

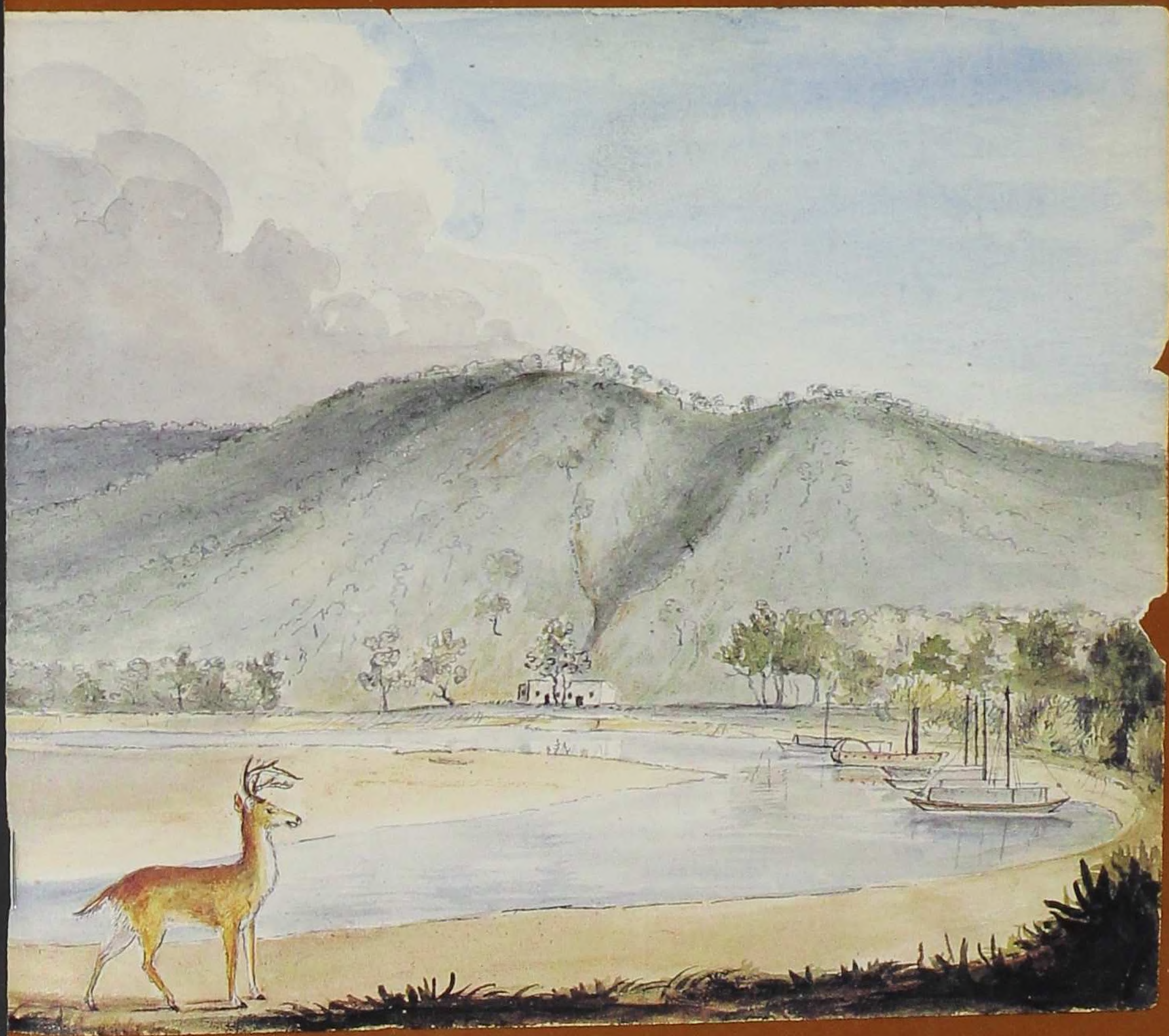
Frontier Clergy • Titian Ramsay Peale and the Long Expedition • Prairie Chickens

The PALIMPSEST

Volume 74, Number 2

IOWA'S POPULAR HISTORY MAGAZINE

Summer 1993 \$4.50



Inside —

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA (JHIL COLLECTION)



The First Congregational Church dominates this pre-1868 stereographic panorama of Dubuque, taken from a bluff overlooking the river town. In this issue of *The Palimpsest*, an eastern Congregational minister ponders a move to Dubuque in 1864 — a town he characterizes as “ruins and ruggedness.” Nevertheless, by the 1860s, Dubuque was the fastest-growing city in Iowa, and would be its largest city until 1875.



