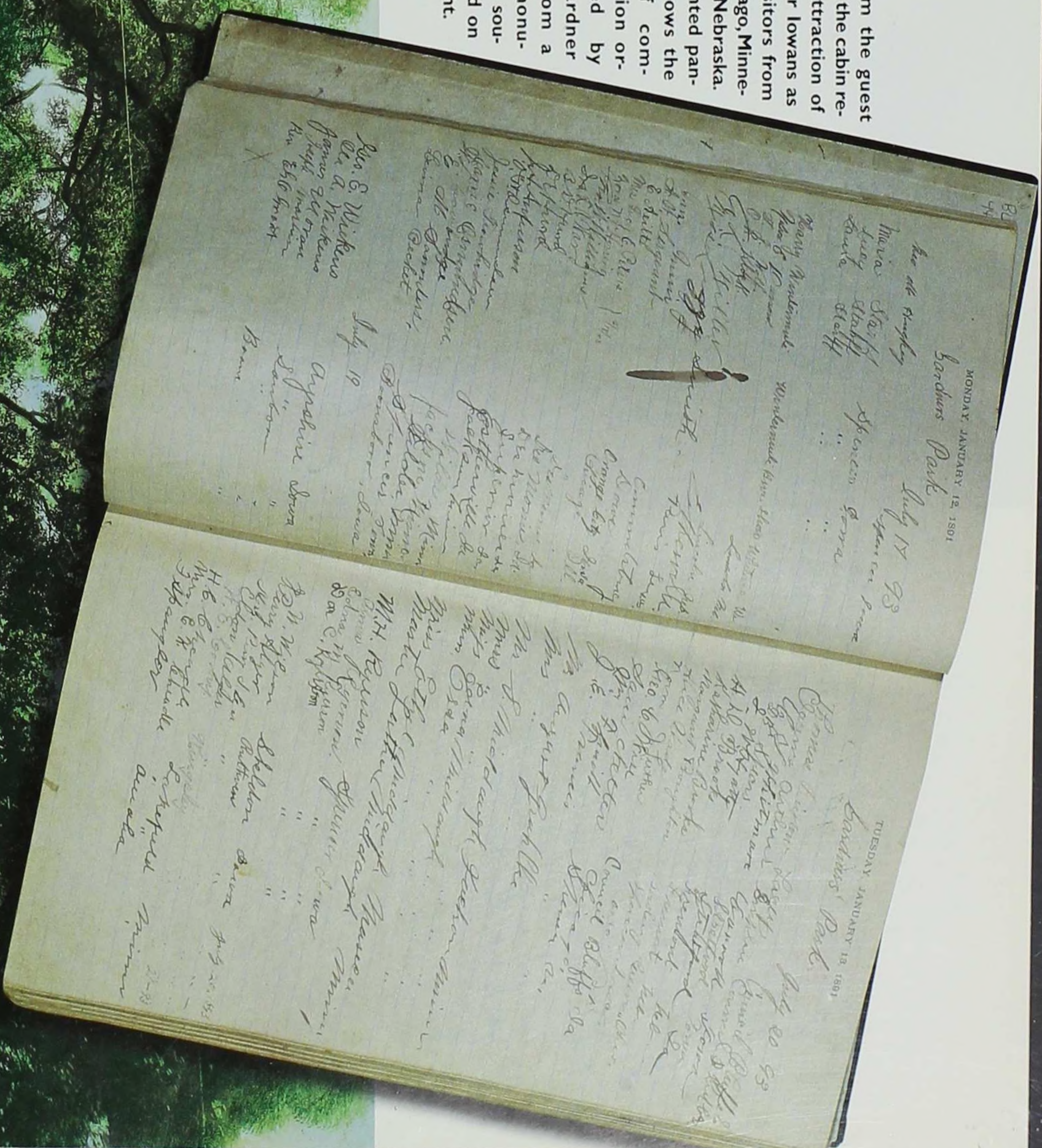
the quiet bravery which inspired these people to seek homes in the wilderness." A 55-foot granite obelisk was erected next to the cabin on a lot purchased by the state. The bodies of 17 of the victims were removed from their original graves and reinterred at the foot of the column.

Some 5,000 people attended the dedication of the monument on July 26, 1895. Presiding over the ceremonies were the monument commission and others, such as Charles Flandrau and Chetamaza, a Wahpeton Dakota who was involved in the effort to buy Abigail in May 1857. In his remarks, commissioner R. A. Smith emphasized the cultural virtues of bravery, endurance, and sacrifice, and compared the Spirit Lake monument to the new Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Des Moines: "While [the state of Iowa] is spending her hundreds of thousands of dollars in giving fitting

recognition to the glorious deeds of her brave soldiers and sailors who fought and bled on so many battlefields, [Iowa] should also . . . give recognition to the . . . band of patriots and heroes, who, taking their lives in their hands struck out on her northwestern border and after braving dangers such as fall to the lot of but very few, finally gave their lives as a sacrifice to their intrepidity and courage."

