

SOURCE MATERIAL OF IOWA HISTORY

A COUNTY POLITICAL CONVENTION IN 1872

[The township, county, district, and state nominating conventions were training-schools for politicians in the days before primaries took the job of choosing candidates from the hands of the few to the votes of the many. In these meetings the novice politico learned the tricks of the trade — tricks now reserved almost entirely to the great national conventions. The following account of a Polk County nominating convention, in spite of its local application, describes a struggle over contested delegations that is a familiar part of many recent national conventions of both parties.

This newspaper account is reproduced because it is one of the very few local conventions that was completely reported. Most newspapers in the seventies gave a half-column or so to reporting the county meetings, with only a brief summary of the political jockeying that went into the choice of a candidate. Even state conventions were seldom reported in full. But in the summer of 1872 a struggle was going on in the Seventh Congressional District of Iowa for control of the local segment of the Republican party. For that reason the *Des Moines Register* devoted seven columns of its first page to its reporter's account of what happened. Granted the bias of the paper and of its "phonographic reporter," the following account is a full story of what happened.

To appreciate what was going on, some background is needed. In 1862 the then Fifth Congressional District of Iowa included 23 counties in the southwest quarter of the state. The state capital, Des Moines, and the important city of Council Bluffs on the Missouri River were part of this district. In that year John A. Kasson of Des Moines had been elected to Congress from this district. He served in that capacity until 1867, when a revolt against him, led by Grenville M. Dodge of Council Bluffs and James S. Clarkson of Des Moines, defeated him for renomination. Those who have read the Society's recent publication, Edward Younger's *John A. Kasson*, will appreciate the bitter intraparty struggle then taking place in Iowa for control of the Republican party. Dodge himself succeeded Kasson in Congress for one term; the two following terms were filled by Frank W.

Palmer, Dodge's choice for the post. Meanwhile, Kasson had served three terms in the Iowa General Assembly and now wished to return to Congress. In 1872 the state had been redistricted; the old Fifth was split in two, with Kasson's home county of Polk going into the Seventh, and Dodge's home county of Pottawattamie into the Eighth. Thus, one of Kasson's enemies had been removed, but he still had to contest with James S. Clarkson, the dynamic editor of the state's most powerful Republican paper, the *Des Moines Register*. Furthermore, 1872 was the year of the Liberal Republican revolt, in which the so-called Liberal Republicans, seconded by the Democrats, had nominated Horace Greeley for the presidency in opposition to U. S. Grant. Clarkson, in his effort to defeat Kasson's new bid for Congress, thus had to fight not only Kasson but the Liberals of his own party in order to retain control of the "Des Moines Regency," as it was then called. He tried to combine the two enemies into one by classing Kasson as a Liberal but never quite succeeded in making the appellation stick. Kasson was not a true Grant Radical but neither was he a Greeley Liberal.

The Congressional Convention of the Seventh District was called for August 14, 1872, later than all the other districts, due to the fact that the incumbent Palmer and the contestant Kasson were carrying on a bitter fight in the townships and the ten counties of the district (Decatur, Wayne, Clarke, Lucas, Adair, Madison, Warren, Guthrie, Dallas, and Polk) for control of the delegations. The Kasson forces even accused the Palmer men of campaigning on Sunday, a day when politicians were supposed to rest. During the final week or ten days before the district meeting, the townships were holding conventions to send delegates to the county conventions, most of which were held within a few days of the district meeting. Polk County Republicans met on August 10 in the courthouse at Des Moines. Twenty townships had sent seventy delegates. The two principals in the contest were Isaac Brandt, who represented the Kasson forces, and Thomas F. Withrow, a Dodge and Clarkson lieutenant who represented the Palmer forces. Actually, a seat in Congress may have hinged on this small county convention, for after the Kasson forces had triumphed, Palmer withdrew from the race. He wrote to Governor C. C. Carpenter, "I am a 'dead duck.'" The district convention nominated Kasson, and he won the election easily. Had Withrow carried the Polk County convention with him, it is possible that its delegates could have swung the district conven-

tion to Palmer, who would then have returned to Congress, thus putting a stop to Kasson's future brilliant career in Congress and in the diplomatic service.

The report of the convention appeared on the first page of the *Des Moines Iowa State Weekly Register* for August 16, 1872, under the heading: "A Full Report of the Proceedings as Made by C. A. Mosier, Phonographic Reporter." — EDITOR]

The Republican Convention of Polk County, on Saturday last [August 10, 1872], met at the Court House, Des Moines, and was called to order at half past one o'clock P. M., by Mr. Davis, Chairman of the County Committee. Mr. Davis read the call for the County Convention.

MR. DAVIS — I call Marshall Talbot to the Chair, "to organize the meeting."

Mr. Davis did not submit the question of Talbot's chairmanship to the Convention, but Mr. Talbot took the chair, amid the cheers of the Kasson side of the house.

MR. BANNISTER, of Lee — I nominate Mr. Roland, of Beaver township, as temporary Secretary. The gentleman was elected.

ISAAC BRANDT — I move the appointment of a committee of five on credentials. Carried.

The Chair appointed as such committee — reading the names from a memorandum in his hand: Isaac Brandt, of Lee; A. J. Barton, of Four Mile; Joseph Hutton, of Elkhart; Wm. Butler, of Beaver; and Samuel Johnson, of Franklin.

MR. WITHROW — I move that the Committee on Credentials be instructed to attach to their report all papers presented to them and that the same be made a part of the record of the Convention. Mr. Isaac Brandt seconded the motion and it was adopted.

