The Palimpsest

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSEST

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY RUTH A. GALLAHER

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State of the Union in 1846

Having in mind the movements leading to the acquisition and occupation of immense territories in the Far West, the relation of this epic surge to the then unrealized national future, and the growth of sectional bitterness, Bernard DeVoto, a distinguished literary historian, set 1846 in dramatic focus as "the year of decision". That was the year Iowa entered the Union.

Seventeen million persons made up the living body of the American Republic at the outset of the 1840's. By 1850 the number had risen to 23,200,000. During this decade, the better part of two million immigrants came over the seas from northern Europe. Among them were many Germans in flight from unsuccessful revolutions. There were also Irish immigrants who were spurred by the drive of hunger following the great famine of 1846.

At the time Iowa entered the Union the United States was still a land of small cities. New York,

which held the lead, had less than 320,000 inhabitants as the decade of the 1840's got under way. Philadelphia boasted little more than 220,000; Boston was scarcely above the 100,000 mark; and Chicago registered only 4,000. In 1846, Nauvoo, the Mormon center, was the largest city in Illinois. If the cities were small, so was the national debt. On the eve of Iowa's elevation to statehood the amount owed by the United States was less than sixteen million dollars!

The country was just getting into its industrial stride. The leading items were textiles and iron. In 1840 the country had some 1200 cotton mills containing two and a quarter million spindles. At the close of the decade the national furnaces were yielding more than half a million tons of pig iron, one-sixth as large as Great Britain's output. The factory and domestic systems of manufacture were overlapping. Great industrial centers did not yet mar the beauty of the landscape and there were still craftsmen proud of their special skills and personal independence, but a rising body of class-conscious laborers was clearly discernible. Indeed, factory workers had already established unions to express collectively their ambitions and demands.

In the field of national politics the decade opened with the astonishing battle between the

Whigs and Democrats in the log cabin hard cider campaign of 1840. In supporting William Henry Harrison, Daniel Webster wept aloud because he had not been granted the boon of birth in a cabin. The modest Jacksonian, Martin Van Buren, was represented as being an idle parasite living in the lap of luxury, dressed in silks and satins, and fawned upon by scented flunkies. Henry Clay declared that the battle was between the cabins and the palaces, champagne and hard cider. Clay's party triumphed in this contest but he himself was defeated for the presidency in 1844, when James K. Polk opened an administration that was to bring Iowa into the Union in 1846. It was in 1846, too, that Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress.

Among the dreadful realities of the decade was the growing tension between North and South. In his Farewell Address Washington had pleaded that national politics never be permitted to divide along regional lines. "In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union", he had said, "it occurs as matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations — *northern* and *southern* — *Atlantic* and *western*". His counsel was not regarded. A flash of anger swept along the Mason and Dixon line when the

Missouri question was being debated, and to Thomas Jefferson the outburst sounded as startling as "a fire bell in the night."

Notwithstanding a quarter century's effort to keep this evil genie imprisoned, it broke loose again in 1846 when David Wilmot attached to an appropriation bill his Proviso forbidding slavery in any territory which might be acquired from Mexico. Whether southern planters had desired to develop their "peculiar system" in the Southwest or not, such an act was a challenge to be fiercely resented and as fervently supported. The insistence with which it was pressed is seen in Abraham Lincoln's statement that, in one form or another, in and out of Congress, he voted for the Proviso more than forty times! It never became law but it poured fuel into the emotional fires, emitting heat and passion.

Men like William Lloyd Garrison were making the most of the dreadful situation. In 1843 he declared that the "Compact" (by which he meant the Constitution) existing between North and South was "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell."

As a prelude to civil blood-letting the nation went to war with Mexico in 1846. Border bickering and threatening brought an ultimatum from the Mexican commander to General Zachary

Taylor to "break up your camp and retire to the other bank of the Nueces River. . . . If you insist upon remaining", Taylor was warned, "arms, and arms alone, must decide the question". In Congress Abraham Lincoln accused Polk of inciting the war. The Mexican attack, he claimed, was not on American soil, but in a Mexican corn-field.

Other foreign relations of a less violent sort were producing historic consequences on this continent. In 1842 the Webster-Ashburton Treaty was concluded between the United States and Great Britain. This achieved settlement of a long-standing dispute regarding the nation's northeastern border. It also provided for the coöperation of the United States and Great Britain in the final suppression of the slave trade. Another feature of the agreement pertained to the surrender of criminals who were fugitives from justice.