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SSI (IOWA CITY) BOOK PHOTOGRAPHED BY CHARLES SCOTT



ENTRANCE TO FAMOUS HOME OF THE GARDNER FAMILY INDIAN MASSACRE OF 1837

SEE THE COLLECTION OF THE GARDNER FAMILY

DK KIRCH



public's taste for lurid stories. In his study of 19th-century American tourist attractions, John F. Sears notes that "Americans had developed an almost morbidly avid appetite for the sublime terror of huge devastation." Though Sharp portrayed herself in her book and lectures as a victim, in actuality she was also an aggressive entrepreneur who was able to capitalize on the tragic events of her life and appeal to the public's interest. Visitors were lured from great distances by the grisly tale of conflict between white settlers and Native Americans and, in particular, by the lurid details of the captivity of young Abigail Gardner. A visit to the cabin offered the public a chance to step into the scene of an infamous event and to learn, firsthand, the explicit details of the killing, mutilation, and abduction that took

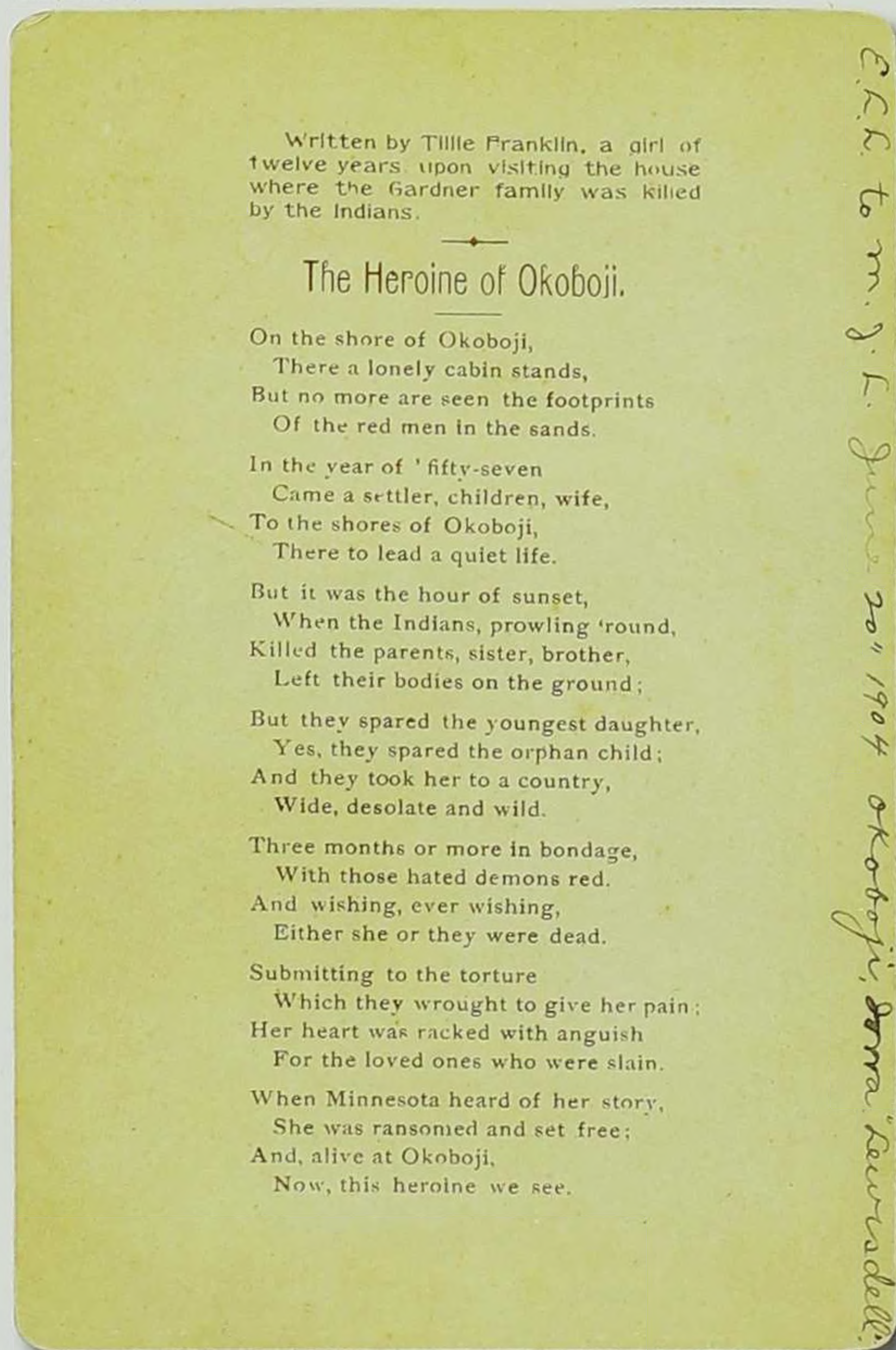
place there. Though mixing tragedy and tourism might seem paradoxical, Sharp made each visitor feel privileged to hear the details of this horrific event by personally recounting her story. In later years, when she was too frail to repeat her story several times a day, she delivered it via a phonograph recording.