MR. WITHROW moved the appointment of a committee of three, of which J. C. Jordan should be chairman, to report a permanent organization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith.

MR. JORDAN moved to lay the motion on the table.

The chair showing no intention of submitting the motion, Mr. Withrow asked if he intended to entertain the resolution, or rule it out of order, or ride it down according to his instructions. Mr. Withrow said he did not care who was put on the committee, that he did not expect to be one of

those selected, that he had no idea his name was on the list in the chairman's vest pocket.

The chair made no reply to the inquiry whether or not he intended to entertain the resolution or rule it out of order, but did not submit the motion.

Mr. Bannister, of Lee, defended the Chair.

CAPT. THOMAS, of Lee — I want to know what right Mr. Withrow has to speak in the Convention. He was not elected a delegate, he ought to show his credentials before attempting to speak.

MR. WITHROW asked Capt. Thomas how *he* got into the Convention, if he had the right to be there, if he had been elected a delegate in any township. The Captain replied that he hadn't.

The Chair, still declining to submit Mr. Withrow's motion, or rule it out of order, the Convention transacted no business till the presentation of

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

That Committee, through Mr. Brandt, made the following report:

Your Committee on Credentials present the following report:

We find that the following persons have been regularly elected delegates from the various townships, and would recommend that they be entitled to seats in this Convention, with the following votes:

Allen — A. Rice, David Spencer.

Beaver — W. H. Davis, E. Canfield, Wm. Butler, P. Humphrey.

Bloomfield — Joseph Davis, A. P. Kindred.

Camp — J. J. Norris, Erastus Smith, Thomas Darnell.

Crocker — D. C. Marts, J. S. Miller, F. W. Feigerbaum.

Delaware — Samuel Jones, C. A. Johnson.

Des Moines — J. H. Given, Thomas Hatton, J. B. Bissell, Frank Butler, W. A. Rollins, Taylor Pierce, C. H. Getchell, D. Uttersen, O. W. Munsell, T. F. Withrow, Albert Burrows, W. C. Burton, S. Carter, J. B. Miller, E. E. Ainsworth, F. W. Birtch [sic].

Douglas — Wm. Justice, N. Brazleton.

Elkhart — James Woods, Joseph Hutton.

Four Mile — A. J. Barton, J. B. Jennings.

Franklin — Samuel Johnson, D. E. Tyler.

Grant — J. C. Taylor, Resin Wilkins.

Jefferson — Abraham Elliott, John Lawson.

Lee — Wm. Shephard, Joseph Brewer, C. A. Riden, I. N. Thomas, Ed. Loughran, Samuel Greene, L. B. Bannister, R. D. Bennett,

J. Bennett. [Isaac Brandt's name was left off this list, possibly through a typographical error.]

Lincoln — H. A. Williams, S. C. Beals, W. W. Anderson.

Madison — C. J. Clark, Nathan Parmenter, G. F. Hubbard, E. H. Crane.

Saylor — Marshall Talbot, David Witter, R. K. Miller.

Valley — Jonathan B. Huston, W. Sovereign.

Walnut — J. C. Jordan, J. Youngerman, L. P. Wilcox.

Washington — Thomas Stillwell, Daniel Tilton.

Signed,

JOSEPH HUTTON

ISAAC BRANDT

W. A. BUTLER

L. W. JOHNSON

A. J. BARTON.

MR. BANNISTER — I move that the report of the Committee on Credentials be adopted. Seconded.

MR. WITHROW — Perhaps a portion of the Convention would be willing to receive but not to *adopt* the report.

MR. BANNISTER — I move to receive and adopt. Seconded.

MR. WITHROW — I move to amend the motion by striking out the names of Joseph Davis and A. P. Kindred, delegates reported from Bloomfield, and inserting the names of J. P. French and Ben. T. Jones. Motion seconded.

The motion was not recognized by the Chairman of the Convention.

MR. WITHROW — Will the Chair entertain my motion to amend?

THE CHAIR — Gentlemen you have heard the motion for an amendment.

MR. BRANDT — Upon a vote upon that amendment I move that we have a call of the townships in regular order.

MR. WITHROW — I am perfectly willing that it shall be done and that as a rule of this Convention we shall have a roll call of the townships upon any vote, if desired — by any member of the convention.

MR. BRANDT — That is the desire.

MR. WITHROW — A motion for a call of the townships would not be in order now but I am perfectly willing on my part, and it is the feeling of those delegates whom I have talked with here, that upon any vote there shall be a call of the townships and the vote recorded.

MR. BRANDT — If you consent to it there will be no objection to a call of the townships.

MR. WITHROW — I understand the motion before the house is my motion to amend the report of the Committee on Credentials. Is that correct?

MR. BRANDT — Yes.

MR. WITHROW — If that is correct I would ask the Chairman of that Committee what papers were submitted to it in regard to the vote at the primary election in Bloomfield township to elect delegates to this Convention.

MR. BRANDT — There were three sets of papers submitted to the Committee, with three sets of delegates. In computing the whole matter, and looking it all over, we found that the regular delegates that we reported in favor of receiving, had more votes than all the others together. We found that the regular election was held in the school house as set forth by the papers, in accordance with the call by the Chairman of the Township Committee, and that the regular delegates, as reported in our report, received a majority of the votes in all cases.

MR. WITHROW — I would like to know whether or not it was made to appear to the Committee on Credentials that at the meeting at which the delegates, whose names appear in the report, were elected, persons were permitted to vote who avowed themselves as intending to support and vote for Horace Greeley for President.

MR. BRANDT — It was set forth in one of the papers that one Thomas Parker had avowed that he would vote for Horace Greeley.