The portion of the boundary between the United States and Canada to draw most attention was that concerning Oregon. The question of British and American authority in the remote region between the 42nd and the 54th parallels became involved in the problem of Mexican relations and in the presidential election of 1844. "Fifty-four Forty or Fight" became a slogan of the Democratic Party. Successful in the contest, President

Polk hurled defiance at Great Britain and declared that the United States possessed "clear and unquestionable" title to all of Oregon and asked Congress for authorization to bring an end to the joint occupation agreement of 1818. Notice to this effect was served on Great Britain in 1846. Fortunately the impending war with Mexico induced a mood less fiery than the slogan, and the boundary was fixed at the 49th parallel and so it has remained to this day.

Another international agreement concluded at this time was with New Granada (Colombia). Signed in 1846, the treaty made provision for peace, amity, navigation, commerce, and the right of free transit across the narrow isthmus. The United States was to guarantee the neutrality of the region and Colombian sovereignty over it.

In the year when Iowa became a State, Europe was on the eve of great liberal eruptions. The Industrial Revolution had brought fear and misery to the workers, but it also promoted their unity. Large numbers of men laboring together beneath a factory roof could more effectively articulate their social and political grievances than those toiling alone; they were also more aware of their potential strength. Thoughts of a democratic society stirred them profoundly, and led to major outbreaks against oppression in 1830 and 1848. In

the flights from failure and consequent revenge by triumphant reaction, the United States received many whose aid was to count powerfully in the democratic strivings of the New World.

This same unrest was active in Great Britain. The year 1846 has gone down in history as being famous for the repeal of the Corn (grain) Laws. These statutes had forbidden importation of foreign wheat unless its average price in the United Kingdom was in excess of 70s. per quarter; imports were then subject to heavy duties. The consequence of this policy was to keep the cost of bread high and this, of course, bore most severely on the poor. The new factory owners were opposed to these measures because the suffering of the impoverished workmen compelled them to make some increase in wages. Furthermore, many among the manufacturing class believed in the laissez-faire doctrine of Adam Smith as a general principle and were opposed to protective tariffs.

Duties on various raw materials gave way before this pressure, and under the brilliant leadership of Richard Cobden and John Bright the anti-Corn Laws forces won their historic victory. This action was received in the United States with satisfaction almost as great as in Britain since it meant a stimulated export for American surplus grain.

In 1840 Great Britain and China came to blows in the Opium War which ended with the defeat of the latter and the humiliating treaties of 1842 and 1843. Other western nations proceeded to demand similar concessions. In 1844 an American mission under Caleb Cushing negotiated treaties with China that gave to the United States a "most-favored nation" position with this oriental land. We also at this time obtained from China what was euphemistically known as the privilege of "extraterritoriality", recently abrogated.

The admission of Iowa into the family of American States was part of the continuing drama of western expansion. The forties witnessed an undiminished surge into the mighty West. Texas joined the Union in 1845, Iowa in 1846, Wisconsin in 1848, and California, boasting golden sands, in 1850. Wagon trains lengthened on the Oregon Trail. Sometimes stark tragedy overtook a migrant group as when, in 1846, the Donner party suffered its awful disaster in the deep snows of the Sierras. Early in February, 1846, the Mormons began their epic journey across Iowa to Utah. Iowa had scarcely settled to its new status within the American family of States when word came of the discovery of gold in California, and many adventurous Iowans, disregarding the slower but surer promise of wealth in their new

possessions, joined in the stampede to the fabulous diggings on the shores of the Pacific.

Not all the energies of Americans during these expansive years were being expended in warfare and on the rushing western tide. Great ingenuity was unfolding to meet the demand for tools, machines, and materials. At the outset of the decade Charles Goodyear of Connecticut succeeded in perfecting the process of vulcanizing rubber, producing what Daniel Webster called an "elastic metal". It was in 1846 that Elias Howe first patented his sewing machine with its eye-pointed needle. In the same year appeared Hoe's rotary press. Amazing beyond belief was Samuel Morse's telegraph which, the incredulous were told, could transmit thought across a continent over slender wires.

Other experiments were proceeding in the possibility of the use of certain gases for anaesthetic purposes. The work of Dr. Crawford W. Long of Georgia, and of Drs. Horace Wells and W. G. T. Morton, dentists of Hartford and Boston respectively, showed that teeth extractions and other minor operations could be painlessly performed by the use of sulphuric ether. It was in 1846, in the Massachusetts General Hospital, that the effectiveness of the miracle gas in general surgery was demonstrated.

