

## ENGLISH EMIGRANTS IN IOWA

After the Territory of Iowa was created by the act of June 12, 1838, a tide of white emigration set in and attracted, among others, the land-hungry people of England. Oppressed at home by the Poor Laws and the Corn Laws, they were fascinated by accounts of the abundance of nature's bounty awaiting the emigrant in America. They absorbed the accounts of Morris Birkbeck, George Flower, and other Englishmen who had made southern Illinois known to England.<sup>1</sup>

Letters written home by early arrivals in the West were published in the *Manchester Examiner and Times* and in other newspapers where they were read avidly by Englishmen, adventurous representatives of whom had already scattered over the world to better their condition. These had been first attracted to the British possessions — Australia, New Zealand, and Canada — before they discovered a hospitable atmosphere in the Midwest of the United States.

At first they came individually and in family groups, but later they realized the advantage of organized parties in acquiring land, making the journey, and adjusting themselves to their new home. One of the most pretentious of these organizations was the culmination of a movement by

<sup>1</sup> Morris Birkbeck's *Letters from Illinois* and George Flower's *Errors of Emigrants*. Other prints consulted by prospective emigrants included William Faux's *Memorable Days in America: Being a Journal of a Tour to the United States*; S. Sidney's *Emigrant's Journal*; Mann's *Emigrant's Complete Guide to the United States, Australia, etc.*; and *The Yorkshire Farmer in Illinois*. See also Grant Foreman's "English Settlers in Illinois" in the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 303-333, for similar references.

the potters of England, who were responsible for sending members to locate in Wisconsin.<sup>2</sup>

Letters<sup>3</sup> written by members of this organization to their friends back in England were published in the *Manchester Examiner and Times*, in which an "Emigrants' Column" was a regular feature, and in the *Potters Examiner*, an organ devoted to the interests of the potters of England, first published in Hanley and later in Burslem, England. Other papers that reproduced these letters were the *Sheffield Times* and the *Ten Towns Messenger*. An examination of these papers in the British Museum yielded numerous interesting letters concerning the English emigrants in the United States. The *Potters Examiner* was first published on December 2, 1843. George Sheppard, editor of *Eastern Counties Herald*, a man who became greatly interested in the subject, visited Iowa that year, and later became active in promoting emigration from Hull to the beautiful country he had seen in the Midwest. Sheppard is identified with the movement by the following letter written to him by Cook and Sargent,<sup>4</sup> Davenport, on October 2, 1849, and copied in the *Manchester Examiner and Times* for November 3, 1849.

"Dear Sir,— We are again in receipt of your valuable journal. As you manifest so deep an interest in the welfare of our infant state, we have thought it would be agreeable to you to receive a letter from us occasionally.

"Since our last the cholera has entirely disappeared

<sup>2</sup> Grant Foreman's "Settlement of English Potters in Wisconsin" in *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. XXI, pp. 374-396.

<sup>3</sup> The letters are reprinted as they appeared in the newspapers except that in some cases they have been divided into paragraphs to make reading easier. A few sections of no special interest to students of Iowa history have been omitted.

<sup>4</sup> Ebenezer Cook and George B. Sargent did a banking and land business at Davenport.

from the west, and business, which during the prevalence of the epidemic, was completely stagnated, has commenced again with renewed life. Our farmers are busily engaged in thrashing and bringing their grain to market; and our mills are turning out several hundred barrels of flour every twenty-four hours. Our rich soil is well adapted to the growth of oats, barley, wheat, buckwheat or rye. This year wheat has not done remarkably well in this immediate neighborhood. There is an excellent crop of other small grain, and corn looks very well. Potatoes are slightly touched with the rot; there is, however, a sufficient crop for home consumption. Onions have fared well this year, and several boatloads will be shipped from this country, yielding to the producer a handsome sum for his labour."

"Nearly all the foreigners who settled in our country in '47 and '48 appear well satisfied with the country, climate, and people. Many of them who landed in '47 without five dollars in their pockets, have now comfortable little homes, earned by their own industry and prudence. When we see in how short a time a poor man in this state can, by industry and economy, surround himself with all the necessaries and comforts of life, we cannot help thinking how much better it would be for the thousands of emigrants landing on our shores, if, instead of remaining in the crowded cities of the east, and earning a bare subsistence, with no prospect of being able for years to *own* a foot [of] land, they would follow the advice of Father Mathew<sup>5</sup> and seek their fortunes in the far west, and on the healthy and fertile prairies secure a home for themselves and families. No man of industry and good habits can fail to do this. All the capital a man needs is a good constitution and habits of temperance and industry.

<sup>5</sup> Probably Father Theobald Mathew, an Irish priest who was interested in social reforms. He visited the United States from 1849 to 1851.

“The field for the capitalist is also good. Money can be invested to good advantage at 10 per cent with safety and sure returns. Mechanics also find here a good opening. All kinds of mechanical labour command cash. The difficulties our state laboured under when you visited it in 1843 have passed away, and the farmer is no longer obliged to pay his debts in wheat and corn, or other products of his farm, but he finds cash purchasers always ready to buy whatever he may have to dispose of at fair prices — which will be much increased whenever the communication by railroad from the Mississippi to the lakes shall be complete. Iowa will then have the advantage of the northern and southern markets.

“A gentleman who arrived in our town from Liverpool a few days since, in conversation remarked that his friends in England told him that the use of carpets was not known in Iowa, and that his piano forte would be looked upon as a great curiosity. Fifteen years ago there would have been some truth in this statement; but we can boast of having made some rapid strides toward civilisation, and the emigrant will have to go farther west than the western boundary of Iowa to find such a state of society as the prevailing impression in England, in regard to the west, would lead them to expect.

“To such of your friends as desire to immigrate to America, you can say with confidence, to men of capital and means, no part of the United States opens a wider or safer field than Iowa. The citizens of Iowa are an industrious, moral, and order-loving people; they need capital to improve their water powers, build up their towns, bridge their rivers, make their railroads, and to facilitate business of every kind; and capital is worth more, and will command a higher interest in Iowa, than in older states of the union or England. To the mechanic you can say, that although the

wages they may receive are not higher in Iowa than in the eastern cities, the expenses of living are not so great, and the opportunity for getting a home, *land* for themselves and children, is much greater. To the labourer — he who is entirely dependent on the sweat of his brow, you can say — Iowa is the land for him. There he can earn one dollar per day by his labour. Fifty dollars will buy him forty acres of good land, as rich soil as he can find on the face of the earth, and with industry and economy he can soon surround himself with all the necessaries of life, and in a few years with all the luxuries. There is room for all on our broad and fertile prairies.

