

[SKETCH OF EDWARD LANGWORTHY]¹⁵

Edward Langworthy, the subject of this memoir, was born in St. Lawrence County, New York, August 3, 1808, and was one of a family of twelve children. His father, Doctor Stephen Langworthy, was one of the early settlers of that county, and practiced his profession for many years in the town of Hopkinton and surrounding country, and in 1810 was one of the United States marshals for the northern district of New York. He was a volunteer surgeon in the battles of Plattsburgh and Sacketts Harbor in the War of 1812. He was also connected with the custom house department, and assisted in collecting the revenues in that district for some years. In 1815 he moved to Erie County, Pennsylvania, with his family; and after five years by various stages of emigration finally settled in Illinois, first at Edwardsville and afterwards in 1821 near the present town of Jacksonville, in Morgan County, engaging in medical practice while his family lived upon, and cultivated a farm at Diamond Grove. The country was then new and undeveloped, only about twelve families being resident in what was afterwards called Morgan County. Here for five years Edward, the subject of this sketch, laboured upon the farm, raising stock, wheat, corn, and the other ordinary products of the soil, and also cotton, an indispensable article in those days for home use. The cotton grew and matured in great perfection and was manufactured into wearing apparel by the members of the family before the ginny was invented

¹⁵ There is no name signed to this sketch and no definite indication as to the authorship. It may have been written by Edward Langworthy himself or by his brother Lucius. The manuscript is in the possession of Mrs. Frances L. Gibbs of Dubuque, Iowa, daughter of Edward Langworthy.

or power looms brought into requisition. Every farmer in the early settlement of Illinois cultivated a field of cotton for home use. In fact it was a staple, one of the requirements of the day. It was of excellent quality and product. But the increase of manufactories in the East and the increased facilities for transportation by means of steamers on the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers so reduced the price of cotton goods that its raising and home manufacture were no longer required and the farm operations were restricted to raising other articles of produce. At this time, and for many years previous, the whole business of the country was done by barter, changing one thing for an other. Not a dollar was in circulation. But there were quarters, bits and picayunes. A quarter was one-fourth of a silver dollar cut into equal parts but the skillful and designing often made five pieces. A bit was one-eighth of a dollar and a picayune in like manner one-fourth of a quarter cut with a chisel from the center to the circumference. These are some of the difficulties which the settlers in the new countries had to encounter. In 1827 Edward L. emigrated to the lead mines of Galena and engaged in mining. But the Winnebago War breaking out he was impelled like many others to volunteer in the United States service, and he marched in various expeditions against the Indians.

In 1832 he was all the summer in the different campaigns sent against Black Hawk and his band, until at the close of that war, with his brothers and some three hundred other miners, he crossed the Mississippi and commenced mining among the old diggings of Julien Dubuque. He also assisted in erecting furnaces for smelting the ore making a large amount of lead and built a good log house in the present limits of the city of Dubuque in the fall of 1832 — which is believed to be the first white man's dwelling in the State

of Iowa. During the following winter the United States soldiers took possession of the dwelling named as head quarters and the miners were forced to scatter and leave to the destruction of a small army all they had acquired in the way of prospects. But the following spring they were permitted to return and enjoy their roofless houses and repair their partially destroyed establishments.

From that time to the present Mr. L. has been a resident of Dubuque enjoying the confidence of the people who have honored him by frequent elections to local offices. He was twice elected to the Territorial legislature,¹⁶ and served to the satisfaction of his fellow citizens who afterwards made him a member of the State Constitutional Convention.¹⁷ In this convention he took an active part in framing the Constitution on such principles as to insure the general welfare. After this he steadily refused to fill other stations to which the people desired to call him, but bent his whole energies to building up the town of Dubuque and for this purpose engaged in all the railroad enterprises projected for this object, and is still aiding these various works.

In the winter of 1837-8 he went as a delegate to Madison, Wisconsin Territory, to the Railroad Convention holden at that early day to take into consideration a connection of Lake Michigan with the Mississippi River. Previously he published a number of articles in the newspapers of the country urging the construction of a Pacific Railway, although this was before the era of steam cars on railroads in the West. It is a little singular that Mr. Langworthy should have published as early as 1836 some sketches of fancy which probably gave prominence to Iowa as a suitable name for the future State which he has lived to see

¹⁶ In 1839 and in 1840.

¹⁷ This was the Convention of 1844.

grow up from a trackless wild.¹⁸ His present residence may be seen by the traveler on the broad Mississippi, high up on the romantic bluffs which environ the beautiful city of Dubuque and which he has also seen when no white man's dwelling adorned the landscape and which has since been partly embellished by his own lavish expenditures.

¹⁸ The writer probably here refers to an article published in the *Dubuque Visitor* and quoted by Lucius H. Langworthy in his first lecture before the Dubuque Literary and Scientific Institute, reprinted in this number. See p. 394.