In 1845 the United States Naval Academy was opened at Annapolis, Maryland, and the following year, by virtue of the beneficence of the Englishman, James Smithson, the Smithsonian Institution was established in the national capital. More immediately exciting in this decade was the transaction that brought the American Museum of New York into the possession of Phineas T. Barnum whose garish career did something to support his theory that one of a certain order of the human species is born every minute.

The decade that saw the entrance of Iowa into the American Union witnessed also the visit to the United States of England's distinguished novelist, Charles Dickens. His coming in 1842 was hailed as an event of major importance and he was received with every evidence of admiration. In spite of the fact that he expressed many complimentary sentiments about Americans and the American scene and paid tribute to the courtesy and kindness of the citizens of the young republic, his book, *American Notes,* aroused a vast amount of indignation, not allayed by its dedication to "those friends of mine in America, who, giving me a welcome I must ever gratefully and proudly remember, left my judgment free; and who, loving their country, can bear the truth, when it is told good humouredly, and in a kind spirit."

The period under discussion was memorable because of the birth of several persons who later played conspicuous parts in the history of the time. Among these were William McKinley, Thomas A. Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, William F. Cody, Elbert H. Gary, Elihu Root, Luther Burbank, Thomas Eakins, A. P. Ryder, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Carry Nation, of hatchet-wielding fame, was born in Kentucky in 1846. To be remembered for his infamy, notwithstanding the late disposition to place him in a romantic setting, was Jesse James, born in Missouri in 1847.

A tide of reforming zeal ran full and strong along the whole course of the nineteenth century. The forties were no exception. When Dorothea Dix visited the jail in East Cambridge she found insane persons confined in unheated rooms and otherwise improperly treated. This stirred her pity and indignation. Undertaking an investigation of the jails and almshouses of Massachusetts, she prepared a report which produced a profound sensation and brought about more humane provisions for the unfortunate insane.

Temperance crusading which had been present since colonial days reached a high point of advancement in the period. A group of tipplers in a Baltimore tavern suddenly found themselves ear-

nestly discussing the evils of liquor, and out of their unpremeditated seriousness came the immensely effective Washington Temperance Society. John H. W. Hawkins, a reformed drunkard, became its leader and embarked upon an itinerary that carried him over 100,000 miles in ten years. Inspired by the Washingtonians, John B. Gough, in this decade, took the temperance pledge, and became the most powerful, brilliant, popular, and effective advocate of temperance that this country (and perhaps the world) has ever known. In 1846 Maine was taking the lead among the States in the effort to achieve a prohibition law.

Iowa was concerned about control of the liquor evil from the beginning of its organized life. Indeed, the Territorial years from 1838 to 1846 witnessed "a more active temperance feeling" than any subsequent period of equal length in the history of the region.

The public of the forties was also bombarded with demands for abstinence from the use of tobacco, tea, coffee, flesh foods, and condiments. A pamphlet of the time circulated by the American Tract Society presented a list of 87 diseases supposed to follow tobacco indulgence; 20,000 deaths annually were laid to the charge of this weed. Sylvester Graham sought longevity with whole wheat flour (Graham flour). Others were sure

that the best hope of society was to be found in vegetarianism.

The crusade for woman's rights was in the forefront of social striving. Ever since the arrival in this country of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* the advocates of feminine emancipation had become increasingly vocal and aggressive. Under such leaders as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Margaret Fuller, Lucretia Mott, the Grimké sisters, Lucy Stone, and many others, women had joined in the humanitarian struggle. Finding courage and organizing competence in the causes of anti-slavery, temperance, and prison reform, they turned their increasing experience in public action to demands for woman suffrage. In 1848 there assembled at Seneca Falls, New York, what was probably the first woman's rights convention in history, and from the gathering issued a defiant assertion of independence cleverly modeled after the national Declaration of 1776.