The Gardner Cabin was also popular because of its fortuitous location. Many of the same natural attributes that had drawn the Gardner family to the lakes region in 1856 brought thousands more in the decades that followed. By the time Sharp returned to the area in 1883, resorts were already being constructed to accommodate tourists who were arriving in large numbers at the newly completed railroad depot. "Here, where once stood the grimy tepees of the Dakotas, may be seen, in the summer, the white tents of people of culture and refinement," Sharp commented in her memoir. Capitalizing on the local tourism, Sharp inserted into later editions of her book several postcard scenes of Okoboji hotels, sailboats, and vacationers—amidst the grisly illustrations of massacre and murder.

She also tapped into the romantic curiosity tourists held for the indigenous inhabitants of the Iowa lakes region. She wrote, "The weird traditions of the dusky race that once haunted these shores, and the stories of the dark tragedies enacted here, have laid over all a more powerful spell than beauty; the subtle one of romance." Legends such as the one that attributed the name Spirit Lake to the Indian spirits that supposedly guarded it also enhanced the popularity of the area. Once the Dakota were safely subdued and no longer a threat, tourists quickly became intrigued with their enigmatic culture and the romance of their "primitive" ways. Sharp catered to this fascination by peddling Indian crafts and by recounting her experiences as their captive.

In her later years, Sharp wholeheartedly endorsed the system of government and mission schools that were established for Indians in the Dakotas. She visited reservation schools in such places as Fort Totten, North Dakota, and Flandreau, South Dakota. In her travels she retraced the journey she first made as a captive, visiting some of Inkpaduta's former camp sites and even encountering one man who claimed to be a member of the band that had held her captive. A convert to Christian Science, Sharp expressed great confidence that "the Indian possesses the quality of mind sufficient to elevate him above the low plane of thought and habit in which he has groveled along ever since he was found by Columbus." Many times she addressed Indian groups in

SHSI (IOWA CITY)



A child's poem about the "Heroine of Okoboji" fills the back of this cabinet-card portrait of Sharp and continues the tradition of captivity narratives.





Abbie Gardner Sharp (above) died in 1921 at the age of 77, in Colfax, Iowa. She left the cabin to her family. Right: Daughter-in-law Mary Sharp (left) poses with a friend in 1928 outside the entrance gate.

schools and churches, shared her well-known story with them, and gently admonished them to learn to read and write and to live in harmony with the whites. She died in Colfax, Iowa, in 1921. She left the cabin to family members, who transferred ownership to the State of Iowa in 1942 and moved to California.

In many ways Abigail Gardner Sharp was an extremely strong figure who crusaded not only to memorialize the "Spirit Lake Massacre," but also to "reform" the Indian population through Christianity. Along the way, she became a savvy entrepreneur and aggressive promoter. So why does the image of Sharp as a victim persist? Because the story of her life was filled with tragic events? Because she was a symbol of lost virtue? Or perhaps because she was an orphan who was later separated from her husband?

Perhaps we continue to see her as a victim partially because it was the role Gardner herself perpetuated in her writing and in her museum. While the stereotype of "Frail Flower" implied limits to her capabilities and aroused pity in those who were familiar with her story, it also endowed her with a certain amount of notoriety and power. Her status as victim presented her with an audience. Through



BOTH PHOTOS: SHSI (IOWA CITY)



her lectures and memoir, she was able to cultivate that audience and to muster popular support for such causes as the construction of the Spirit Lake monument and the reform of Indian civilization. The Gardner log cabin became a symbol of her views and causes while serving as a stage on which to recount the horrendous details of one of Iowa's most tragic events.

**A**bbie Gardner Sharp's log house museum was well established by 1907 when 61-year-old Charlotte Kirchner Butler and her only child, 23-year-old Hortense, returned to Peterson, Iowa, 40 miles south of Spirit Lake. Charlotte Kirchner had been ten in the winter of 1857, when Inkpaduta and his band of Wahpekute had stopped at her family's cabin in search of food a few weeks before they reached Spirit Lake.

Much had happened in the Kirchner family since that harsh winter. The little settlement of Long Grove had changed its name to Peterson. Charlotte had left northwest Iowa to study in Grinnell and Iowa City and then returned to teach school. In 1880, she married Moreau Butler, the first doctor to establish a permanent practice in Cherokee County. Meanwhile, in 1867, Charlotte's older brother Phillip and his new wife, Anna Parrish Kirchner, had moved to 320 acres of farmland just northwest of Peterson. There they built a modest and unassuming log house—15 by 20 feet, and a story and a half—as their first home. Although hand-hewn logs formed the walls, dimension lumber cut at a mill owned by Phillip's brother Gust Kirchner was used for floors, joists, roof, doors, and window frames. This method of mixing traditional log and modern frame building techniques was sometimes used toward the end of the region's period

of settlement as a means of constructing homes and businesses quickly and inexpensively.

Inside the log home, a wood-burning stove served for cooking and heating. A loft space provided sleeping quarters, and a trap door led to an earthen storage cellar. As the farming operation expanded, the Kirchners enlarged their log house by building two frame additions. Many years later, Hortense Butler Heywood, Charlotte's daughter, recalled these spaces: "On one side was a shed containing anvil and forge with a bellows so large that a child's utmost strength scarcely served to force a puff of air from it; on the other side was the kitchen and in it a kettle once used for rendering the fat used in the making of soap and large enough to hold three or four children." From this small home, Phillip and Anna Kirchner operated their farm until 1882, when they built a two-story, white frame house only a few yards away.