The Meaning of the Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest (*pal /imp/est*) 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 record 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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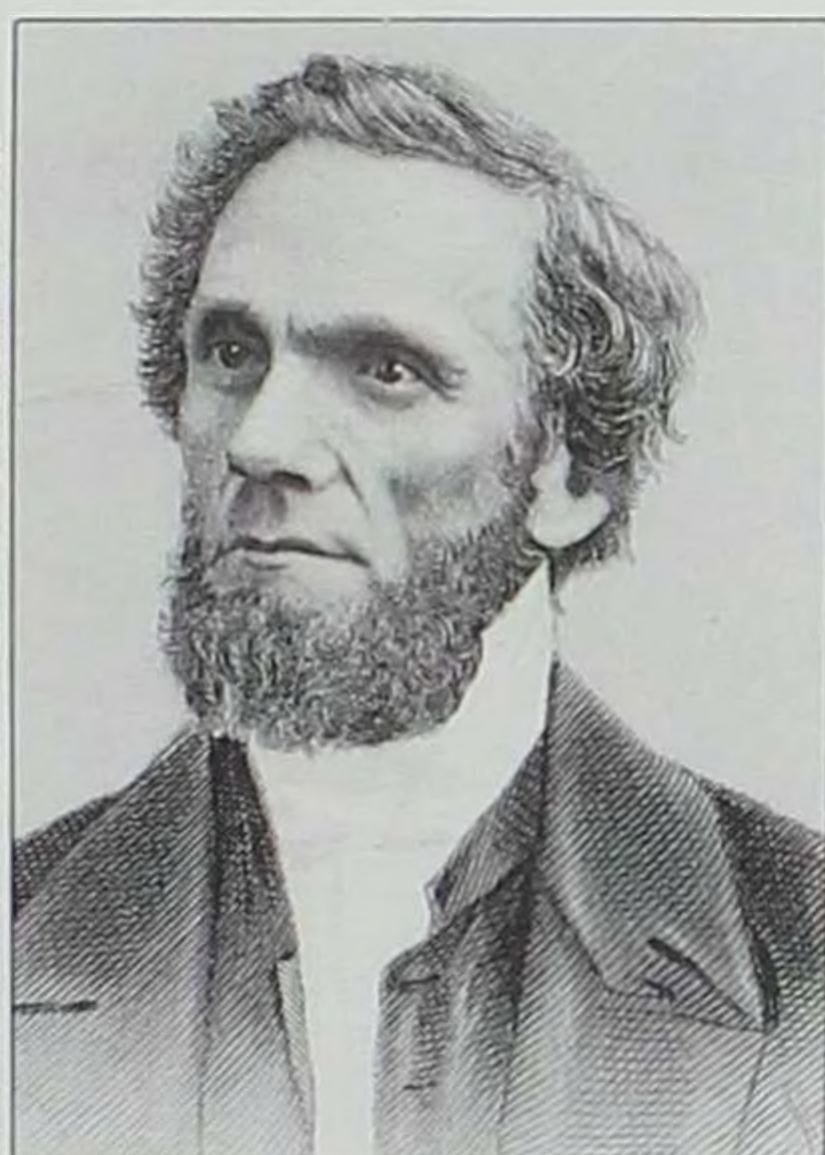


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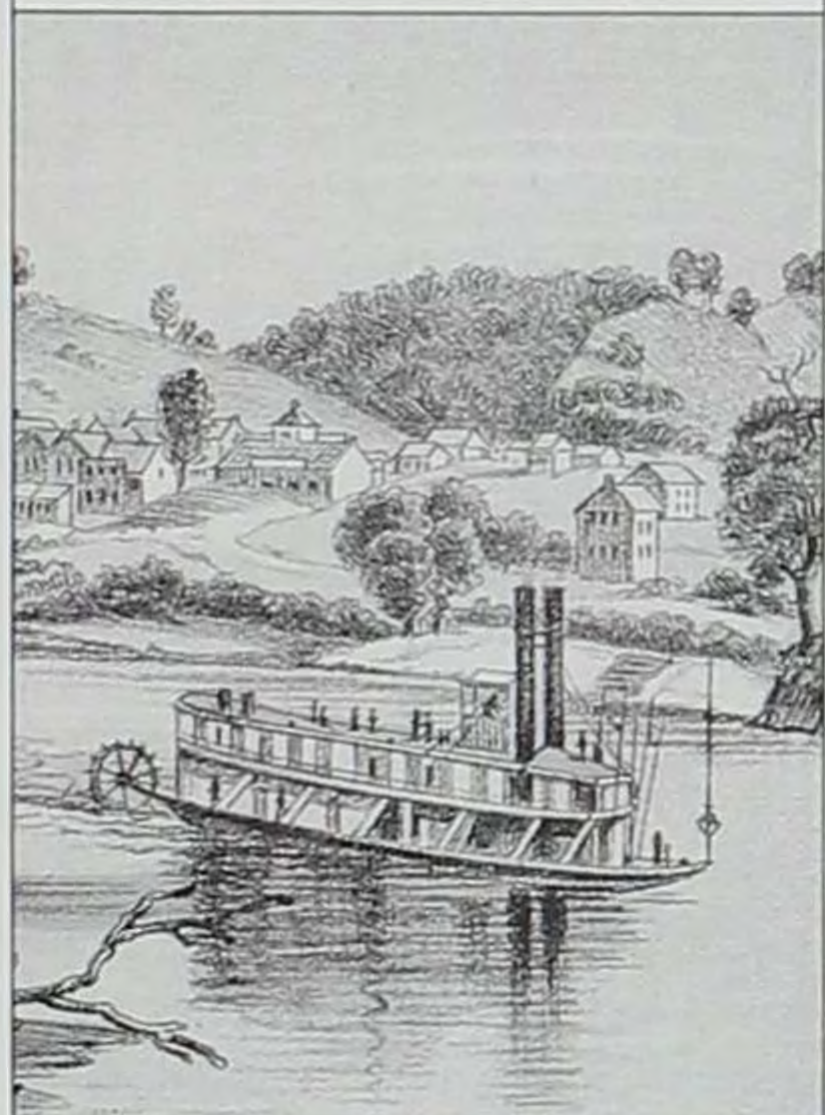
SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS: *The Palimpsest* (quarterly popular history magazine), *Iowa Historian* (bimonthly newsletter), *The Goldfinch* (Iowa history magazine for young people, 4 per school year), *The Annals of Iowa* (quarterly journal), books, research guides, technical leaflets. Catalogs available.