“To emigrants landing in New York or Boston we would recommend the following route to Iowa:— By railroad, steamboat, or canal, to Buffalo; thence *via* lakes to Chicago; thence, if early in the spring, by canal and steamboat to St. Louis, and thence by steam-boat to Davenport. If as late as the 1st of June on their arrival in Chicago, we would recommend the land route to Davenport — Respectfully your obedient servants,

Cook & Sargent”

George Sheppard became so interested in the subject that he aided in the organization at Hull of the Iowa Emigration Society of which Benjamin Driffill was secretary. When everything was ready, Sheppard headed a party of emigrants that sailed from Hull on May 15, 1850, on the sailing packet ship *Columbus*. It did not arrive at New York for six weeks. On shipboard, Sheppard wrote a long and interesting letter descriptive of his experiences as director of the organization, of his fellow passengers, and of the journey. He did not finish this letter until he arrived at New York. There he told of the many perils and annoyances that beset him and the members of his company

at the hands of all manner of pirates who preyed on ignorant immigrants.<sup>6</sup>

*The Eastern Counties Herald* to which he sent the letter printed it in full:

“*Packet-ship Columbus, June 3, 1850.*

“Yesterday we were midway in our voyage across the Atlantic. This, then, seems a proper point for glancing at one’s passing experience of sea life, and the varied manifestations of character which it affords.

“First let me speak of the ship. Six years ago I crossed and re-crossed the vast ocean which separates England from the western world. Comparing the accommodation then with the accommodation now, great changes are observable, attributable partly to the steadily-increasing demand for passages, partly to the potent influence of steam navigation. Changes of the former class reveal themselves principally in connection with the enlarged size of the packet-ships. Four or five hundred were formerly considered a crowded freight. Now these numbers are doubled, with even increased comfort to all concerned. The vessel in which I write carries, altogether, about 700 souls. Yet there is ample room for all, with greater conveniences than were before enjoyed.

“It is not my intention to affirm that the passenger ships to which the greatest share of popularity is now-a-days awarded are as comfortable as it is desirable that they should be. The steerage of the best ship afloat is comfortable enough. The bright rays of the sun never penetrate into its recesses. The ventilation is defective. But the class to be accommodated is of the poorest, and even the steerage is comfortable in comparison with the rude huts and undrained cellars in which these poor travellers have

<sup>6</sup> This letter, of about 5,000 words, appeared in the *Eastern Counties Herald* for July 25, 1850.

been accustomed to dwell. I have never visited the steerage of the Columbus without feeling that its terrors are traceable to the filthiness and laziness of the occupants, rather than to inattention on the part of the owners or managers of the vessel. The passengers are also to blame for many of the inconveniences that are endured on the main deck. Space designed for health and comfort is filled with unreasonable quantities of luggage, with which, despite of all advice to the contrary, emigrants continue to encumber themselves.

“The class of changes to which I have adverted as arising from the growing importance of steam navigation are confined to the better departments of the vessel. The number of cabin passengers in ordinary ships has undergone a great diminution. The majority of those who can afford to pay cabin fare prefer steam, with its greater certainty and speed; and, owing to this circumstance, they are in many cases being reduced in size. Hence a new and superior description of second cabin has come into the market — one that presents the spacious rooms and not a few of the substantial comforts of the cabin, at about one-half of its cost.

“So far, our voyage has not been relieved by many incidents worthy of note. The flogging of a couple of ‘stow-aways,’ the death and burial of two infants, the sickness incident to a passage equalling a winter passage in tedium and severity; these are the points which would compose the dull side of the picture. The brighter points are equally commonplace and trivial — so trivial, indeed, as not to be worthy of specific mention.

“Apart from the destitute Irish, who are the sole occupants of the steerage, there is a decided improvement in the character and apparent circumstances of the emigrants on board the Columbus. Their presence here sustains the

assertion that the 'respectable' classes in the old country are becoming more and more uneasy. Amongst us there are men who have long borne an honourable character as tradesmen — who have laboured perseveringly to bring up families intelligently and comfortably — but who had begun to experience reverses, and to encounter difficulties of which they saw not the end. They have wisely resolved to transfer their industry and enterprise to more hopeful fields, while they yet possess the vigour of manhood, and means to warrant an expectation of success.

“Some there are who have pursued a less wise course — who have patiently borne loss after loss, and who stake on emigration their almost empty purses with a desperation akin to that of the gambler. We have, too, an aged and a gentlemanly representative of one of the fast-falling families of Ireland. Bad legislation and bad fortune have well nigh ruined him; and now, at an age which should entitle him to quiet rest, he is driven forth to seek a new home for himself and those who share his lot. His case is far from being a solitary one. Scattered through the ship are a fair proportion of English agricultural labourers, and mechanics accustomed to the wants of farming life. With scarcely an exception, the emigrants are destined for the western states. Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa will receive most of them.

“An emigrant ship is preeminently the place for studying the multiform passions of which human nature is susceptible. Believers in the doctrine of human perfectibility are staggered by unerring evidence of evil in the occupants of almost every part of the vessel. . . . Listen to these living nuisances, and you cannot avoid the conclusion that there is a vile conspiracy on the part of the owners, agents, commander, and crew, to convert the ship into a perfect purgatory. Ask any man who has had occasion to traverse



the Atlantic, and you will find that where inconveniences exist, they are of a nature common to all passenger ships, and that, generally speaking, the captain of a 'liner' does all in his power to secure the safety and promote the comfort of those committed to his charge.

"The captain of the Columbus is as fine a specimen of an American officer as you can desire to have. With a cultivated mind, and the easy bearing which extended intercourse with the world confers — with an eye which, in rapid turn, takes in every object — firm in command, with energy, coolness and decision, equal to every emergency; Captain McCerren unites all the qualities which are required to form the efficient guardian and director of great interests. His skill as a seaman is on a level with his demeanor as a man. The sternness and severity which he not unfrequently exhibits, so far from being drawbacks to his character, are additional evidences of his usefulness. Discipline must be maintained at any cost. The presence of it in an emigrant ship is indispensable; and it is honourable to Mr. McCerren that his precision as a disciplinarian is not allowed to interfere with the more kindly duties of his station.

*"June 15.*

"Thirty days have expired, and still we are on the Atlantic, with something like 800 miles between the Columbus and New York. I am not making a random assertion, but one that is sustained by the statements of every officer on board, when I say that our passage has been in many respects remarkable. Remarkable for its length, considering the well-tried reputation of the vessel in which we sail; remarkable on account of the variableness of the wind during the whole of the voyage; remarkable, also, because of the extreme inclemency of the weather at a season when a

moderate amount of warmth might reasonably have been expected.