Changes came quickly to Clay County and the surrounding region during the last decades of the 19th century. Farms covered much of the prairie, and due partly to improvements in transportation and agricultural technology, the business of farming grew beyond the level of mere subsistence. As farmers expanded their operations to remain competitive, they often tore down the original pioneer homes to make way for larger, more permanent dwellings. Yet amidst the new buildings the successful Kirchners had added to their farm—the frame



As the Kirchner farm prospered and new outbuildings rose, the 1867 cabin held its own on the farmstead and found new purposes—first as a workshop and then as a museum and landmark.





BOTH PHOTOS: SHS (IOWA CITY); PETERSON, IOWA, NOTEBOOK

**Charlotte Kirchner Butler (in dark dress) undertook the preservation of her brother's cabin and transformed it into a historical landmark. Here, she poses outside the cabin with another brother, William, and his wife.**

house, a huge barn in 1890, then a tenant house and several outbuildings—the small log home remained in its original location, serving for a time as a workshop and spared for its practical utility, its sentimental value, or simply its novelty.

The couple died childless—Anna in 1891 and Phillip in 1903—and the farm was rented out until 1907, when Phillip's sister Charlotte and her daughter, Hortense, returned to live there. It seems doubtful that, in 1907, many of the neighbors would have imagined that the log house in the Kirchner front yard was destined to become a historical landmark. "This was the only one of these primitive homes left," Charlotte later related, "and it was ready to tumble down. A kind neighbor offered to take it down and haul it away for . . . firewood."

Instead, Charlotte Kirchner Butler initiated the careful restoration of the log house. Though her brother Phillip had constructed the cabin eleven years after Inkpaduta's much-remembered visit to Peterson and the surrounding area, she saw the log house as a symbol of the struggles the Kirchner family and their neighbors had faced during their first years on the banks of the Little Sioux River and as a reminder of the part the settle-

"THE HOUSE BUILDING had progressed rapidly. Trees had been cut, scored, hewn and marked, ready to be put up. When enough had been cut, all the men in the new settlement met and had a 'raising.' One by one, the logs were rolled and lifted into place. At the first story lighter logs were put cross-wise to support the second floor; then more logs and then the gables, on which rested the ridge pole, securely fastened to support the rafters. As there were no shingles to be had, their place was taken by slabs made by splitting logs, which had been sawed into two and a half foot lengths, lengthwise into even thickness and then smoothing the slabs roughly. They made a fairly tight roof. The puncheon floors were made by splitting logs about four feet long into thick boards and smoothing them with a broadax. These floors were not too bad when you knew that they were the best you could have and that no one on the frontier had better ones."

Charlotte Kirchner Butler wrote these words to her daughter, recalling the log cabin built by her parents in Clay County in 1856. Her brother's log house, which she later preserved, is believed to have been one of the last log homes built in the county, and its construction varied significantly from that of the earlier structures described above. Yet for Butler, her brother's log house came to embody the memories she carried from her frontier childhood. —Greg Olson



ment played in the prelude to the "Spirit Lake Massacre." Butler saw to it that the log home was restored to look exactly as it had when her brother and sister-in-law first moved into it in 1867. The chinking between the logs was replaced, the windows and roof were repaired, and the add-on summer kitchen and blacksmith shop were removed.

In the next years, Butler began to display a collection of artifacts in the Kirchner log house, including agricultural tools, Native American arrowheads, some family furniture, and the bellows from Phillip's blacksmith forge. Soon, Charlotte and Hortense opened the log house for tours. By the 1920s, their "museum" began to receive publicity in several regional newspapers as a site of historical significance. "Dear Girlie," Butler wrote her daughter at one point, "The little log house in my front yard seems to be quite popular."

Butler understood that the Kirchner log house appealed to visitors partly because it served as a sort of picturesque curio. But there was more to it. Set in the beautiful surroundings of the farm, which came to be

known as "the Oaks," the cabin became a striking visual symbol of the romance and nostalgia many Americans associated with frontier and early agrarian life. Butler was highly educated and well traveled (widowed in 1894, she had lived in Chicago from 1899 to 1905, and then traveled in Europe until 1907), and she understood the widespread sentiment for the image of the hand-hewn log home, and its power to symbolize westward expansion and the nation's emerging identity. As tour guide, Charlotte Kirchner Butler added a personal touch to the pioneer saga by recounting childhood memories to visitors. The cabin and its artifacts illustrated her tales of hardships in the winter of 1857, the Kirchners' brush with the starving Wahpekute, and the trail of trouble that led northward.

**L**ike Abigail Gardner Sharp, Charlotte Kirchner Butler and her daughter opened their log house museum to the public. Unlike the Gardner cabin, however, the Kirchner log house was free to all visitors

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR



Visitors to the Kirchner cabin saw an array of furnishings, farm tools, and arrowheads collected by Charlotte Kirchner Butler.



Knowing your interest in all of our history I thought you might like this sketch of my log cabin. It was a project of our church Circle and we have sold nearly 175 of the boxes. This summer I have had over four hundred visitors to the cabin, the interest seems to be increasing.