With bright vistas of reform on distant horizons it is not surprising that some enthusiasts held the possibility of achieving nothing less than social perfection in a world of tears and tribulation. A perfectionist movement was manifested in the effort to establish Utopias in the New World not less alluring than that conceived in the mind of Sir

Thomas More. Among such experiments existing during the decade of Iowa's admission were Amos Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands near Harvard, Massachusetts, Adin Ballou's Hopedale in Worcester County, Massachusetts, John Humphrey Noyes' eugenic settlement at Oneida, New York, and the famous Brook Farm near Boston. Another of these was the Ebenezer Society which in the forties moved from Germany to New York State. During the following decade this group of pietists transferred its interest to Iowa's prairie land there to develop the cluster of charming villages known as the Amana Colonies.

While political, material, and social patterns were thus emerging, the nation was by no means negligent of cultural considerations. The objective sought in education during the thirties and the forties was a system of schools publicly controlled, tax-supported, non-sectarian, and equally available to both sexes. The labors of Henry Barnard and Horace Mann produced good harvests and promoted the eventual triumph of educational democracy. In the area of secondary instruction the academy continued its work, while on the levels of advanced learning the multiplication of colleges and universities, notably in the West, was nothing less than astonishing. It is an impressive tribute to a Commonwealth but two months old

that Iowa's legislature authorized a State University in 1847.

According to the Federal Census the young nation possessed by 1840 over 170 colleges and universities, 3,000 academies and grammar schools, and more than 47,000 primary schools. There were some 16,000 students in colleges, 164,000 in the secondary schools, and about two million children in the grades. Such educational achievements are evidence of ambitious provision for the progressive enlightenment of democracy, but pride is tempered by remembering that eight-tenths of the people were not availing themselves of academic facilities beyond the primary grades, and that in 1840 half a million white persons over twenty years of age were unable to read or write. It is disconcerting, too, to note that by 1850, in consequence of a large increase in foreign immigration, illiteracy among white persons had nearly doubled.

In 1820 the English critic Sidney Smith asked, "Who reads an American book?" His caustic question was not well timed because Americans already were spreading their literary wings and were on the verge of a golden age of letters. In 1840, Richard Henry Dana published his *Two Years Before the Mast,* and James Fenimore Cooper, *The Pathfinder.* The decade so well

opened was rich in the writings of Cooper, Hawthorne, Whittier, Poe, Prescott, Longfellow, Lowell, Parkman, Thoreau, Melville, and Emerson. During the year that Iowa was being welcomed into the family of States there appeared Melville's *Typee,* Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse,* Poe's "Philosophy of Composition", and the *Poems* of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Far removed from the philosophic calm of the transcendentalists were the religious riots in Philadelphia in 1844 which, like those in Charlestown, near Boston, during the previous decade, resulted in destruction, indignity, and bitterness. Behind these distressing events was a certain Protestant fear of the growth of Roman Catholicism in the United States.

To the religious violence of the decade was added excited expectancy that the end of the world was at hand. When a certain William Miller of New York became convinced that the second coming of Christ was imminent, he set out on a speaking itinerary that brought a multitude of persons to the same conclusion. Many hurried to dispose of their earthly possessions and to buy "ascension robes", but after two "appointed" days had come and gone, ecstatic expectations of immediate translation faded into the light of common day.

As the Millerite movement was disintegrating, the Mormons were paying a heavy price for their unconventional faith. After pursuing their stormy way through Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, and witnessing the murder of their founder, Joseph Smith, they followed Brigham Young across the plains to the distant Salt Lake flats where, in the course of time, they made the wilderness blossom as the rose.

The churches of North and South were shaken by the bitterness of the slavery question, and before the decade was over it was seen that no more than politics was religion able to resist the divisiveness of the time. Yet, despite these elements of stress, the spiritual heritage of the people was conserved and propagated by a multiplicity of denominations — Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, Quaker, Disciple, Unitarian, Universalist, Jewish, *et alii* — and with zeal and devotion, each commended the faith according to its light. Between authoritarian orthodoxy and extreme libertarianism, the choice was wide and any seeker after assurance and grace could find his place.

The emerging State on the western bank of the Father of Waters felt the impact of the great energies flowing through these middle years of American life. Born at a time when tragedy was in the

wings preparing to dominate the stage of national drama, Iowa's growth was not checked by the civil conflict. Supported by the incomparable soil, and spurred by lofty purposes, her hardy people responded to the call of destiny and the State marched confidently forward into the first century of its federal existence.

HARRISON JOHN THORNTON

Iowa Delegates to Congress

At the present time each State in the Union is represented in Washington by two United States Senators and its representation in the House is based upon population. Under this rule Iowa has two Senators and eight members of the House of Representatives. In Territorial days it was not so.