“A month forms the limit which the commander of a ‘liner’ prescribes for himself in the early summer passage; Captain McCerren has never exceeded thirty-two days at any time during the last four years; yet we are only off St. Peter’s Isle, after tossing about for full thirty days, with a fair prospect of being tossed about for a week or ten days longer. At no time have we had twelve successive hours of decidedly fair wind. Our present point has been gained only by perpetual ‘tacking.’ Now and then we have had a favourable puff, but a brief period has exhausted it, and then has followed either a dead calm or a head wind. For instance, in the night of the 13th, a gentle breeze sprung up from the north-east; in an hour afterwards, a squall arose with a suddenness and force more common in the Indian seas than the Atlantic, rain falling in torrents, and vivid lightning adding to the terrors of the scene. In less than another hour, the storm was spent; a brilliant clear sky succeeded, and before midnight the *aurora borealis* attracted to the deck a crowd of admiring on-lookers.

“In the night of the 8th, we passed through the great pack of ice, our proximity to which had occasioned much anxiety to the captain during several previous days. None but the officers on watch were cognizant of the occurrence, which happily occasioned no injury. On the 9th, the temperature of the water was 32°; that of the atmosphere 40°. On the 11th, during a gentle gale, the fore-topmast was lost; fortunately a spare mast was on board, and in a couple of days this was raised and rigged. Two accidents occurred during the progress of repairs: a seaman was struck on the head by a block which swung in the air, and he now lies in a perilous condition; and the third mate fell from the fore-mast on to the deck, a height of 90 feet. His

presence of mind alone saved him from a horrible death: by snatching at ropes as he descended, he so far modified the effects of the mishap as to be able, in a quarter of an hour afterwards, to resume his duties as though nothing had happened. At an earlier stage of the voyage, the same man was rescued from the ocean into which he had fallen while engaged on the outer side of the quarter-deck. Yesterday, the main-top-gallant-mast, which had 'sprung' in the course of recent heavy winds, was properly secured, and we now ride with as much apparent safety as when we left the Mersey.

"The last few days have sorely tried the temper of all on board. The monotony of a long and wearisome voyage is a source of unpleasantness of no small magnitude. Added to this, as a cause of discontent and anxiety, is the exhausted state of the provision chests of a majority of the passengers. Few provided for more than thirty days, and now that that time has expired, symptoms of a 'rebellion of the belly' begin to make their appearance in many quarters. Nine out of ten have used their entire store of salted meat, flour, biscuits, butter, eggs, potatoes, and so forth; the fortunate minority are therefore enabled to dispose of surplus quantities of these articles at highly remunerative prices.

"Under these circumstances, the wisdom of the last passengers' act passed by the British legislature becomes apparent. Starvation would have been inevitable had the passengers nothing to rely upon beyond their own judgment. Hunger would have been the precursor of disease and death. The stores provided by the ship now act with beneficial effect. Once a week are distributed flour, oatmeal, rice, biscuits, tea, sugar, and molasses, in quantities large enough to sustain every passenger in health and strength. When this law was passed, the British shipowner

protested against it as a grievous and an unnecessary interference with private enterprise.

“Circumstances such as those in which the Columbus is at this moment placed illustrate the hardships and misery which would result from the doctrine of non-interference in its application to emigrant ships. My own opinion is that legislative interference in this matter, so far from having reached its proper point, may with propriety and advantage be carried many steps further. Great as are the improvements already effected, there still remain many matters which call for vigorous intervention to promote the health, comfort, and morals of the lower class of passengers.

“Foremost among the obstacles to any material improvement in this respect is the character of the passengers themselves. Dirty, indolent, and ignorant, the improvement of their condition during the transit is a problem which it were vain to attempt hastily to solve. They are indifferent with regard to their own health. It is not enough that they are reminded of the necessity of being as much as possible in the pure air. It is not enough that they are told that long-continued inhalation of the poisonous atmosphere of a steerage, rendered deadly by their own filthiness, prepares them for the ravages of ship-fever — a malady more terrible in its features and results than the yellow fever of the south. Day after day, the surgeon is driven to the exercise of threats and forced to clear the steerage — partly for the sake of the effective purification would suppose that this needful piece of discipline were, from first to last, gratuitous cruelty.

“The laziness of these people is on a par with their filthiness. In emigrant ships, as in troop ships, the full complement of that part of the ship, and partly for the passengers' immediate comfort. Judging from their complaints, you

ment of seamen is rarely provided, reliance being placed on the passengers for assistance in times of difficulty and danger. The loss of the fore-top-mast was an occasion on which, one would have thought, every man on board would have cheerfully rendered all the assistance in his power. Every man had an interest in repairing the loss as speedily as possible. Yet, even on this occasion, when every officer and seaman was thoroughly worn out with fatigue, nothing short of the threatened use of a rope by the captain induced the gaping idlers to afford the smallest help. The Irish passengers were not alone to blame in this particular. A couple of ship carpenters from Hull obstinately withheld all assistance, at a time when they, above all on board, were most required. . . .

“The experience of an emigrant’s passage are well calculated to rub off many prejudices and foolish fancies. He who can go through the inconveniences, trials, and troubles of an emigrant’s life on board even of a good ship, without loss of temper, is qualified to live in any part of the world. He acquires the qualities of self-denial and self-helpfulness. He ceases to grumble if all things are not as he wishes them to be. He is no longer critical about his meat or the style in which it is served up. His ideas of comfort undergo considerable modifications, and he learns to how large an extent he can wait upon himself. On these grounds, I look upon life in an emigrant ship as a fitting forerunner of life in the far west.

“Of more than 600 souls who now approach the great republic with the view of finding residences there, how many will realize the objects of their change? I fancy that it would not be difficult to pick out not a few who are altogether unadapted to the mode of life they are about to adopt, who will fail or be otherwise disappointed, and who will return to the ‘old country’ at no distant day, with false

estimates of almost everything belonging to America. Of all assailants of the United States, the most virulent and vindictive are those who figure as 'returning emigrants.' Yet it is certain that in nearly every case, the members of this class ought never to have entertained any notion of emigration. Without aspiring to the character of a prophet, I venture to predict that one-tenth of my fellow-emigrants will leave the United States, and return to their native land, before the expiration of eighteen months from this date. I imagine that I could now name several of these parties, and sure I am that the causes of their disappointment or failure are to be found in themselves, and not in the country which they will hereafter endeavour to depreciate and decry.

