

## Davenport to Burlington

EASTERN HOTEL

*Muscatine, Iowa*

*September 25, 1881*

We found an extended field for observation at Davenport, Rock Island and their environs, and would gladly have spent many more days in this delightful locality; but to keep in advance of the cold weather, which was now following us down the river with rapid strides, it was deemed prudent to press forward with all possible dispatch. In consequence of this decision the lecture programme was abandoned and short halts contemplated in the cities and towns lying along our route.

Greatly refreshed by our four days on shore, we resolved to make an early start on the morning of the twenty-fifth, and at seven o'clock were in our canoe. Colonel Russell was at the landing, and after returning my "Mississippi Album," which had been left with him the previous evening, pushed us out into the stream with best wishes for a prosperous voyage.

On opening the album the following lines were found inscribed in the colonel's familiar handwriting:

"DAVENPORT, *on the Mississippi,*  
*September 25, 1881*

"MY DEAR CAPTAIN:

"Safety and success, thus far,  
Adown this mighty stream;  
May heaven guard thy progress still,  
And grant fulfilment of your dream!"

A vigorous use of our paddles for an hour and a half brought us to Buffalo, a small village on the right bank, ten miles below Davenport. After dinner at Buffalo we resumed our journey with Muscatine as the evening destination, which city was reached at five o'clock. We now began to regard ourselves as something more than amateurs in canoe navigation, as the distance covered from day to day will convince the reader that we were not lacking in propelling force.

Muscatine, on the west bank of the Mississippi, is built on a rocky bluff, the scenery from which in all directions is very charming to the lover of nature. The city is situated at the apex of the Great Bend, thirty miles below Davenport and three hundred and seventeen miles above Saint Louis by rail. The Muscatine division of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Minnesota, and the south-western branch of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific railways have their stations here. It is the shipping-point of an extensive and fertile surrounding country, while widely extended beds of coal and quarries of freestone and limestone are in the neighborhood. Its lumber business is large

and increasing, and barley, corn, oats, rye, wheat, wool, butter and pork are produced on the rich farms adjoining. It supports two large pork-packing establishments and three extensive saw-mills, and has a gas-works, four banking houses, good public schools, a Catholic school, a fine public library, five newspapers, a monthly periodical, and fifteen churches. Muscatine was first settled in 1836, and was incorporated as a city in 1853; and if the public spirit displayed by her capitalists is any indication of future prosperity, I conclude that they will not be disappointed. The population now reaches over ten thousand.

## FARM HOUSE

*Near Mouth of Iowa River*

*September 26, 1881*

Learning that this day, which had been appointed for the funeral of the late President Garfield, would be observed at Muscatine with befitting ceremonies, we remained in that city until three o'clock in the afternoon, in the meantime listening to an eloquent oration upon the life and public services of the eminent soldier and illustrious statesman whose brilliant career had been so suddenly closed by the hand of the assassin.

It was some time since we had enjoyed the hospitalities of the farmers, but we had, nevertheless, not forgotten that many of the pleasant evenings of our journey had been spent in the farm-houses of Minnesota. We were now desirous of testing

the courtesies and accommodations of the Iowa grangers, and also of picking up some information concerning their social and industrial progress.

It was fortunate, perhaps, that circumstances brought us to the farm of John Warren Walton, a pioneer of Louisa County, an intelligent and affable gentleman. We wandered over Mr. Walton's farm, and looking to the westward from an elevated position, our eyes rested upon the beautiful groves and running streams, and we wondered not that Keokuk and Black Hawk clung with such tenacity to their ancestral hunting-grounds.

The Iowa River passes diagonally through this section of Iowa to its confluence with the Mississippi. Its banks are heavily timbered, and the farmer finds his highest hopes realized in the natural resources of his possessions. In this county, but a few miles from the Walton farm, is the small village of Florence, which lives in history as the home of Black Hawk. Here repose the bones of his ancestors, while the renowned chief "sleeps his last sleep" in a distant part of the State. Our evening with the Waltons was occupied chiefly in looking over a large number of Indian relics which had been carefully preserved and classified by our agreeable host. It was one of the finest private collections we had ever examined.