By the act of June 12, 1838, Iowa became a separate Territory. The Organic Act provided that a "delegate to the House of Representatives" should be elected to serve for a period of two years, and that he should "be entitled to the same rights and privileges as have been granted to the delegates from the several Territories of the United States." Thus at the outset Iowa had but a single representative in Congress — a Delegate who sat in the House of Representatives, with the privilege of debate, but without authority to vote or serve on committees.

Prior to the passage of the law making Iowa a separate Territory, William W. Chapman of Burlington had announced his candidacy for the office of Delegate to Congress from the Territory of Wisconsin — the office then held by George Wallace Jones. When the Territory of Iowa was

created, Chapman transferred his candidacy to the new Territory west of the Mississippi. Several men competed with Chapman for the office. One of the most prominent of the men suggested was Thomas S. Wilson, but he preferred an appointment to the Territorial Supreme Court. Thereupon Peter H. Engle of Dubuque, "a ripe scholar and good lawyer" and a former Speaker of the House of Representatives of Wisconsin, became a candidate. David Rorer of Burlington and William Henry Wallace of Mt. Pleasant were also candidates.

The four candidates in the field were all good speakers. They did not campaign on party lines, but each spoke for himself. Because of pioneer conditions of travel and the difficulties of obtaining an audience, the four men often traveled together and frequently addressed the same audience — "taking turn about in speaking first".

Each of the candidates, of course, became familiar with the arguments and speeches presented by his opponents. On one occasion Rorer, Engle, and Wallace agreed that Rorer, who was to speak first, should give the argument usually presented by Chapman. This he did in such an able manner that Chapman acknowledged authorship of the speech. Rorer then hastened to add, "It was the poorest speech that I ever made."

Near the close of the campaign an unfortunate accident befell Mr. Engle. While endeavoring to fill appointments that had been made for him to speak in the southern counties it became necessary for him to ford the Maquoketa River. The river was unusually high and swift and Engle was washed from his horse and carried downstream. Some Indians rescued him from the river, but he was not able to fill his appointments, and was reported to have drowned. This "Maquoketa Bath" may have cost Engle the office. The election, held on September 10, 1838, was so close that Chapman at first thought that he was defeated and "retired to his corn-field, near Burlington". Later returns revealed that he had won by the narrow margin of thirty-six votes.

Chapman was born in Marion County, Virginia, on August 11, 1808. Aided by a widowed mother and a faithful brother he obtained a common school education. He then obtained employment in a clerk's office, where he worked during the day and read law at night. In due time he was admitted to the bar and in the spring of 1835 he removed to Burlington, in the "Black Hawk Purchase".

At that time the Iowa District was a part of the Territory of Michigan, and in the fall of 1835 acting Governor John S. Horner appointed Chap-

man prosecuting attorney. When the Territory of Wisconsin was created, President Andrew Jackson commissioned Chapman as United States District Attorney for that Territory. In 1836 Chapman moved to Dubuque, but the following year he returned to Burlington, where he operated a farm and practiced law.

Chapman represented the largest Territory formed in the West, with an area including the present States of Iowa, Minnesota, and parts of North and South Dakota. Thousands of settlers from all parts of the Union were crossing the Mississippi each year. Many of them were farmers and the business of their Delegate in Congress was concerned chiefly with land claims, preëmption rights, surveys, and appropriations for roads, bridges, and public buildings, and grants of the public domain for educational and local government purposes.

The tenure of the Iowa Delegate to Congress developed into a comedy of errors. Chapman had been elected for two years. In January, 1839, the Territorial Assembly provided for the election of a Delegate on the first Monday of August, 1840, and every second year thereafter. The following March Congress passed a law ending Chapman's term on October 27, 1840, and directing that a Delegate be elected for the period from that date

down to March 4, 1841. In January, 1840, the Legislative Assembly provided that a Delegate be elected in August, 1840, for the short term and that regular elections should be held on the first Monday in August, 1841, and every second year thereafter. To add to the confusion one faction in Iowa contended that the Iowa law of 1839 should have read "on the first Monday of August next — and forty, and on the same day in every second year thereafter." Under this interpretation Francis Gehon was actually elected as Delegate in August, 1839, but was never recognized.

It was during Chapman's term that the Iowa-Missouri boundary dispute became critical. He was anxious to obtain an amicable settlement and to this end he "industriously bombarded both House and Senate committees". The question was not finally settled, however, until a decade later and then by court action.