*“June 21.*

“So far I have written generally. I must now furnish a few particulars with regard to the position and prospects of the Iowa Emigration Society.

“On two occasions, I took advantage of calm weather to address the passengers on the advantages of organization, and the strong claims which Iowa has on the consideration of emigrants. The result was the accession to our ranks of several individuals, of various useful trades; a much larger number, whose means are scanty, declare their intention of following after a few months' work in some of the eastern states.

“Our intention to lay out a village in the first instance has met with unanimous approval. 'Village acres' are quite popular on board. In a dozen instances fifteen shillings per acre have been paid for land which we shall obtain for 5s.2½d. I am sanguine enough to hope that before the close of the present year, our village will present the nucleus of a thriving settlement. We carry with us

many elements of prosperity. There will be fertile land, with labour to till it. At the outset we shall be able to boast of several of the most important trades: there are carpenters and cabinet-makers, tailors, a blacksmith, wheelwrights, a gardener, and so forth; only a shoemaker is wanted to render our list tolerably complete. I trust that some uniformity will be observed in the style and arrangements of the first dwellings: even log-houses may be built neatly and systematically.

“On reaching New York I shall proceed by the most expeditious conveyance to Iowa. We have two or three serious disadvantages to encounter. In the first place, we were late in starting; then there is the unexpected length of the passage. Owing to these circumstances, the utmost dispatch is necessary to enable our members to make a little head-way before the commencement of winter. Immediately on reaching Davenport, I shall begin the survey, which will probably occupy a month. The members will follow by the ordinary routes, which are cheaper, though slower, than that which I propose to take. To ensure their comfortable travel, a committee has been appointed, whose duties will commence at New York and close at Davenport. It is pretty certain that they will succeed in effecting contracts for the whole party at rates considerably lower than those which would be insisted upon in the absence of organization. The comfort experienced respectively by a party and by individuals admits of no comparison.

“One unpleasant point — and only one — requires notice. About three weeks ago, a member of the society expressed himself as aggrieved by a portion of the arrangements which had been resolved upon, and which I am instructed to carry into effect. He objected, firstly, to the principle of grouping, although it has no other object than the promotion of the comfort of the persons grouped, and

inflicts no injury on those not included. He objected, secondly, to the ballot, which placed all members in an equality of position. He conceived that the present party should have the choice of lots, leaving the autumn party, and the party coming out next spring, to choose from the remaining lots. This proposal involved a manifest injustice to absent members.

“My course in reference to both objections was simple and decided. I posted a notice to the effect that my instructions from the central committee, in Hull, were specific, and that I was resolved to abide by them to their fullest extent. This relieved me from the fruitless discussions which would otherwise have occurred. Every member on board, with the exception of the one alluded to, sustained me in my position. By and bye, even he perceived that his objections were not tenable, and he has since exhibited complete good feeling towards the society and myself, its agent. As far as I can judge, the same friendly disposition actuates our whole party.

“*June 30.*

“Late on Wednesday night we reached this city [New York] in safety and in health.

“I regret exceedingly that the hopeful anticipations with which my note of the 21st concludes has not been sustained by subsequent occurrences. The person already alluded to seized the earliest moment after his arrival to renew his efforts to promote disaffection amongst our members. Repeatedly during the passage, the members were cautioned against the manifold rascalities of the New York ‘runners,’ whose impudence is only equalled by their roguery. The captain corroborated statements on this subject made in my addresses on board; and when entering the harbour, hand-bills, containing ‘words of warning’ were distributed



by a servant of the emigration commissioners. Notwithstanding these repeated cautions, the 'runners' obtained numerous victims. Before the anchor was dropped, I was besieged by agents of rival swindlers, each soliciting me to take passages for our party through him. I told all that, having been here before, I was cognizant of the frauds practised upon emigrants, and intended to exert myself to prevent their repetition in our case. This reply did not suffice.

"Early the next morning, the same fellows called upon me at the Pacific Hotel, where I am staying, and repeated their solicitations in more tempting terms. Aware that they would resort to perjury or forgery to destroy the influence of any one who seemed likely to thwart their views, I took care never to speak to them except in the presence of Mr. S. S. Cortis and other friends, to whom I had previously communicated my determination. When we went out the 'runners' followed us; we went into a shop to buy straw hats — they were at the door when we came out; everywhere our steps were dogged by them.

"Eventually they appear to have discovered that we were not to be game for them, and then a more desperate course was taken. On going to the vessel next morning, we found them haranguing many of the passengers, telling them that I had 'sold' them to some forwarding house, and that they would suffer for their confidence in me.

"Foremost to believe this transparent lie was our disaffected member, Mr. Cartwright, who forthwith became an active ally of the 'runners,' retailing to them his imaginary grievances, and echoing their selfish fabrications. Fortunately for myself, the friends who had been with me from the first were able to rebut the statements of the 'runners,' whose anger exceeded all bounds when they saw that they could not entrap us. Cartwright and a few who

adhered to him fell into the trap, and will have to suffer for their credulity before they escape. Messrs. Wright, Cundell, and Buck, as the committee whose appointment took place on the Atlantic, waited upon a merchant to whom I had letters of introduction, and through his agency effected a bargain for the inland journey, which will, I trust, prove satisfactory to all who have availed themselves of it.

“It will be obvious to you that these circumstances have been, and are, annoying and even painful to me. The dishonesty of the ‘runners’ I previously knew, but for the gullibility of some of our party I was certainly unprepared. Neither has or shall deter me from discharging my duty to the best of my ability. The issue time shall determine.

“I concluded my business here last night. This evening, I steam up the Hudson to Albany, and thence start westward. You will hear from me on my arrival in Iowa.

“Yours faithfully,

“GEORGE SHEPPARD.”

Sheppard's letter was succeeded by the following advice, in the *Eastern Counties Herald* for August 1, 1850:

“HINTS TO EMIGRANTS.—Mr. B. Driffill, secretary to the Hull Iowa Emigration Society, has received from a respectable tradesman who went out in the Columbus, a letter containing some practical hints for the conduct of future emigrants from this town, which may possibly be of value. The writer is, in the first place, decidedly in favour of sailing from Hull, if a fast-sailing and well appointed ship can be had from thence, for he thinks the expense of the inland journey and the probable cost of two or three days stay in a strange town would more than counterbalance the extra time required for the voyage from here.

“Another advantage and one of considerable importance in sailing from Hull is, he says, the absence of the low Irish who sail from Liverpool, ‘for of all the dirty, filthy beings that can be imagined, they are certainly without parallel.’ The lower deck of the Columbus, which was filled with about 300 of them, was far more offensive than any menagerie he ever visited; and his notions of the perfectibility of human nature have, he says, sunk sadly below what they formerly were from the spectacle which these miserable Irishmen exhibited.