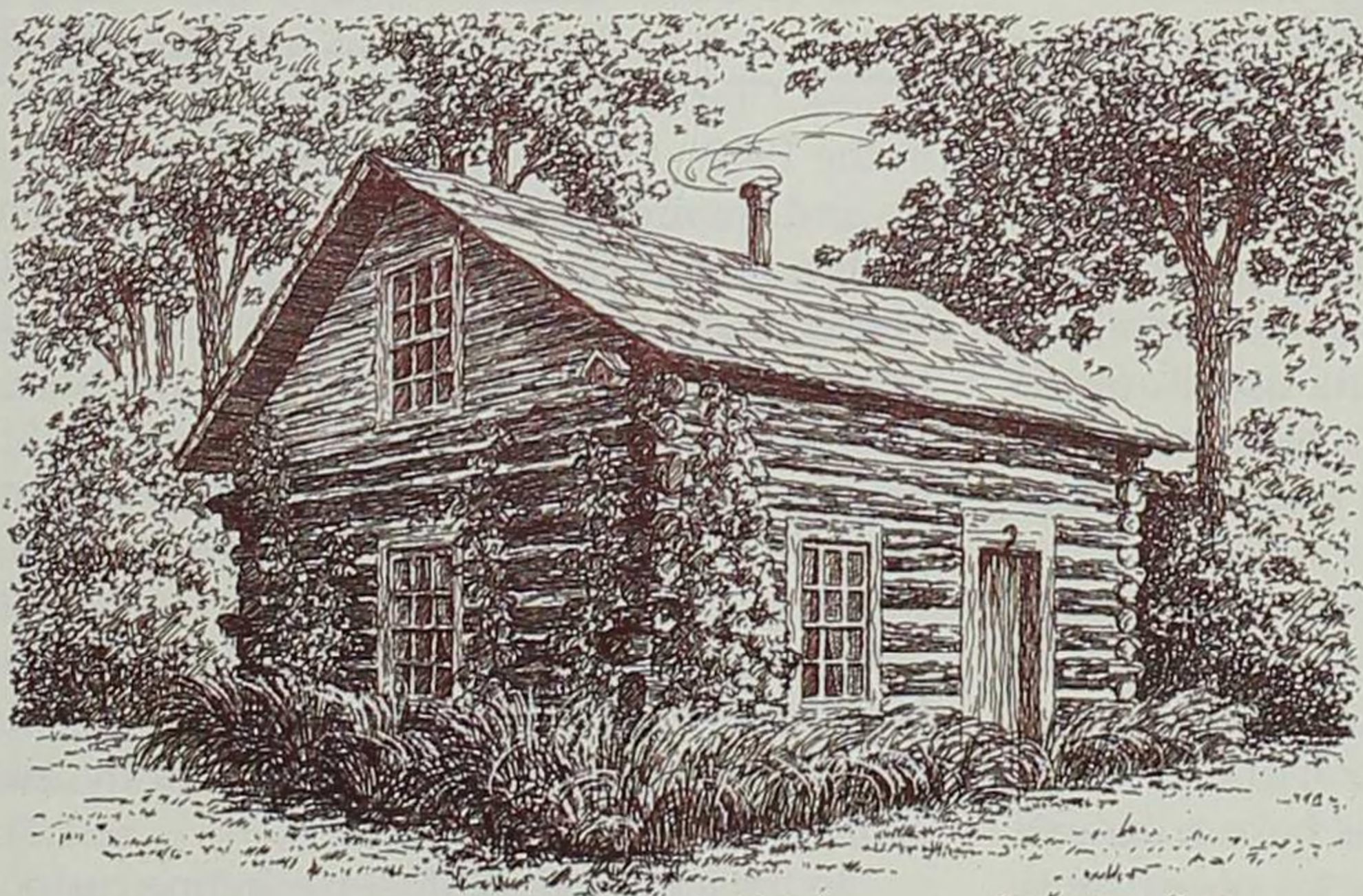
With Christmas greetings and good wishes to you both.

Dec. 3, 1967  
The Oaks,  
Peterson, Iowa

Hortense B. Heywood

Hometown Prints  
HOMETOWN, WISCONSIN

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Philip Kirchner Cabin - built in 1867

Peterson, Iowa

After Butler's death in 1923, her daughter, Hortense Butler Heywood, assumed the role of the cabin's protector, historian, and promoter. Above: Heywood examines artifacts in a March 1956 article for *The Iowan*.

The typed message on this illustrated notecard demonstrates Heywood's passion and energy for bringing the cabin to the public's attention. The notecard is in the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa and may have been sent to its superintendent.



and none of the objects in it were for sale. While the Gardner cabin attracted thousands of visitors each year, thanks largely to Sharp's promotional ability and its location near several popular lake resorts, visitors to the Kirchner cabin were primarily area school groups and occasional travelers who stopped by to visit the rustic curiosity in the front yard of this Clay County farm.

Butler's descendants believe she intended the Kirchner log home to serve as an antidote to the commercialism of the Gardner cabin and Sharp's mix of history and commerce. Butler, a woman of more independent means, felt that steering clear of profit would enable her to depict a more genuine picture of Iowa pioneer history. Yet both women clearly shared similar beliefs about the significance of the history they had participated in, and both felt uniquely qualified to present that history to others.