MR. WITHROW — And his vote was admitted?

MR. BRANDT — His vote was taken.

MR. WITHROW — I will ask whether it further appeared from the papers handed to the Committee that it was then announced by the Judges of that election, upon Thomas Parker's vote being challenged, that any person who heretofore voted the Republican ticket would be permitted to vote at that election whether they intended to support Horace Greeley for President or not; or if there was a declaration by the Judges to that effect?

MR. BRANDT — The conflicting statements in substance were these: That a portion of the gentlemen retired from the house and held an election — a portion of those who had voted in the house voting again. The papers are here and can be read.

MR. WITHROW — I would like to hear those papers read for the information of the delegates in this Convention.

MR. JAMES C. JORDAN — I can't, for the life of me, see what all this

discussion is for, before the Convention is organized. It seems to me that it is clearly out of order. Let the report be adopted and then the question can be brought up.

MR. WITHROW — Mr. President, excuse me for calling attention to the parliamentary rule that the gentleman refers to. I did suppose, though I confess my inexperience in these matters, that upon a motion to adopt a report of a committee on credentials and to admit members as delegates to the Convention, it is in order to amend that report. The gentleman suggests that after the convention is organized, after this report is adopted, this question can be brought up. I would like to know how? After the report is adopted and these parties are in the Convention, I would like to know how we are going to raise the question as to their being legal members of the convention.

MR. J. C. JORDAN — The point I raise is, allowing the time of this Convention in speeches or buncombe, without attending to the business of the Convention. We have a question before the house and until this is disposed of all this discussion is out of order.

MR. WITHROW — What question is before the House?

MR. J. C. JORDAN — The question as to the adoption of the report and the motion to amend.

MR. WITHROW — I ask to have these papers read that we may see whether the door is to be opened for the admission of delegates in this Convention who were elected by persons pledged to vote for Horace Greeley, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency.

MR. BRANDT — I presume there will be no objection to the reading of the papers but it will only consume time. I will read the statement submitted by citizens from Bloomfield township. . . .

MR. BRANDT then read from the credentials of the contesting delegates. After hesitating in reading, he said: "I don't know whether I can read the gentleman's hand writing (referring to Mr. Withrow) or not.

MR. WITHROW — I think you can read it.

MR. BRANDT then read with some difficulty the statement submitted by citizens of Bloomfield Township.

As he was hesitating in his reading MR. WITHROW said: "You must have acted very intelligently as a member of the committee on a paper which you cannot read."

(The paper read was as follows, as reproduced by Mr. Mosier, Secretary of the meeting:)

THE BLOOMFIELD REPUBLICANS' STATEMENT.

BELL'S SCHOOL HOUSE DIST. NO. 2,

August 3d, 1872.

A number of citizens of Bloomfield township assembled at Bell's School House at 3 o'clock P. M., pursuant to a call for a primary meeting for Bloomfield township, to elect delegates to the Republican Convention to be held at the city of Des Moines, August 10th, 1872.

On motion of Thomas Parker, M. L. Devin was called to the chair.

On motion of Thomas Parker, Fernando Easton was appointed one of the Judges of the election proposed to be held, and on motion of Joseph Davis, William Drake was appointed the other Judge.

On motion of Thomas Parker, Bruce Jones was appointed Secretary.

An election by ballot was then commenced for delegates and also for county officers, and candidate for Congress. While the vote was progressing the following resolution was offered by William Deford:

Resolved, That straight Republicans only, are entitled to vote at this convention, excluding all Democrats and Liberal Republicans.

Some discussion occurred upon the resolution, in which Mr. Drake, one of the judges of the election declared that he would vote for neither Greeley nor Grant for President.

The resolution was deemed lost, only a partial vote being taken owing to the confusion arising from the excited discussion.

Thomas Parker then offered his ballot to the judges, whereupon his vote was challenged by Stephen Farr on the ground that he intended to support Horace Greeley and was not entitled to vote at a Republican meeting. Mr. Parker acknowledged that he was supporting and intended to vote for Horace Greeley for President. The challenge was overruled by the judges of the election and the vote admitted.

It was then announced by the Judges that any person who had heretofore voted the Republican ticket would be permitted to vote at that election if he so desired.

Thereupon Dr. W. R. S. Clark proposed that all straight Republicans, all those who intended to support the entire Republican ticket, including the nominees of the Philadelphia Convention,

should retire to the outside of the building and there hold the Republican primary election of Bloomfield township. All who were willing to support the entire Republican ticket, National, State, District and County, were invited to participate in the meeting.

A majority of those present thereupon retired to a place outside and near to the building, and organized a meeting by electing Dr. W. R. S. Clark, President, C. A. Mosier, Secretary, Farron Case and Stephen Farr, Judges of the election.

Upon motion, an election was then had, all Republicans who intend to support the entire Republican ticket being invited to participate. [There follows here a list of 33 names of the men voting at that election.] . . .

Upon a canvass of the vote in the presence of the meeting, it was found that 33 votes were cast. Of these, F. W. Palmer had 26 votes for Representative in Congress, and John A. Kasson had 7 votes for the same position.

[Other votes for district and county positions are then listed, and a township committee appointed.] . . .

MR. JORDAN — I move that the further reading of these papers be dispensed with.

MR. WITHROW — I ask that the affidavits attached to that statement be read.

MR. JORDAN — This is all for Buncombe.

MR. WITHROW — Are there any affidavits appended to that statement attesting the truth of it?

[Brandt reads one affidavit signed by J. P. French and notarized by C. A. Mosier.] . . .