“The writer adds that emigrants must look well to the character of the captain, the quality of the water and provisions, the conveniences for cooking, and the size and ventilation of the bed berths. Since passengers will require to live better and not worse than on shore, he recommends that on this account, in addition to the ship’s stores, they should provide ‘coffee, green tea, lump sugar, a few spices, some good vinegar, pickles, preserves or dried fruits for puddings, and (if they have young children) arrow-root, sago, or anything of this kind, which makes an agreeable change. Also potatoes (if good and likely to keep), onions, and as many green vegetables as will be good for a week or two, dried peas for soup or puddings, as much homemade bread as can be used while it is good, some dried yeast or any substitute for it; spice-bread, ginger-bread, hunting nuts, ginger, cayenne, peppermint, or other lozenges. Ale or porter in cask or bottle will be in great request (except for teetotallers), and ginger beer, soda water, lemonade, with a little good brandy, will be found useful.’

“In addition to this formidable list of provisions, the writer advises that when the emigrants break up house-keeping they should keep all their cooking apparatus worth anything, and if they are not applicable for the ship, more should be got which are. ‘They will find their old cups,

pots, plates, saucers, &c., useful, and with care they may last the whole passage; but it will be well to provide for accidents by having tin plates, baking-dishes, knives, forks, or any table gear they may chance to have or can think of. The ship is a capital place for wearing out clothes; therefore keep an old suit for the purpose, and a sufficiency of clean linen to serve the voyage, it being unlikely you will be able to wash on board the ship, not only for want of water, but for lack of convenience. Bring as little luggage as possible with you, and that only useful luggage.'

"The description which the writer gives of the knavery of the New York 'runners' corresponds with that for which the letter of Mr. Sheppard, published in our last, would prepare us. 'On your arrival in the city, mind yourself, your money, and your luggage; for of all the swindlers in the world the New York 'runners' bear off the palm. Trust to nobody but yourself to do your own business. . . . Make your own bargain and take care to have it endorsed on the back of your ticket. Get out of the city as fast as you can; it is most expensive; flee from it as you would from the \_\_\_\_\_.'"

On his arrival at Davenport, Sheppard wrote a letter to his society in Hull, dated August 6, 1850, which was released by Secretary Benjamin Driffill to the press and published in the *Eastern Counties Herald* on September 12, 1850:

"Davenport, Iowa, U. S., August 6th, 1850.

"Gentlemen,—In my letter to you from New York I referred solely to the incidents of the voyage and to the probable arrangements for the journey thence to Iowa. Of the inland travel you will doubtless hear in full from one or another of the members of our society; my remarks will relate solely to our proceedings in this state.

“Immediately on my arrival here, and while the party were yet on their journey, I commenced my survey of the most eligible districts, with a view to discovering a spot for our location. In the performance of this duty I traversed seven counties; namely, Scott, Clinton, Jackson, Jones, Linn, Johnson, and Cedar, with all of which I was in some measure familiar. Seven years ago nearly the same route presented to me a wilderness, and although aware that in the interim the tide of emigration had rolled hither to a marvellous extent, I confess that I was not prepared for the complete change which it has been my good fortune to witness. Spots which I remembered as untenanted prairies now present thriving settlements; in every direction, evidence of cultivation is presented; and I soon found, therefore, that my task was likely to be longer and more difficult than I anticipated. In every county I saw immense tracts of prairie which are still purchaseable at the government price; but the timbered land has been scanned by keen eyes, and in a majority of instances the best pieces have been transferred to private owners. The same spirit has led to the purchase of nearly all the mill sites in the central and eastern ranges of counties.

“My object, you may remember, was to find prairie, timber, and water power in conjunction, within a moderate distance of good markets. The water power I abandoned, not because it is altogether unattainable, but because it is to be procured only in unhealthy localities, or at an inconvenient distance from the seats of commercial enterprise. This simplified my work, and eventually I fixed upon a tract in Clinton County. This county is situated on the Mississippi, and has all the advantages which proximity to that mighty channel of trade confers. As a whole, the county is more undulating, and therefore more salubrious, than many others in the western country; although, for

reasons which I am at a loss to discern, it is more thinly peopled than less beautiful and more remote sections of country.

“The place which is to form the scene of your society’s operations, is on the government road from Dubuque to Davenport, and is about 25 miles north of the latter town, and 8 north of De Witt; the capital of the county, Comanche [Camanche], a rising town on the Mississippi, and the future outlet for the produce of a large district, is about 20 miles east of the chosen spot. With regard, then, to facilities for communication and business it is favourably placed.

“The spot itself is excellent. It is composed of oak openings, studded with small but valuable timber and rich fertile prairie. It is well adapted for every branch of industry to which the emigrant is likely to direct his attention. The deep loam which forms the soil on the prairie and in the valleys will produce maize, wheat, oats, and potatoes to perfection. The slopes bear mostly a southern aspect, and are well adapted for grain or fruit, while scattered springs of excellent water render many parts exceedingly valuable for pastoral purposes.

“The healthfulness of the district is beyond cavil. It is high and naturally well drained; many of our members are loud in their praise of the beauty of the location. Some see in it a close resemblance to the finest parts of the Yorkshire Wold, from which, however, it differs in the greater depth of its soil. Others are reminded of Welton and its pretty groves. For my part, I am familiar with no prettier spot. Its exceeding loveliness attracted my attention, and I am truly glad that in such a place I have found the main object of my tour.

“The survey of the land is just completed, and I am here to make arrangements for the completion of the purchase.

The quantity required for the society is 1,760 acres; of this 40 acres are set aside for division into village lots, the whole of which will have occupants. By next week's post I hope to be able to send plans of the estate and the village.

“In a few days I shall start for the pineries in Wisconsin and at the head of the Mississippi, to learn the terms on which we can contract for lumber for building and fencing. On my return I shall resume the survey for the purpose of enabling you to continue the operations of your society. We already occupy the whole of the timber in the groves connected with the location, and for the present, therefore, we are not in a position to offer places of settlement to any beyond the original members. It is, however, of the utmost importance that the settlement be allowed to continue its growth, and I think I can point out other locations in this neighbourhood which will render this object practicable. You may safely continue to receive members to leave England in connection with your party next spring. In my next communication I will write more specifically on this head.

“You will be glad to learn that those of our members who are already here highly approve of the location, and are sanguine of ultimate success. The quarrelsome personage named in my last has gone further north; his manoeuvres had no supporters in our ranks, and he has left mortified and baffled. In his absence I am warranted in saying that a gratifying spirit of friendship and union pervades the party, and furnishes a reasonable guarantee of comfort during the whole process of settlement.