Butler and Sharp were not alone in this respect. During the first decades of the 20th century many Iowans reflected on the settlement history of their state. Hamlin Garland's *A Son of the Middle Border* (1917), Josephine Donovan's *Black Soil* (1930), and Herbert Quick's *Vandemark's Folly* (1922) are just a sample of the Iowa novels that brought the saga of the rapidly changing prairie into the canon of contemporary literature. Preservation efforts by groups such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and Old Settlers Associations contributed to a general awareness of Iowa's heritage, and local residents began to recognize many of the buildings and sites that were of historical significance.

After Butler's death in 1932, Hortense Butler Heywood worked to preserve her mother's stories and to ensure the Kirchner log home's place of importance in local and state history. She was responsible for much of its publicity and occasionally wrote articles for newspapers such as the *Peterson Patriot* and the *Sioux City Journal*. Her activity in the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs and the State Historical Society of Iowa provided her with a forum from which to speak publicly on topics of historical interest.

Trained as an entomologist at Cornell University and co-author of *A Handbook of the Dragonflies of North America* (1929), Heywood brought the analytical perspective of a scholar to her interpretation of the history of Iowa. Yet, perhaps because she was born a generation after the settlement of Peterson, some of her prose revealed a streak of romantic sentiment. In an unpublished article titled "Yesterday," she described a scene that, most likely, she had not personally witnessed: "Despite the terror they spread about them the Indians gave the frontier life a touch of picturesqueness; the stolid braves, draped in gaudy blankets, bearing their

guns over their shoulders; the squaws, with their pa-pooes strapped to their backs, struggling with restless ponies and with the awkward 'travois' in which their household goods were packed; the camp with clustered teepees outlined against wood or hill, were objects of never ending interest to those to whom such a sight was incredibly novel."

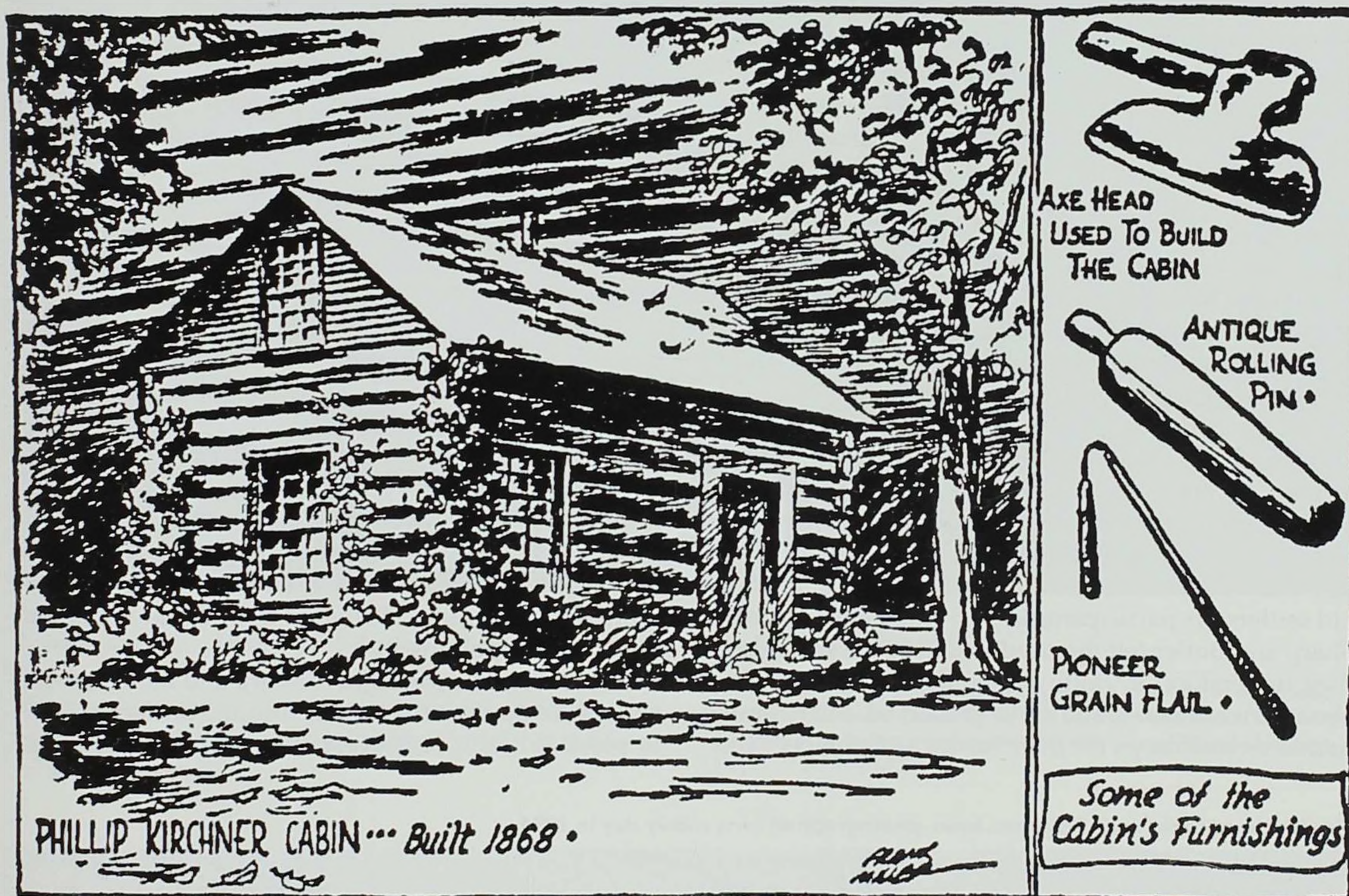
Through a shared interest in history, both mother and daughter had understood that the log house museum they had created was more than a monument to the family's founding role in the history of Clay County. Butler had realized immediately that the Kirchner log house was historically important because it remained intact and in situ. She believed that this log house, unlike cabins that had been altered or moved, was an accurate example of a pioneer home and that it stood as an important contrast to the Gardner cabin, which had been remodeled as a museum and souvenir shop. To her, it was important that Iowans never become so busy improving their homes, farms, and businesses that they forget their humble and rugged beginnings or their ancestors' heroic conquest over the wilderness.