MR. BRANDT — Is there anything further you would like to have read?

MR. WITHROW — Are there no other affidavits on the other side?

MR. BRANDT — No sir, not that I have seen; nothing more than the certificates of the regular officers as read in the first place.

(Mr. Brandt was shown another affidavit on the next page preceding the one last read, which he proceeded to read.)

[This was an affidavit by W. R. S. Clark and Ben. T. Jones, notarized by C. A. Mosier.] . . .

MR. WITHROW — I will only notice the witticisms of the Deputy Treasurer [Brandt was deputy treasurer of Iowa] in his confession before this Convention that he could not read the papers that he had made a report upon, as Chairman of the Committee on Credentials, by saying that the paper which he professed his inability to read is in the handwriting of the

Secretary of the meeting. I never saw that report until after it was written (of course of that the gentleman has no knowledge), but he could not be mistaken about my handwriting, and he could not be mistaken about the handwriting of C. A. Mosier, the Secretary.

But passing from this unimportant matter, I ask, what are the credentials of these parties from Bloomfield township the committee has reported in favor of receiving — by whom were they elected? By the statement of their own Secretary it is shown that all persons who had voted the Republican ticket, and who intended to support the "*nominees of this meeting*" (this meeting over in Bloomfield township) should be permitted to vote at that election. U. S. Grant was not a nominee of that meeting, neither was Henry Wilson. The Republican ticket of this State will not be the [one] nominated by the meeting held at Bell's school house in Bloomfield township. So that all a man necessarily had to do to secure the reception of his vote at that meeting was to say "*I have voted the Republican ticket and intend to support the nominees of this meeting.*" He might say that "*I intend to vote the Greeley and Brown Liberal-Democratic ticket, and for the Liberal Democratic State ticket, and notwithstanding I intend to do all this, I have voted the Republican ticket, and will support the nominees of this meeting, and am entitled to vote here.*" This was the test of qualification as shown by their own story. This is their own version of what they did as shown by their credentials, made out by their officers, with full knowledge that their seats would be contested in this convention.

Did they set out that they refused at that meeting to admit the votes of avowed supporters of Horace Greeley? Not a word of it. Do they say that they would not admit Liberal or Democratic tickets? Not a word of it.

I want this Convention to look at the record presented by the contesting delegates, and the affidavits of some of the most prominent citizens of Bloomfield township, appended to it, and then say in the face of the Republicans of Polk County, that they will admit men as delegates in this Convention to nominate Republican candidates for County officers and to elect delegates to the Republican Congressional, State and Judicial Conventions, who have been elected as the delegates named in the report were.

That record discloses that Thomas Parker, an openly avowed Greeley man, was the man who organized the convention by moving that M. L. Devin be appointed President of the meeting. Thomas Parker, whose sense of honor did not keep him away from a Republican meeting when he was a

member of another party, but who had the manliness to avow his support of Greeley and Brown. — Thomas Parker takes charge of the organization of the Republican primary meeting of Bloomfield township. On motion of Thomas Parker, M. L. Devin was appointed temporary chairman, and Mr. Thomas Parker, the avowed Greeley man, as this statement further recites, proceeds with the organization by moving that Wm. Drake (a man who openly proclaimed at that meeting that he would vote for neither Greeley nor Grant), should be elected one of the Judges of the election.

(A VOICE — No, that is not so.)

MR. WITHROW — Well, who did make the motion that Mr. Drake should be one of the Judges?

(A VOICE — Joseph Davis.)

MR. WITHROW — Very well, I will ask if Joseph Davis is not a Greeley man?

MR. DAVIS — You are a liar!

(Hereupon Joseph Davis sprang to his feet in an excited manner and started toward the speaker. Several persons took hold of him. A large number of persons in the crowd outside the bar joined in cries of denunciation of the speaker, such as "put him out," "knock him down," "make him shut up," and similar phrases. During the excitement Mr. Withrow maintained his position on the floor. After the noise somewhat subsided:)

CAPT. I. N. THOMAS said I have no knowledge of how long a man is entitled to speak here. Mr. Withrow may speak for two hours. He may take up two hours of this Convention, and probably will do it. I suggest that he be limited.

MR. WITHROW — I have the floor. Now as the gentlemen of the Convention over there have cooled down I will explain why I asked that gentleman if he was not a Greeley man.

JOSEPH DAVIS — You said I was a Greeley man.

MR. WITHROW — I asked whether you were a Greeley man.

MR. DAVIS — Its a lie.

MR. WITHROW — I will leave it with the gentlemen of this Convention. They recollect what I said. I did not ask the question without reason. I submit to the Convention the following document placed in my hands to-day:

DES MOINES, IOWA, Aug. 10, 1872.

To Whom it may Concern: — Some three weeks since I had a

conversation with Joseph Davis, of Bloomfield township, Polk county, Iowa, in which conversation he (Davis) declared himself in the strongest and most emphatic terms in favor of the election of Horace Greeley to the Presidency of the United States, and as bitterly opposed the election of Gen. Grant.

I make this statement for the reason that I am informed said Davis will claim a seat in the Republican County Convention of Polk Co., to be held to-day, as a delegate from Bloomfield township, and as a Republican. I protest against his admission.

JONATHAN B. HUSTEN

Delegate from Valley Township.

JOSEPH DAVIS — It is a lie from beginning to end.