BARRETT HOUSE

*Burlington, Iowa*

*September 27, 1881*

"Weighed anchor" at seven o'clock. Our atten-

tion had been drawn to so many objects of interest in our route to Burlington that we clearly saw the necessity of an early start. Weather pleasant and but little wind.

We ran down to Keithsburg for dinner. This is a small village of Mercer County, Illinois, thirty-five miles below Muscatine, and one hundred sixty-eight miles south-west of Chicago. It has a national bank, a graded public school, and a weekly paper. Population about one thousand.

So genial were wind and weather during our sixty-sixth day that we were registered at the Barrett House, Burlington, at five o'clock, having covered forty-four miles since pushing off at the mouth of the Iowa in the morning.

I had hardly reached my room at the hotel when my daughter, Alice, now a girl of twelve years, came bounding up the stairs to meet me. She had been looking for us all the afternoon, but we had dropped into Burlington so quietly that very few were aware of our arrival until we were registered at the "Barrett." I had placed her at a private school here before starting on my expedition.

After tea the card of a representative of the *Hawkeye* was handed me, followed a moment later by the sender, Mr. J. E. Calkins, who politely solicited for his paper the fullest particulars of our explorations and discoveries in Northern Minnesota. This information we, of course, readily furnished, and the following day the readers of the

*Hawkeye* were presented with a narrative of the discovery of the source of the Mississippi, and a brief outline of our voyage down the river.

The city of Burlington, on the right bank of the Mississippi, is five hundred and thirty-six miles below Saint Paul, and two hundred and fifty above Saint Louis. Along the bank of the river and the valley of *Hawkeye* creek, the land is low, but back of this the site of the city is hilly to the height of two hundred feet, to the level of the prairie which stretches away to the west. The first settler on the site of Burlington was Simpson S. White, who built his cabin on what is now Front street, just below the lots on which the Sunderland mills stand. White's brother-in-law, [Amzi] Doolittle, and others, joined him in 1834, and together they laid out the original town. John Grey, a Vermonter, a friend of White, gave the name of "Burlington" to the prospective town, in honor of the city of that name in his native State. The future Burlington comprised then only a few log-cabins, and the first frame houses were erected by White and Doolittle in 1834. In this year the first store was opened by William R. Ross. The first brick house was built by Judge David Rorer, in 1836.

In 1837, the population of the embryo city numbered three hundred, and in February, 1838, Burlington was incorporated. On the twenty-eighth of December, 1846, Iowa was admitted into the Union and John Lucas [Ansel Briggs] elected its

first governor. Zion Church was used as a place of worship and State-house from the installation of the territorial government, in 1838, until the removal of the State capital to Iowa City. It stood on Third street, between Washington and Columbia streets, on the spot where now stands the magnificent Opera House, the pride of the Orchard City: "Old Zion" is no more.

Burlington's first school-house was erected in the year 1835; and its first saw-mill in 1837. Dr. Ross and Miss Matilda Morgan were the parties to the first wedding in 1833. The license and the preacher were obtained from Monmouth, Illinois, there being no territorial government at this time, and therefore no authority to perform the marriage ceremony on the west side of the river. The bridal company crossed in a scow and the knot was tied as they stood on the eastern bank, after which the guests returned to make merry at the wedding dinner. From a population of three hundred in 1837, Burlington leaped to one of twenty thousand in 1880, an interval of only forty-three years, and at the present date (1885) it numbers at least twenty-eight thousand inhabitants. A considerable proportion of these are of German birth or descent, many of whom are among its most substantial and enterprising citizens.