Many of these deep cultural themes can be detected in various newspaper features written about the Kirchner log house. The home "contained two rooms, one downstairs and one up and the life lived there was of necessity bare of many of the comforts which we have come to consider essential to happiness," reported Ruth Fraser in the *Sioux City Journal* in the 1940s. Other writers described the house as rustic and quaint, staunch and sturdy. "When Grandpa Built a Home Here He Built to Last," proclaimed the *Spencer Daily Reporter* in a 1939 photo essay, while a 1928 headline from the *Des Moines Register* stated that the Kirchner log house was "Still Defying [the] Elements." Nearly all articles faithfully, if not always correctly, reported Charlotte Kirchner Butler's story of the harsh winter and Indian/settler conflict of 1857. More than one reporter confused the log house—built by her brother in 1867—with Charlotte's and Phillip's own childhood log cabin that was visited by Inkpaduta in 1857.

In the late 1960s, Pulitzer-winning cartoonist Frank Miller produced an illustrated essay for the *Des Moines Register* that perhaps best articulates the enduring power of the Kirchner log house. Titled "Pioneer Cabin: Symbol for Americans," the feature expressed Miller's strong belief that this modest home was a reminder of the pioneer spirit of survival. Based on information gathered



# Pioneer Cabin: Symbol for Americans



from Hortense Butler Heywood, Miller's essay recited the litany of hardships faced by the Kirchners, Bicknells, and Meads, the first families to settle in Clay County. Miller concluded that "the Kirchner cabin stands as a tribute to a people who faced annihilation, yet never gave up the things they had worked for, or the hopes they had lived for; who set an example that should stand as a lesson to Americans today." Miller's accompanying drawing (*above*) presented the Kirchner log house as an idealized log cabin, standing straight and strong under a darkening sky. In a small side panel, Miller included sketches of three of the tools displayed in the log home: a grain flail, an antique rolling pin, and an axe head "used to build the cabin."

Miller's essay illustrates the ability of Kirchner's log house to transcend its local historical significance. Although Charlotte Butler seems to have viewed the house as an accurate artifact of a specific time and place, she also successfully empowered it as a cultural icon. By

restoring the cabin without its two frame additions and by weaving the experiences of her frontier childhood with the cabin's own history as the first home of newlyweds Phillip and Anna Kirchner, Butler endowed the structure with an identity that easily blended with the stereotype of a pioneer home. As such, it more easily captured the imaginations of its visitors. As a landmark, it possessed an appeal sufficiently broad to evoke strong cultural responses in those who, like cartoonist Miller, came from outside the immediate area.

No longer simply a primitive home defying the elements, the log home had evolved into a historical site, built upon a mixture of preserved fact and cultural myth. Three generations of women—Charlotte, Hortense, and now Julia Heywood Booth (Hortense's daughter and current guardian of the site)—have made a point of staying committed to the factual presentation of early Clay County history. Yet, as is often the case with family histories, they relished the value of a good story. Like

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Abigail Gardner Sharp, they realized that the manner in which their story was presented directly affected the enduring popularity and long-term survival of their log house museum. Through oral history, photographs, memoirs, articles, and speeches they were able to promote the Kirchner log house in such a way that the public has long regarded it as nothing less than, as cartoonist Frank Miller called it, a "Symbol for Americans."

**L**ike most who witnessed the plowing under of the Iowa prairie, Abbie Gardner Sharp and Charlotte Kirchner Butler understood the magnitude of change their generation had laid upon the land. Also like many Americans, they saw this change as a necessary heroic struggle. Their families and others like them had battled the wilderness, weather, and indigenous populations to secure the land for what they perceived as the "advancement of civilization." As this change continued at a frantic pace, as corn replaced the once abundant stands of bluestem, so, too, did new white frame farmhouses replace the humble first homes of the old settlers. As participants in the settlement saga, both Sharp and Butler felt the need to define the struggle as they understood it. Both wrote and spoke frequently about Iowa history, and both preserved their family homes as backdrops for their stories and perspectives.