MR. WITHROW — Why is it that he is so irritated by the mere question as to the genuineness of his republicanism, while he manifested no feeling while consorting with Greeley men in organizing and managing the Republican primary in Bloomfield township? Why is it that the gentlemen on the other side are so excited when the question is raised as to the admission of Greeley men to seats in this Convention? Take their own version of this, and let it be that either Davis or Parker moved the appointment of Drake as one of the judges — that does not alter the question. These papers show that Drake avowed that he would vote for neither Grant nor Greeley and yet he presided as one of the judges of the election at this primary meeting in Bloomfield.

This statement is made under oath and not contradicted. There is not a syllable of contradiction, nor an intimation of a contradiction, to say nothing about a denial made under oath. A Liberal Republican placed in a judge's seat to determine the qualifications of Republicans to vote at their own party primary meeting! Is it possible that among the Republicans of Bloomfield township there were not two men who intended to vote the entire ticket, with sufficient intelligence to act as judges of a Republican primary election?

Let us look a little further at this statement. (Reads.) The following resolution was offered by Wm. Deford:

Resolved, That straight Republicans only are entitled to vote at this Convention, excluding all Democrats and Liberal Republicans.

Now they say that they know of but one Greeley man who voted, I understand. Why was this resolution not adopted, if it would exclude but one? The meeting failed to adopt.

CAPT. I. N. THOMAS — I call the gentleman to order. The question is upon accepting the report of the Committee on Credentials. I claim that the gentleman has no right to speak in this Convention until he is accepted as a delegate in this Convention, and nobody has a right to speak on the reception of it —

(Here the supporters of Mr. Kasson outside the bar commenced groaning, hissing and yelling, demanding that Mr. Withrow should "sit down," "be put out," &c. This continued for several minutes, MR. FRANK BUTLER, a delegate from Des Moines, attempted to address the President, but the yelling of the crowd prevented his being heard.

MR. WITHROW kept possession of the floor, and when the noise subsided so he could be heard, continued.)

I have lived in this community for fourteen years to little purpose if these gentlemen don't know that I can't be howled down by men brought here for that purpose. I have this floor; am as duly entitled to a seat in this Convention as any man here, and I propose to be heard.

(Continued groans, howls, and cries of "down," — "put him out" — during which the speaker kept his position.)

MR. JORDAN — I ask what is before the house? (Great confusion.)

THE CHAIRMAN — Order! keep order, gentlemen! order! It will be through quicker!

MR. WITHROW — If I have no right to speak here I would like to know what right any other gentleman has?

MR. CHAIRMAN — You have a right, but you have no right to be personal. Order! Order! Mr. Withrow has the floor if he speaks to the question.

MR. JORDAN — This controversy is all out of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN — Mr. Withrow has the floor if he talks to the question.

(Constant cries of *down!* and groans.)

MR. WITHROW — I was told before I came into this hall that three hundred men would be brought here to howl me down. It *shall not succeed* — I *will* address the Convention.

(The confusion and cries of down were renewed. When it subsided the speaker continued.)

The question is, whether or not the names of the delegates from Bloomfield reported by this Committee, should be stricken out and the names of J. P. French and Ben. F. Jones inserted in their stead. (Confusion.)

I am endeavoring to show that the delegates from Bloomfield reported by this Committee as entitled to seats were not elected at a Republican meeting, but that Mr. Jones and Mr. French were elected by Republicans at a Republican meeting, and are entitled to seats on this floor as delegates from Bloomfield township.

(Cries of "Down" "Down," "put him out," from the Kasson side.)

I propose to have the question settled whether or not a Republican, in a Republican Convention can discuss the right of a Republican to control a Republican primary meeting.

Mr. Parker offered his vote at that meeting, and upon a challenge being made the question was raised as to his right to vote, on the ground that he was a supporter of the leader of the Democratic ticket; and the judges of the election ruled that he was entitled to vote because he *had* voted the Republican ticket, and they permitted him to vote and invited all others like him to vote at the meeting.

This is not contradicted. On the contrary it is sustained by the certificate of the officers of that meeting. It is sustained by the affidavits of citizens of Bloomfield township, who are as respectable, and whose veracity and integrity is as unquestioned as that of any gentleman on the other side of the house, and this is saying nothing disparaging to them. Thomas Parker, who openly and publicly declared at that meeting that he would support, not Grant and Wilson, who are placed at the head of the Republican ticket, but Horace Greeley, the nominee of the Liberal-Republican and Democratic parties for the Presidency, was one of the ruling spirits. And now, I ask this convention, do you want to open the doors to the admission of men to seats as delegates in a Republican County Convention and in the Congressional and State Conventions, who *are not* members of our party, and who declare that they *will not* be at the next election?

Let us see where this will end if tolerated: E. L. Burnham, a member of the Republican County Central Committee, was President of the last Liberal County Convention held in this city, as I am informed; (I was not present, but make the statement upon information given by others) a delegate to the last Liberal State Convention, and one of the committee appointed by the Liberal State Convention to wait on the Democratic State Convention and inform it that the bride was ready for the marriage ceremony. (Cheers and laughter) E. L. Burnham who assisted in making a platform for the Liberal party, and who, if he is an honorable gentleman,

must support the nominees of that party (and I believe he is honorable enough to do that), offered his vote to the Republican Primary in Valley Township and desired to assist in nominating a ticket he will oppose [at] the polls.

COL. CLARK — I call the gentleman to order. He has no right to be personal in his remarks.

MR. WITHROW — Mr. Parker would do the same thing that Burnham has done and is doing.

(At this point Col. J. M. Griffith worked his way to Mr. Brandt, near the center of the Convention, and was whispering in his ear.)

MR. WITHROW — I trust the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials will profit by the suggestions being whispered to him by a distinguished Liberal.

COL. J. M. GRIFFITH (very excitedly) — He never presided at a Liberal Republican meeting, and never bolted a Republican ticket as you did last fall.