Burlington is a city of the first-class, with a mayor and aldermen, a well-organized police force, fire department, water-works, gas, street-

cars, a fine public library, churches, public schools, two colleges, one of the best opera-houses in the West, a splendid boat-club house, and commerce, trade and manufactures of a character to warrant the belief of her citizens that in a few more years she will rank among the first of western cities. The private residences are exceedingly attractive in appearance, and nothing could be more beautiful than the view from those on the summit of Prospect Hill. Most of them are owned by their occupants, which accounts for their neat and thrifty style and surroundings. The little park on North Hill is a delightful resort in the summer, with its fountain and walks and seats under the shade of the maples and elms. North of the Catholic Cemetery is Black Hawk Amphitheatre, with a great granite boulder in its centre. Here, tradition says, the Sacs and Foxes assembled in council and determined the question of peace or war. The granite boulder was the rostrum from which Black Hawk appealed to his people when they rallied for the final struggle with the white man.

The city of Burlington is favorably situated in the important matter of transportation facilities. With nine lines of railway radiating to all points of the compass she connects with Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and the South-east; with Saint Paul, Minneapolis and the North-west; and with Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and Texas. She thus enjoys every advantage for develop-

ing her trade. The Mississippi also plays an important part as a means of transportation, large amounts of merchandise being brought here for distribution. The levee is a very fine one, embracing a quarter of a mile of solid paved roadway, with a gradual slope, making the landing easy of access. The quantity of freight received and shipped by river is said to be rapidly increasing. Large rafts of lumber from up-river are received and landed at Burlington to be stored in the yards to dry, after which it is shipped by railway to various points in Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska. The amount of lumber shipped from Burlington is a large item in her general trade. The smokestacks of the manufactories are seen in all parts of the city. The Murray Iron Works are large and substantial buildings. The Burlington Plow Company, Wolfe's Furniture Factory, the Buffington Wheel Works, and many others, are fully up to the times in the character and amount of their products.

The Opera House is a credit and an ornament to the city and is one of the finest constructed theatres in the West. It was opened in 1882, and cost one hundred thousand dollars. The Burlington Boat-club has been an important factor in promoting the improvement of the city. Its primary objects were to build and maintain a boat-house, purchase boats and promote the art of rowing with a view to the improvement of its members in manly

exercise. But they have accomplished far more, and to them the city owes, in a great measure, the erection of its beautiful opera-house. They have a very handsome club-house which ornaments the river approach to the city, and the members, besides extending their fame from Lake Minnetonka to Creve Coeur Lake, have participated with honors in the regatta of the National Rowing Association at Washington. A large percentage of the muscle and blood of Burlington are numbered among its members, who are noted for their skill in aquatic contests and regattas occurring in the Mississippi Valley.

A splendid iron bridge crosses the river at this point, built by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company. It consists of nine spans and is about two thousand two hundred feet in length. There is also a commodious steam-ferry crossing the river to Henderson, which is considered one of the finest on the Mississippi. The Public Library occupies pleasant and well-arranged rooms on the north-west corner of Fourth and Jefferson streets. It has about seven thousand volumes on its shelves, which have cost over ten thousand dollars. The library originated in a liberal gift of five thousand dollars by the Hon. James W. Grimes.

The educational interests of Burlington appear to have been carefully fostered, as evidenced by the public schools, the denominational schools,

private schools, colleges and academies. The high-school building is a model of its kind. Burlington College, at the head of College Street, is surrounded by ample and ornamented grounds, and is a select boarding and day school for young ladies and gentlemen. The Academy of Our Lady of Lourdes, on the corner of Fourth and Court streets, has a handsome building and accommodates about one hundred and twenty pupils. Several other public and private schools flourish here, and the poorest citizen can secure a good education for his children.

The press of Burlington through one of its members, has carried the name and fame of this city into the remotest corner of America; and across the ocean, on the news-stands of London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow, it is found, and has given the city of its birth and growth a cosmopolitan character which it will probably never lose. *Esto perpetua*, "The Burlington Hawkeye!" May thy witty and instructive pages continue to delight our descendants as they have instructed and delighted us.