“Very faithfully yours,

“Geo. Sheppard.”

This issue of the *Eastern Counties Herald* also contained the following letter received by Mr. Cortis, of Hull, from

his son, who had emigrated with the party, sent out some months earlier under the guidance of Mr. Sheppard.

“Wright’s Grove, 5th August, 1850.

“We arrived in Davenport a fortnight last Thursday, heartily tired of our journey up the country, which lasted three weeks. We waited there for Mr. Sheppard’s return, who arrived on the Monday following, having selected two places for our choice. Four of us examined them, and finally determined upon settling here. The place is in Clinton county, about eight miles from De Witt, eight from Springfield, fourteen from Comanche — a very good cash market on the Mississippi — and thirty from Davenport. All hands are highly delighted with the place. The village will be on a beautiful hill, with a rolling prairie on all sides of it; reminding me a good deal of Yorkshire Wolds. The oak openings will keep up a good supply of timber.

“We commenced the measuring out immediately, and it was a long and tiring job, trailing the chain through the brushwood, along grass and swamps, under a broiling hot sun. The grass was eight and ten feet high, and the hill tops and sides are covered with hazel bushes — the surest indications of a rich, strong soil. The ease with which the people get their living here is truly astonishing. They sit down on the land without anything but a waggon, a pair of horses, and a good axe. All they buy for the first year is on credit; yet in four years they are able to enter the land, and are then independent for life. Hard work they know nothing of ever after.

“The people round about here are exceeding kind to us. A farmer took us in for several days at the rate of 1s. 6d. per day. They are willing to give us anything they have. We were lucky enough to find an empty log house, which we hired for a month for two dollars. I only wish you could see us in it.



“Our adventures coming up the country were too numerous to mention; but if anything will take the pride out of a man, and make him shift for himself — it is emigration. But now for a few of our plans. We have arranged with Mr. Wright, from Patrinton, to bear part of the expense of building the house, and to board with him. At a future time, should we wish to part, this is to be returned — an allowance, of course, to be made on our part for wear and tear.

“We have bought the frame of a house uncommonly cheap; it was built by a man now gone to California. We hope to have it ready in a fortnight or three weeks; we shall enlarge it a little, and open a road-side inn; there is none in the neighbourhood. A farmer has turned half-a-dozen travellers away in a day. It is one of the best businesses in the country, as it keeps up a good supply of cash. I forgot to mention that our village will be on the high-road; a stage passes twice a-day, the owners of which are willing to pay us twenty dollars for a feed of hay for their horses and a meal for themselves. To this we hope to connect a small store.

“The country is considered remarkably healthy. As regards myself, I was never in better health in my life. We have the heat as high as 98 in the shade, but there has not been such a hot season as this before. I was out yesterday helping a man with his harvest; they cut the corn<sup>7</sup> down with a reaping machine here — seventeen acres per day.

Poor Sheppard has had hard times of it; he has done his best for everybody, but some are so unreasonable that it would be impossible to keep straight with them. The English make the worst kind of settlers; they grumble and growl at everything — comparing all things with the state

<sup>7</sup> “Corn” was evidently wheat, barley, or oats, not Indian corn or maize, for this was the first week in August.

of things at home — forgetting that this is an entirely new country, and the one they have left an old one. The difference between our farm-servants and yours is striking; they are as intelligent here as they are ignorant in England.

“I had almost forgot to tell you that the price of land is 5s. 2½d. per acre, and that it abounds with game within easy reach of the rifle. Send me some good gunpowder (there is none good here), and the Hull newspapers regularly. Pray don't forget to send the newspapers.”<sup>8</sup>

Two weeks later the Hull newspaper printed the following letter under the heading, “THE IOWA EMI-GRANTS”, with the explanation that it had been received from Mr. Sheppard, leader of the party of Hull emigrants to the above settlement, by the committee of the Iowa Emigration Society in Hull:

“Davenport, Iowa, Aug. 15th, 1850.

“Gentlemen,—In my last communication I apprised you of the choice of a location near DeWitt, Clinton county, and of the commencement of operations by the members of our party. I propose now to furnish some particulars of my course, of our position, and of the general prospects of the settlement.

“The route pursued in the survey embraced the most eligible districts in the central section of Iowa. The southern part is more thickly peopled, and, having been longer known, presents fewer opportunities of extensive settlements. The northern part, again, has a severer winter than is compatible with comfortable farming. On the score of health, the central is the most desirable district; all of it is fertile; and much of it is extremely beautiful. I speak now of Scott, Clinton, Cedar, Johnson, Linn, and portions of Muscatine, Jackson, and Jones counties. Of these, Mus-

<sup>8</sup> *Eastern Counties Herald*, September 12, 1850.

catine, Scott, Clinton, and Jackson have the Mississippi as one of their boundaries, and on that account enjoy the best markets.

“Despite of distance from market, however, the stream of settlers runs in a westerly direction, to so great an extent, indeed, that it is more difficult to purchase land at Government price, in Linn county, 60 miles from the river, than in Scott or Clinton county, although actually on the river. Proximity to market being, in my judgment, one of the essentials, I decided not to settle in a western county, unless on the borders of a navigable stream, but this I found impossible, except to a very limited extent. After a protracted journey, therefore, and a very careful examination of the country through which I passed, I gave a final preference to Clinton county, and I am here completing the purchase of the required quantity of land.

“Let me say, in passing, that my task has been more difficult and costly than a stranger might suppose it to be. In one respect, the present is an unlucky period. The California fever has produced a revolution in the value of grain and stock in this corner of the world. A large proportion of the overland travel to California is through this state; and hence has sprung a demand for oats, maize, horses, mules and oxen, which resident settlers have not yet been able fully to meet. Oats, which in ordinary times are not worth more than 20 or 25 cents per bushel, cost me 60 cents throughout my whole journey; horses, which could formerly have been purchased for 50 dollars each, are now worth 75 or 80; and other things have experienced a corresponding advance.

“It is unlucky, then, as I have said, that the expenses attendant upon inland travel are at this moment higher than they have been since the early settlement of the state; and it is the same in regard to the cost of stocking a farm.

But these circumstances, although inconvenient for a time, furnish obvious grounds for expectations of prosperity on the part of settlers, so soon as their farms are brought into cultivation. I am heretical enough to prefer high prices to cheapness.