(Thereupon the friends of the Colonel succeeded in drawing him back into the crowd of delegates and Liberals on the south side of the room.)

MR. WITHROW — Is it not singular that when I stir up the other side of the house I stir up the Liberal Republicans with them?

COL. GRIFFITH (emerging from the crowd into which he had disappeared) — It is because you stir up honest men with them.

(He then pronounced an incoherent eulogy on Kasson and was again drawn into the crowd.)

THE CHAIRMAN — (To Mr. Withrow.) Speak to the question or sit down.

MR. WITHROW — I thank the Chairman for his courtesy. I was remarking that Mr. Parker would do precisely — (more confusion) — The end of this speech will be reached sooner if order is maintained than otherwise — for it will be proceeded with to the end in any event. I was remarking that Mr. Parker could do precisely what Mr. Burnham has done. The Liberals and Democrats have nominated a State electoral ticket, and in that nomination they have had a voice. They have nominated a State ticket. This Convention will appoint delegates to a State Convention to nominate Presidential electors and a ticket of State officers. The Liberal Republicans will not, as they avow, support the Presidential electors — they cannot support two tickets. Should they have a voice in the nomination of two?

Is it fair, is it right that any citizen should have the privilege of being represented in both parties, the right to be represented on two opposite tickets, when it is morally and absolutely impossible for him to give his support to both of them? I want this presented as a test question. I want the Republicans of Polk county to come up and meet the question squarely, and go upon the record as they are willing to appear before the entire State.

I want the question settled as to whether Greeley Republicans are a part of the Republican party; whether they have a right to assist us in making nominations simply because they *have* voted our ticket once, but intend to vote it no more. That is the question, and blink it as you will, act upon it under excitement as you may, resolve that you will accomplish certain purposes by foul or by fair means, you must stand before the Republicans of the State with the record you make to-day, for we give you notice now that the record you make here to-day shall be submitted to the Republican party of the State.

I might enter into a discussion of the cause of the interest which the Liberal Republicans manifest in this Congressional nomination, as developed by Mr. Greeley's selection of leaders in this State —

MR. CHAIRMAN — This is out of order.

MR. WITHROW — I yield to the ruling of the Chair, the more cheerfully because the matter is well understood by the members of the Convention. I have submitted all that I desire to say to the Convention.

MR. BRANDT — I can't make a speech and don't intend to, and would not if I were able to speak, but I will say if there are any other gentlemen who wish to speak I will yield the floor for them to do it now, but I intend to move the previous question. I will quit the floor now.

MR. DAY — I suppose that the action of the Republicans of Lee Township will come up at the proper time. However, I presume that the previous question will take all the papers with it, that is, before the meeting.

MR. WITHROW — The previous question brings the Convention to a vote on that report.

MR. BRANDT — I will give the gentleman, all gentlemen, all the time they want to talk.

MR. WITHROW — I appeal to the gentleman whether or not it is fair for him as Chairman of the Committee, and as a member of a delegation whose seat is contested, to attempt to cut off, by moving the previous question,

the right of a delegate to speak, and to make a motion to amend the report as to Lee township. There is one amendment now pending and no further motions can be made until it is disposed of. The previous question would cut out a motion to amend as to Lee township.

MR. BRANDT — We will let them talk as much as they intend to. I recollect that my friend broke into a convention two years ago, and made a speech. He wanted to make a speech and I wanted to hear him make it, for he can make a good speech to a good audience, but he don't usually do it when he speaks of his own accord. I wish to state most emphatically that a majority was in favor of the delegates we reported from Bloomfield. I will state again, that under this resolution, and allowing every one there a vote, we found that one set of delegates got 26 votes, whereas it appears that some of them voted twice, but putting them altogether we find that there was then a clear majority in favor of the delegates we have reported in favor of.

MR. BUTLER — If these gentlemen are counted twice, may they not be counted on the other side twice?

MR. BRANDT — They are *checked* in relation to the matter. They may have voted the other way. These are simply the facts in the matter that the committee have found.

(Laughter and cheers by those who had attempted to howl Mr. Withrow into his seat.)

MR. BRANDT — This hallooing and hooting is not done by Republicans; it is Greeley men outside that have gathered here to try to disrupt the Republican convention. They have gathered here to try to disrupt us and drive Republicans into their ranks. I see honest Democrats and Greeley men standing out there that would not do such a thing, and do not countenance it.

Let us go on with our convention, and whoever is successful, God bless them!

I now move the previous question.

A VOICE — I second the motion.

MR. WITHROW — I ask for a decision from the Chair as to how many votes are necessary to second a call for the previous question.

(The Chair hesitated.)

MR. BRANDT — (In an undertone to the Chairman) — A majority of those present. (Laughter.)

THE CHAIRMAN — All those in favor of seconding the previous question rise up.

MR. WITHROW — I desire the vote to be taken by townships.

MR. BRANDT — It is against Parliamentary usage, but as he desires the roll call let it be done.

MR. DAY — We wish to be heard upon the communication from Lee Township, in reference to the contested seats of delegates from that township. If the previous question is sustained, does it not preclude our being heard on that matter?

THE CHAIR — I don't understand that it has anything to do with the question of Lee township.

MR. DAY — If that is the understanding, it is satisfactory to us.

MR. WITHROW — If the previous question is ordered, does it not bring the Convention to a vote on the adoption of the report?

THE CHAIR — It brings them to a vote on the adoption of the report of the Committee on Credentials.

MR. WITHROW — Do you understand that after the report is adopted any motion in regard to the Lee township matter can be heard?