Mr. Chapman is reported to have introduced into Congress the first preëmption bill. And, among other things, he secured a grant of $20,000 for the building of a military road from Dubuque to the Missouri boundary line, and $5,000 for a road from Burlington through the counties of Des Moines, Henry, and Van Buren to the Indian agency in Wapello County. He was not a candidate for the short term.

In 1843 Chapman moved to Agency City (now Agency) in Wapello County. From that county he was elected as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1844, and became chairman of the committee on boundaries. In the convention, too, he was one of those who helped to formulate plans whereby Iowa's share in the 500,000-acre land grant by Congress in 1841 should be devoted to educational purposes. In 1847 Mr. Chapman moved to Oregon where he became one of the founders of Portland and a member of the Oregon State legislature. He was later appointed Surveyor General of the United States.

Augustus Caesar Dodge, the second Iowa Delegate to Congress, had an even more colorful career than that of Mr. Chapman. He was born at Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, on January 2, 1812 — the son of Henry Dodge, Delegate to Congress from the Territory of Wisconsin, Governor of the Territory of Wisconsin, and later United States Senator from Wisconsin. At the age of fifteen Augustus Caesar Dodge removed with his parents to the lead-mine area of what is now southwestern Wisconsin. From 1838 to 1840 he was registrar of public lands at Burlington in the Territory of Iowa. While serving in this capacity he was nominated by the Democratic Party in the summer of 1840 as a candidate for the office of Delegate to

Congress at the election to be held on August third.

The Whig candidate for that office was Alfred Rich. Dodge's popularity won the election for him, and on December 8, 1840, he took his seat in Congress. The short term for which Dodge was elected expired on March 4, 1841. The election for a successor did not take place until August 2, 1841, and when the Twenty-seventh Congress met in special session on May 31, 1841, Iowa was not represented. In the summer of 1841 Dodge and Rich were again nominated and again Dodge was elected. Soon after he took his seat in Congress he welcomed his father, Henry Dodge, who had been elected Delegate to Congress from Wisconsin. The two Dodges were able to command the attention and respect of members of the House of Representatives, sometimes gaining the advantage over the Florida Delegate, David Levy, a shrewd politician.

In the debate upon the civil and diplomatic appropriation bill, Augustus Caesar Dodge offered an amendment appropriating some thirteen thousand dollars for arrearage in Iowa legislative expenses. The measure was opposed on the ground that the Iowa legislature had been extravagant. Dodge admitted this, but tactfully urged passage as a matter of present necessity. The amendment

passed the House, but was held up in the Senate for several sessions.

During the discussion on the tariff, when a proposition was made to reduce the import duty on lead, both Augustus Caesar Dodge and his father spoke authoritatively and effectively upon the subject. During the Twenty-seventh Congress, too, attempts were made to reach a final decision in the Iowa-Missouri boundary dispute, but final settlement was again postponed.

The two-year term of Delegate Dodge terminated in March, 1843, but again, under the Iowa law, the election of a Delegate was not held until that summer. In June he was renominated by the Democrats in convention at Iowa City. William Henry Wallace of Mt. Pleasant was the Whig candidate. Together these men "stumped the Territory". Dodge was criticized for not obtaining more appropriations, but there were no real political issues. Dodge was again the more popular candidate and he was reëlected.

By 1844 the population of Iowa had increased to 75,152, and there was a growing interest in statehood. Early in the year the Iowa Legislative Assembly passed a law calling for a constitutional convention. The convention, which met in October, formulated a constitution for a new State, with boundaries extending from the Mississippi to

the Missouri River, and from the northern boundary of Missouri to the St. Peter's River.

In December, 1844, Delegate Dodge presented the constitution to Congres and urged its acceptance. Amendments were presented to reduce the size of the State to about two-thirds the size outlined in the original constitution. Mr. Dodge vigorously opposed such amendments, but despite his protest, the amendments were passed. Dodge then felt that since Congress had spoken in the matter it would be better for the people of Iowa to accept its proposal and come into the Union with the smaller boundaries. To this end he addressed a letter to his constituents saying that regardless of how they might vote they could not expect "one square mile more" for the new State.

The people of Iowa disagreed with Mr. Dodge and rejected the constitution. Moreover, when Mr. Dodge came up for reëlection again, he was criticized for not standing firmly for the Missouri River boundary. Whereupon he addressed another communication to his constituents saying that if he were reëlected he would insist upon the larger boundaries.