“The settlers have a strong and excusable antipathy to land speculators, and for this reason are more reserved in their communications respecting places for settlement than otherwise they would be. Moreover, the majority of them are not familiar with the exact points of the governmental survey. With the view of obtaining reliable information on these matters, I proceeded to Iowa city, and there instituted an examination of the official records. These records are open to inspection without charge; extracts from them, or copies of the surveyor’s plans, are to be had on payment of moderate fees. A dollar each is expected for copies of the plans. Having procured a supply of these, I was enabled to return to chosen spots, and to speak with confidence as to the tracts yet available for settlement.

“You are aware that the government price of land is a dollar and a quarter per acre. Bounty land warrants, granting land to soldiers who served in the Mexican war, are in the market, and may be purchased at prices which reduce the cost of land to less than a dollar an acre. The warrants, like railway scrip, fluctuate in value from time to time, and call into action the spirit of gambling and fraud. Great care is necessary to protect the purchaser from absolute loss; but, with this care, the title derived from land warrants is as clear and valid as any in existence.

“I have purchased warrants to cover the whole tract required for the society, and have thereby effected a saving which in the aggregate is considerable. I think I may say with confidence that the land will not exceed one dollar per acre in price; and this will include the land-office fees,

the cost of transfer, and the expenses involved in the subdivision by the surveyor. The warrants are purchased from the principal land-agents in the state, who become personally responsible for the validity of the title. I could have purchased warrants at Iowa city for considerably less than the price I am paying, but I could not have obtained the guarantee which I deem desirable. The few extra cents involve all the difference between questionable and *bona fide* titles.

“Messrs. Buck, Wright, Cortis, and others, are making arrangements for the erection of dwellings. Excellent oak timber is procurable at Maquoketa, 9 miles distant, at from 8 to 10 dollars per 1,000 feet; and this is being hauled to the village site. Situated on a beautiful eminence, on the main road between two of the largest places in the state, the village<sup>9</sup> may be expected soon to become a thriving place. A tavern is to be opened forthwith, and as it will be the only place of general accommodation between De Witt, the capital of this county and Maquoketa, in Jackson county, considerable traffic is anticipated. A store will be

<sup>9</sup> The village-to-be was named Welton, in Welton Township. A post office was established there on June 20, 1851, discontinued on October 4, 1870, and re-established about a mile distant in 1871. Thomas Wright was the first postmaster. *The History of Clinton County, Iowa* (1879), page 642, has the following account of this English settlement:

“In 1850, an Englishman named Shepherd, came over as the agent of a colony of English artisans, to locate their lands for them. He made his selection in this vicinity and located a large tract. Upon their arrival, they commenced to build a village about a mile from the present station and which they called Welton. Each member of the colony had forty acres of land and two town lots. Quite a number of buildings were erected, stores, a hotel, shops and dwellings. But these men did not take kindly to pioneer farming, all of them having been trained to mechanical employments, having among their number a furrier—Mr. Skinner, of Lyons—tailors, bookbinders, painters, paper-hangers, etc., and one after another they returned to their respective callings, locating at different points in the West. Christopher Buck retained his farm; is now the only one of the original colony who remains there. Mr. Skinner has retained ownership of his farm, but has for many years resided in Lyons. The town has all disappeared.”

opened in another month — the only store in a circuit of many miles. Bye and bye, when others of our members arrive, application will be made for the appointment of a post-office; in the meantime, I have made arrangements at Davenport, for the forwarding direct to us, per coach, of the letters and papers which may be addressed to that place.

“The season is too far advanced for the breaking of land. It will be better to wait until early spring, and then to sow the plowed land with maize. Log-houses and heavy rail-fencing are rapidly going out of fashion in the prairie section of this state. Frame-houses are preferred as neater and more comfortable, and withal as cheap, as their more primitive predecessors; and where heavy timber is scarce, posts, with split timber as rails, are manifestly advantageous. Pine lumber realizes 11 to 12 dollars on the river, including the exorbitant percentage imposed by river-side store-keepers. To give our members the benefits of organization in this particular, I am about to proceed to the pine region at the heads of the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers, to ascertain the most favourable terms on which a contract can be made for the delivery of pine timber at Comanche, our nearest river town. Unless I am much mistaken, this article may be procured in this manner at a cost not exceeding that of oak, to which, for building purposes, it is decidedly superior.

“Presuming that the tide of emigration has not ceased to flow from English shores, I may usefully say a few words in reference to the continuance of the society’s operations. They who have already secured farms in the settlement are necessarily interested in increasing the extent and improving the character of its resources. It is equally certain that future immigrants will gain largely in comfort by gathering around the nucleus which is at this moment rising into

existence. I do not dwell upon the social pleasure derivable from residing amongst your own countrymen, because, in truth, I heartily dislike everything that tends to produce exclusiveness; in principles and sympathies I am sincerely American, and hope to have Americans as neighbors; but it is nevertheless plain that numerous palpable benefits are gained by locating in a district possessed of mills, schools, and the various *et ceteras* of a western settlement.

“There is no doubt that the society’s location in Clinton county will forthwith enhance the value of contiguous lands, and it is for you, the managing committee of the society, to make arrangements for securing to new members the profits ordinarily clutched by mere speculators. They, above all beings, are the most to be dreaded. It is known in Davenport that they had their eyes upon our proceedings, and watch our chances of success with anxious interest. What you do must be done quickly, unless you wish to hunt for honey after others have stripped the hive. I can lead you to thousands of acres as good as those we are purchasing, and at no great distance from them. Portions are school lands, the commissioners of which allow three-fourths of the purchase-money to remain on mortgage for ten years. Other portions are purchasable with warrants.

“If possible, let the spring party come *via* New Orleans, leaving England in March or early in April. They can then bring as much luggage as they can reconcile with conscience. The voyage, though longer, will be cheaper, and the families will be spared the inconveniences attendant upon many changes of conveyance. The New York route is the only one available in summer. Instead of landing at Davenport, in this state, the better course will be to proceed to Comanche, whence conveyances to the settlement may easily be procured.

“A few words with regard to myself. From the com-

mencement of my connection with the society, I have been accused of selfish purposes. Parties in Hull accused me of being a land speculator, or the agent of land speculators; and the whole plan of the Iowa Emigration Society was represented by its adversaries as a scheme for my personal aggrandizement. You probably recollect that, with a knowledge of these imputations, I declared my intention not to become a holder of land in connection with the society's estate, and by that declaration I am determined to abide. The wisdom of it, subsequent events have fully demonstrated. My agency terminates on the last day of the present month, and by that time I hope to have fulfilled the various duties which were entrusted to me. All that I can afford to do will then be done, and I shall leave the settlement without having been enriched one farthing by its formation. Understand, that in saying this, I utter no complaint. The contract has been fulfilled on both sides; and my object in alluding to the topic is merely to rebut the ungenerous accusations to which I have been exposed.