While conscious of the broad strokes of settlement history, Sharp and Butler were also keenly interested in protecting family legacies. Both were proud that their parents had been among the first whites to establish permanent homes in northwest Iowa. Their acts of preservation ensured the enduring place of their parents and siblings in the annals of history. By sharing their private stories and family artifacts with tourists and visitors, Sharp and Butler could direct the manner in which these things became absorbed into the public memory. By presenting their heritage in a museum context, the two women further endowed that heritage with the aura of authenticity.

Thanks to the early preservation efforts of Abbie Gardner Sharp and Charlotte Kirchner Butler, both log house museums remain today in their original locations, and both are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Abbie Gardner Cabin Historic Site is maintained by the State Historical Society of Iowa, which restored the cabin to its 1856 appearance and built a museum and visitors center next to the cabin. The Kirchner log house is currently owned by Butler's granddaughter, Julia Heywood Booth, and is open to visitors by appointment.

Because of the foresight of Sharp and Butler, we can experience up close the architecture and artifacts related to pioneer life in northwest Iowa. As promoters and

**The Kirchner cabin near Peterson, Iowa, photographed on a snowy day in 1991.**



PHOTO BY GREG OLSON





PHOTO BY AND COURTESY OF MIKE WHYTE

preservationists, Sharp and Butler left us a rich guide to the past. At the same time, by examining their means of preserving their past, we can learn much about how they viewed themselves and their part in this moment of Iowa history. ❖

#### The Gardner Cabin today.

The Kirchner log cabin (opposite page) is open to the public by appointment from Memorial Day to Labor Day. For more information regarding the cabin or to arrange a tour, contact Burdette Stier of Peterson Heritage, Inc., at 712-295-6443.

*Raised on a century farm in Buena Vista County, Iowa, Greg Olson has fabricated and installed exhibits at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City. He is the former director of the Walters-Boone County Museum in Columbia, Missouri, and currently curates and designs exhibits for the Missouri State Archives.*

#### NOTE ON SOURCES

This article combines two separate works. Each was presented at the Iowa Heritage Expo (Des Moines, 1995, 1996), and a brief version combining the two at the "Women in Preservation Conference" (Tempe, Arizona, 1997). Research for the Butler Cabin portion was supported by a Sesquicentennial grant from the State Historical Society of Iowa and the Iowa Sesquicentennial Commission.

Discussions of frontier and log house iconography appear in Mac E. Berrick, "The Log House as Cultural Symbol," *Material Culture* 18 (1986), 15-16; John R. Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America, 1580-1845* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 180-81; Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 8-22; William H. Truettner, *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Press, 1991); and Vivien Green Fryd, *Art and Empire: The Politics of Ethnicity in the United States Capitol, 1815-1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). Iowa sources on early settlement include Frank Luther Mott, *Literature of Pioneer Life in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1923); and Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration, *The WPA Guide to 1930s Iowa* (1938; reprint, Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1986), 130-39.

Various accounts of the "Spirit Lake Massacre" and of the captivity of Abigail Gardner have been published over the years. The most popular, of course, is her own *History of the Spirit Lake Massacre*, which was reprinted in at least nine editions and is still available in a facsimile edition from the Dickinson County Historical Society in Spirit Lake. Other versions of the story can be found in Lorenzo Porter Lee's *History of the Spirit Lake Massacre!* (1857, reprinted by the State Historical Society of Iowa in 1971); R. A. Smith's *A History of Dickinson County, Iowa* (Des Moines: Kenyon Publishing, 1902); and Thomas Teakle's *The Spirit Lake Massacre* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1918). A fictional account of the story is found in MacKinlay Kantor's novel *Spirit Lake* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1961).

Richard VanDerBeets's *The Indian Captivity Narrative: An American Genre* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984) is a comprehensive survey of the history of captivity narratives in the United States. A more analytical treatment can be found in June Namias, *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). See also Roy Harvey Pearce, "The Significance of the Captivity Narrative," *American Literature* 19 (1947): 2-4.

For information about Abigail Gardner Sharp's later years and the beginnings of the Gardner Cabin museum, see Hattie P. Elston's *White Men Follow After* (Iowa City: Athens Press, 1946); and Peggy Schenk Smith's *Arnolds Park at Lake Okoboji* (Aurelia, IA: Sentinel Publishing, 1976). In the revised sixth edition of *The History of the Spirit Lake Massacre*, Sharp discusses the museum's early years in a chapter called "An Epoch of Advancement."

Concerning the Kirchner cabin, the major sources are biographical data and newspaper articles in the Kirchner family papers, held by Julia Heywood Booth (Sioux Falls, South Dakota), and the author's interviews with Booth, 1991-95. See also Drake Hokanson, *Reflecting a Prairie Town: A Year in Peterson* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1994), 111-27; Curt Harnack, "Prelude to Massacre," *The Iowan* 4:3 (March 1956); and Bessie L. Lyon, "Hungry Indians," *The Palimpsest* 9 (Oct. 1928).

John A. Jakle's *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); and John F. Sears's *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1989), are extremely valuable in establishing historical context for small tourist attractions like Gardner Cabin.

Finally, I am greatly indebted to Steven Ohm, the State Historical Society of Iowa's Historic Sites Coordinator, and to Mike Koppert, the Site Manager at Gardner Cabin, for leading me to invaluable resources and for sharing their enthusiasm for this topic. Annotations are held in *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* production files (SHSI-Iowa City).