True to this promise he presented the Constitution of 1846 to Congress and again made a plea for the larger boundaries. He declared that if the members of Congress insisted on the smaller area,

"they might as well pass an act for our perpetual exclusion from the Union." His arguments were successful and the new lines were accepted. With the coming of statehood, the Delegate to Congress was out of office.

In 1848 Dodge was named as one of the first two United States Senators from Iowa. He served for a second period of six years, again with his father who was then Senator from Wisconsin. At the expiration of his term in the Senate, he was appointed by President Franklin Pierce as minister to Spain. Retiring from this office he returned to Iowa to become a candidate for Governor in 1859, but was defeated by Samuel J. Kirkwood. In the following year he was defeated by James Harlan for the United States Senate. Meanwhile Republican politics had come into power in Iowa and Dodge — always a staunch Democrat — was permanently retired from political office.

It is of interest to note that the prestige and influence of Delegates to Congress increased during the Iowa Territorial period. At first the bills which the Delegates sponsored were usually introduced through committees and Delegates were not appointed to committees, but both Chapman and Dodge occasionally introduced unimportant bills on the floor. On one occasion Chapman attempted

to have a bill transferred from one committee to another, but the request was denied. When he objected to this ruling, he was also denied the privilege of debating this particular question.

Dodge not only introduced measures independently of committees, but on one occasion he even offered an amendment which was adopted. In 1845 his prestige was further increased when President James K. Polk asked him to make recommendations for Federal appointments in Iowa, thus giving him a patronage status.

JACOB A. SWISHER

Comment by the Editor

FROM DIGITS TO CENTENNIALS

In 1946 Iowa celebrates its first hundred years as a State. What is the magic of a century that we note its passing? Moreover, how did man discover that with nine digits and a zero he could represent all possible numbers from one to quadrillions and beyond.

It all started with the fingers, though the toes were sometimes added; so the fact that in English the same word may be used for fingers and toes and for the first nine numbers is no accident. The complete score or tally based on human digits was twenty, whence came the quaint "three score and ten" as the expected span of human life. The Mayas had an elaborate system of numbers based on twenty.

If the fingers alone were used as counters, the unit was ten and from that ten came the science of arithmetic. Fingers came to be represented by lines. The Greeks and Romans used upright lines, I, II, III. The hand, fingers together and thumb out, suggested the V. The scholars of India used horizontal lines, —, ═, ≡. Hurriedly written, perhaps in sand, these finally evolved as

1, 2, and 3. The march of the numbers had begun. As early as the third century, A. D., and perhaps before that, the Hindu scholars were using nine digits. Later these were introduced into Europe by the Arabs and we call them Arabic.

Mathematicians in various countries came to think in multiples of ten. Ten tens were a hundred, ten hundreds were a thousand. These were all very well as ideas, but they were difficult to add and subtract. It is easy to write MDCCCXLVI or MCMXLVI but not so easy to subtract one from the other and discover that Iowa is C years old.

The magic key to the new arithmetic was the zero and its use in the formation of a system of numbers in which the digits had place value. Seven is said to be the lucky number, but this should be 10. One might speculate that some wise man, having counted his fingers up to nine may have said in his own language, "once around", and put down a one and a circle. That explanation is, of course, too obvious. No one knows exactly how or when the combination of digits and zeros with place values came into use.

Ancient merchants used counting devices in which small stones, *calculi,* were used in the various columns to represent the ones, tens, hundreds, etc. Today we still "calculate". It would have

been easy to represent the pebbles by digits, but what to do in case there were, for example, seven thousands and two tens but no hundreds and no ones. The Hindus, it seems, used a dot to represent an empty column. Somehow along the path of history, perhaps from the dot, perhaps from the Greek Δ, representing ten, the zero emerged. The Hindu word for void was *sunya*. The Arabs made it *as-sifr* or *sifr*. Through the Greek and Italian this came to be the English "zero". Through the Spanish and Old French it came to be "cipher".

The zero came into use about a thousand years before the Declaration of Independence. With its aid any number could be expressed by a simple row of characters. And so, instead of writing MDCCCXLVI, as the Romans did, we now write 1846; for MCMXLVI we write 1946. A one followed by two ciphers means one hundred, no tens, and no ones. It looks easy, but it took mankind a long time to work out the transition from digits to centennials.

RUTH A. GALLAHER

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