"Believe that, though absent from the settlement, I shall feel deeply interested in its welfare, and that I shall have pleasure in aiding your future movements to the full extent of the means within my reach.

"I am, gentlemen, very faithfully yours,  
"George Sheppard."

"P. S.—Plans of the settlement, with explanatory notes, are enclosed."

"The Committee of the Iowa Emigration Society, Hull."<sup>10</sup>

Some two months later the Hull editor printed several extracts from letters written by Joseph Buck, one of the

<sup>10</sup> *Eastern Counties Herald*, September 26, 1850.



emigrants from that town to Iowa, which had been received during the preceding week.

“Clinton County, Iowa, America,  
“November 1, 1850.

“Dear Booth, — The description of our locality, as given in Mr. Sheppard’s letters, is not at all overdrawn; it is as beautiful a spot as any to be met with in Iowa, and when cultivated will be greatly improved in appearance, forming a delightful place for settlement. I have written my father a long letter, with the prices of provisions, &c., &c., which will interest many persons. He will, doubtless, give you the particulars. I would advise those who intend to come out not to burden themselves with much luggage, if they come by New York, or any of the eastern cities; it is very expensive and very troublesome. The risk also is great. If they come by New Orleans it is less costly and less irksome, particularly if they ship in a steamer that comes direct up the Mississippi, say to Comanche, the nearest place to this locality, where a conveyance can mostly be had; this last route is the cheapest by (I believe) one-half.

And now as to the country generally. The large towns and cities must be avoided by the emigrant; competition is rife and all the attendant evils thereon. It is not quite so bad as the old country, but very near. The west is the place for a poor man; if he is able and willing to work he cannot starve; labour is well paid; in harvest time  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars a day with board. Mechanics receive generally  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars a day without board; they can have board and lodgings at one of the first boarding houses in this locality, at from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars to 2 dollars per week. Labour is also respected; it is no degradation to work; the persons who are looked down upon are the lazy and the drunkards. I regret I did not bring out with me a gun; we could have almost

kept the table supplied with prairie chickens, plover, quails, wild ducks, geese, wild turkeys, rabbits, deer, and I know not what. . . .

“I offer a few words by way of advice, which may be used or not as the parties may choose. Bring as little luggage as practicable, consistent, or useful; no furniture of any kind nor beds, unless they be very good. Blankets are rather scarce here, so use your discretion. As to clothing; linens, prints, fine cloths, and hats, are dear, but if any of these things are required, they can be obtained either at New Orleans or St. Louis, on the passage up the Mississippi. Coarse cloths and such things as are really fit for the country are at least as cheap as with you. Bring a good gun if you can obtain one. If you have any really good tools bring them, they are valuable, tools being rather expensive, and not so good in quality as in England. Pots of all kinds are dear in the west; but the risk is so great I think it unadvisable to bring them. I have just been called away by an alarm of the ‘Prairie on fire!’ By the bye, this burning is a most magnificent sight, and when it occurs at night baffles description; to me it is the realization of ‘wild fire.’

“If I might advise on so critical a matter, send us an order for a building, if you can make up your mind as to plan, material, &c.; with the amount you wish to be expended on it; if you wish a wooden house, a frame is the best and cheapest; if of brick or stone, which is not much more costly, you will do well to give your orders at once, as the bricks, probably, will have to be bespoke; at all events, you might have a small wooden building, which would afterwards serve for stable or barn, and thereby save you a great deal of expense for board, &c.; nay, it is not certain you could obtain it at all, except at the distance of eight or ten miles. I speak feelingly on this matter, it

having cost me above 100 dollars, which would have been saved if I had been provided with only a temporary house.

“Since our arrival here we have been living at Makuqueta [Maquoketa], a thriving town on the river of the same name, in Jackson county; and considering the very hot weather (the hottest for several years), have been tolerably well, except Christopher, who has had a severe fit of the ague, brought on partly by want of care, which has left him very weak and poorly. On St. Luke’s day we got into our new frame-house of two rooms, pantry and cellar, with stable, &c. We are about digging a well, building a pig-stye, cow-shed, and other conveniences, which, with fencing and such like, will make us plenty of work [f]or the winter.

“I have a splendid pair of horses, worth 200 dollars (if they were in England they would fetch £80 or £90), two waggons, a stack of hay, and am about to buy four or five pigs, a cow or two, some poultry, &c., so that we may be said to have fairly commenced farming. Mr. Sheppard’s description of the locality of our settlement is not at all exaggerated; it is as beautiful a spot as any I have seen in Iowa, and, with ordinary good fortune, we have a good prospect of ultimate success.

“You will want to know the prices of provisions; the present is considered a very dear time by the western people; I have had the finest wheat in the neighborhood offered me for fifty cents (2s. 1d.) per bushel; I have bought a hind-quarter of good beef for 2d. per lb., the fore-quarter was 1½d. per lb.; half a sheep, 1½d. per lb., half a pig, 1½d. per lb.; butter, 6¼d. per lb.; eggs, 3d. per dozen; fowls, 5d. to 7½d. each; geese, 1s. 3d. to 2s. 1d. each; turkeys, 1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d. each; potatoes, 1s. 0½ d. per bushel; apples, 3s. 4d. to 4s. 2d. per bushel; onions, 2s. 1d. per

bushel; we have had during the season large water melons to fill a bucket for 2½d.; mush melons, weighing 12 to 20 pounds, 2½d. to 5d.; (I bought in New York, a pine apple, as fine as ever I saw, for 5d.); cucumbers, by the bushel, gratis; flour is at present selling at 3.75 to 4 dollars (15s. 7½ d. to 16s. 8d.) per barrel of 200 lbs.; tea from 2s. 6d. to 4s. 2d. per lb.; coffee from 6d. to 7½d. per lb.; unroasted; sugar from 4d. to 5d., refined 6¼d. per lb.; soap, 4½d. or 5d.; currants, 7½d.; raisins, 7½d. to 10d.

“To conclude: I do not regret having come here, it is the country for a poor man; if he is able and willing to work he cannot starve. Labour here is no degradation, but on the contrary, the industrious man is respected; worth not riches is the standard of respectability, and magistrates and justices of the peace are only recognized by their superior knowledge and integrity.”<sup>11</sup>

GRANT FOREMAN

MUSKOGEE OKLAHOMA

<sup>11</sup> *Eastern Counties Herald*, November 28, 1850.