MR. BARTON — I understand that then all the delegates we reported back as delegates to this Convention will take their seats as delegates to this Convention.

THE CHAIR — That is the understanding that I have of it.

MR. BARTON — The Committee acted honestly in this matter. The Committee has a communication before them asking to have the delegates from this township (Des Moines) excluded on account of the proceedings at the primary meeting here. If we would take the history of all these primary meetings and exclude the delegates elected because persons had voted at these meetings who have not voted, or will not vote, the entire Republican ticket one-half of the delegates would be excluded, but we want every man to have his right on the floor. The committee reported Mr. Withrow as proxy and was perfectly willing for him to have a seat in this Convention, notwithstanding he was not elected to a seat in this Convention.

MR. WITHROW — What is the question before the Convention?

THE CHAIR — The question is whether the Report of this Committee on Credentials shall be received and adopted.

MR. WITHROW — When was this previous question seconded? How does the Chair get around taking a vote on the motion to amend? Does the

Chairman intend to allow *one* member of this Convention to order the previous question? Is that the style of Parliamentary law we are to have in this Convention? (Laughter.)

THE CHAIRMAN — The Secretary will call the list of townships.

THE SECRETARY — Allen, 2 votes (1 aye, 1 no); Beaver, 4 votes (aye); Bloomfield, 2 votes (aye).

MR. WITHROW — I object to Bloomfield voting upon this question. These delegates have a direct interest in the decision on this question.

THE CHAIRMAN — (To the Secretary) go on with the call!

THE SECRETARY — Camp, 3 votes (no.).

MR. WITHROW — Was Bloomfield township called? If so, what was the vote?

MR. SECRETARY — I didn't hear any vote.

MR. BRANDT — It has voted several times, aye. Stand up and vote.

A VOICE — Aye.

MR. SECRETARY — Crocker, 3 votes (aye); Delaware, 2 votes (aye); Des Moines, 16 votes (no); Douglas, 2 votes (aye); Elkhart, 2 votes (one aye, one no); Four Mile, 2 votes (aye); Franklin, 2 votes (no); Grant, 2 votes (aye); Jefferson, 2 votes (aye); Lee, 9 votes (aye).

MR. DAY, of Lee — I object to Lee township voting until these papers are presented and acted upon by this Convention.

(Cries of Order! Order! Howls and yells.)

THE CHAIRMAN — Order! Order!

(The Secretary completed the roll call.)

MR. WITHROW — I desire now to raise a point of order before any announcement of the vote is made, for the purpose of appealing from decision of the Chair, if the ruling is adverse. I object to the persons reported by this committee as delegates from Bloomfield township voting on this question, for the reason that they are not entitled to vote until the contest is settled as to who are the delegates from Bloomfield.

MR. BARTON — That would exclude Des Moines township.

THE CHAIRMAN — Each township must vote, there is no Convention without that! (Laughter and cheers.) Otherwise you might shut off all the votes for sustaining it. (Laughter.)

MR. BRANDT — Does the gentleman appeal from the decision of the Chair?

MR. WITHROW — I certainly do on that vote.

MR. BRANDT — I move that the Chair be sustained in its decision. Seconded.

MR. WITHROW — What is the question now before this Convention?

MR. BRANDT — The question is now upon sustaining the decision of the chair in relation to the vote of the delegates from Bloomfield township. Those who wish to vote in favor of sustaining the chair, of course will vote *aye*; those to the contrary *no*.

(Great laughter and cheers, with cries of take the chair! take the chair! Why don't you take the chair?)

The roll of townships was then called and the vote taken. The chair announced the vote to be yeas 42, nays 26. (Cheers.)

THE CHAIRMAN — The next thing is to vote upon the main question, as to whether the report of the committee shall be adopted or not. The Secretary will call the roll.

MR. WITHROW — I think the motion to amend is now in order.

THE CHAIR — The vote will be taken on the amendment of Mr. Withrow. What was that amendment?

MR. WITHROW — My motion is to strike out the names of Davis and Kindred reported as delegates from Bloomfield township and insert instead thereof the names of Ben. T. Jones and J. P. French.

THE CHAIR — The Secretary will call the roll of townships and delegates will vote on the question.

The roll was called and the vote announced by the Chair to be: Ayes, 28; Noes, 42.

MR. WITHROW — What is the question now before the convention?

THE CHAIR — The question is, whether the report of this committee be adopted. All in favor of the adoption of the report of the Committee vote *aye*.

VOICE — Aye, aye, aye, aye.

THE CHAIR — Call the roll!

A DELEGATE — What is the question?

THE CHAIR — The question is upon the adoption of the report of the committee.

The vote was taken and the Chair announced 43 in favor of the adoption of the report and 27 against it.

MR. BANNISTER — I move the temporary officers be declared the permanent officers of this Convention. Seconded. The motion prevailed. . . .

COL. CLARK — I move that the Convention now proceed to select fourteen delegates to the Republican State Convention. Adopted. Col. Clark presented the following names:

John A. Kasson	Jno. A. Elliott
Hoyt Sherman	G. W. Edwards
J. C. Jordan	M. Talbot
I. Brandt	Geo. Lendrum
M. L. Devin	W. H. Davis
D. C. Marts	A. J. Barton
Wm. Justice	M. L. Devin [<i>sic.</i> repetition]

Mr. Withrow presented the following names:

George G. Wright	B. F. Allen
Frank W. Palmer	Thomas F. Withrow
C. C. Nourse	C. H. Gatch
Thomas Mitchell	James Smith
Frank Nagle	Smith Kingman
D. Brown	J. M. Day
A. H. Botkin	A. L. F. Mower

MR. CHAIRMAN — Those in favor of Clark's delegates will say "aye" and those in favor of Withrow's delegates will say "no." (Uproarious laughter — the Chairman looking puzzled.)

The delegates presented by Col. Clark were elected by a vote of 40 to 30.

MR. BRANDT — I move that we proceed to the election of delegates to the Congressional Convention.

The following names were presented:

Samuel Merrill	Geo. W. Edwards
J. C. Jordan	Isaac Brandt
A. Elliott	Geo. H. Maish
Ezra Plummer	N. R. Kuntz
Wm. Ellyson	G. M. Walker
Rev. Dimmitt	Ed. Parmenter
L. W. Dennis	John Hnnter

Mr. Withrow presented the following names:

B. F. Allen	J. B. Miller
Thos. F. Withrow	C. C. Nourse
W. F. Thompson	Hector Mason
Col. R. K. Miller	C. A. Johnson
C. D. Persons	J. C. Taylor
J. E. Fagan	M. H. King
A. Christy	John A. Fleming

MR. WITHROW — Before we proceed to vote, I would like to ask my

friend what assurance he has that Gov. Merrill [Samuel Merrill had been governor of Iowa from January, 1868, to January, 1872], at the head of his ticket, will vote for Grant and Wilson.

MR. BRANDT — Gov. Merrill will vote for Grant and Wilson; he told me so himself, and that no matter whether anybody else might say otherwise, that he would vote for Grant and Wilson every time. (Cheers.)

MR. WITHROW — Gov. Merrill, when his vote was challenged at the Republican primary last Saturday would only reply that "if he should vote to day he would vote for Grant," but would not say he would do so in November. Further than this, a State officer only a few days ago, called Gov. M's attention to statements in the press that he was a Liberal, asked him what truth there was in it. The Governor replied that he knew of it, but had taken no pains to deny it; that he didn't know where he would stand.

The vote on delegates to the Congressional Convention stood 40 for the delegates nominated by Mr. Brandt, and 30 for those nominated by Mr. Withrow.

MR. WITHROW — I desire to offer a resolution and submit it to a vote without discussion on our side if there is none on the other.

(He then read the following resolution, without the words in brackets:)

Resolved, That the action of any officers of primary meetings in permitting persons to vote who were known to be supporters of Greeley and Brown for the Presidency and Vice Presidency [or of any persons who refuse to support the State or National, District and County Republican tickets at the next election] was in violation of the call of the State Central Committee, was a wrong and outrage upon the Republicans of the county, and receives the unqualified disapprobation of this convention.

MR. BRANDT — I second the motion for the adoption of the resolution.

MR. JORDAN — I wish to amend the resolution so as to include all bolters and Democrats.

MR. BRANDT — Do you accept the amendment?

MR. WITHROW — I am willing to include all persons who don't intend to support the entire Republican ticket at the next election, or all not within the terms of the call of the State Central Committee.

(The resolution was then returned to Mr. Withrow, who inserted the words in brackets after which it was read to the convention.)

MR. BRANDT — I now move the adoption.

MR. WITHROW — I have already moved its adoption, you can have permission to second it.

MR. BRANDT — I do second it.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

MR. WITHROW then offered the following resolution and moved its adoption.

Resolved, That the action of the officers of the primary meetings in Bloomfield and Lee townships in permitting persons to vote who were known to be supporters of Greeley and Brown for the Presidency and Vice Presidency of the United States was in violation of the call of the State Central Committee, and a wrong and outrage upon the Republicans of the county, and receives the unqualified disapprobation of this Convention.

MR. BRANDT — I second the motion.

MR. JORDAN — I move to amend by adding: "And Des Moines Township by allowing those to vote who were known to be Democrats and Greeley Republicans."

MR. WITHROW — Does the gentleman say that the judges in Des Moines Township permitted parties to vote *knowing* them to be Liberals and Democrats.

MR. JORDAN — I say they permitted Democrats and bolters to vote.

MR. WITHROW — Everybody who knows anything about the matter knows that they refused to receive the votes of such persons when they were known to be such.

(While Mr. Withrow was speaking the Secretary commenced to call the roll. He continued:)

I ask the Chair to state the question pending before the Convention.

THE CHAIRMAN — Go on with the call.

MR. WITHROW — To ask the Chair to state the question so that our delegation may know what they are voting on, is certainly a trifling request.

THE CHAIRMAN — It has been stated three or four times. Go on with the call!

SEVERAL VOICES — State the question.

THE CHAIRMAN — Will Mr. Jordan state the question?

MR. JORDAN — The question is on the motion to add to what you have already read, "And Des Moines township in permitting those known to be Democrats to vote."

MR. BRANDT — "And Greeley Republicans."

MR. WITHROW — That the judges at the Des Moines township primary permitted Democrats to vote?

MR. BRANDT — Yes; and Greeley Republicans.

When the roll was called, the Des Moines township delegation voted "No," assigning as the reason that the statement embodied in the amendment was false. The vote resulted — 39 yeas, 27 nays.

The question on the adoption of the original resolution as amended was then taken. Des Moines township voted "no," assigning as a reason that as amended the resolution was a libel upon the judges who conducted the Des Moines township election. The vote resulted — yeas, 45, nays 25.

[Nominations for various county offices were then made, and a county committee was appointed. John A. Kasson, the congressional candidate of Brandt and his wing of the convention, was then called from "a room below" and made a short speech supporting Grant and Wilson, an obvious effort to refute the Withrow followers who had accused him of Liberal leanings.]