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FRONT COVER: A deer stands quietly on the shore of the Missouri River, near where the Stephen Long Expedition wintered over in 1819/20. Hired as an artist on the expedition, young Titian Ramsay Peale painted this watercolor. Recently uncovered in the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa, the watercolor is an important key to how Peale viewed the West; see "Between Science and Art" in this issue.

The PALIMPSEST

IOWA'S POPULAR HISTORY MAGAZINE

Ginalie Swaim, Editor

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A palimpsest within this *Palimpsest* . . .

or how to use an unusual word
a dozen times
in one conversation

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK me what the word "palimpsest" means. (As readers of the magazine, perhaps you've fielded this question, too.) After I give a quick explanation of the word and how it applies to history, I direct the individual to the inside front cover of each issue.

There we reprint the definition as it appeared in the first issue of *The Palimpsest* in 1920: "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 record of successive generations," the definition continues. "To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history."

It's an interesting word, though not easy to explain — or pronounce (accent on the first syllable, PAL). For those of us who like to build

our vocabulary by using a new word ten times in one week, "palimpsest" will never be easy to work into a casual conversation. In books and articles I occasionally run across the word used in a figurative sense, rather than a literal sense. In fact, this issue of the magazine contains a compelling example of a figurative "palimpsest." Let me explain.

In the article titled "Between Science and Art," scholar Kenneth Haltman writes about nineteenth-century artist Titian Ramsay Peale. Peale was on the Stephen Long Expedition, which camped near the area then known as "council bluff" along the Missouri River in 1819/20. As natural history illustrator for the expedition, Peale produced an enormous amount of artwork — both preliminary field sketches and revised, composite watercolors. In the article, Haltman compares and interprets Peale's *earlier and later versions* of the same subject matter. We might say, then, that Titian's Ramsay Peale's artwork is a "palimpsest."

Granted, it is not a palimpsest in the literal sense: Peale did not reuse the same sheet of paper by erasing or drawing on top of an existing sketch. But in a figurative sense, the entire

body of Peale's expeditionary work is a palimpsest. His more deliberately composed revisions for the public have obscured his preparatory sketches, which often convey quite different information and meanings.

ACTUALLY, perhaps much of the historical art and illustrations produced for public consumption are palimpsests in this figurative sense. In *Transforming Visions of the American West*, Martha A. Sandweiss reminds us that in the nineteenth century, a drawing or painting was often reproduced for the public as a print. "This meant reliance on draftsmen, lithographers or engravers, and publishers," she writes, "any one of whom could dramatically alter the appearance of an image."

Furthermore, publishers often pirated prints and lithographs from one publication to use in their own. In redrawing the images, they sometimes added, deleted, or changed elements on the picture. By the time an image reached a particular audience, it may have been changed in minor or major ways, by intention or accident, by the original artist or other individuals. Layers of change — and meaning — had accumulated, creating a palimpsest.

The earliest layer of imposed meaning is probably the perspective of the original creator. Suppose, for instance, that I'm on a family vacation in Rocky Mountain National Park. Happy to be away from urban life and awed by the scenery, I whip out my camera to show my co-workers back home that I really did take a vacation. I carefully focus on the mountain lake edged in pines — but I ignore the jammed parking lot that's right behind me.

Both the sparkling mountain lake and the concrete parking lot are there, but my perspective selects and documents only one view of the area. A journalist documenting the effect of carbon monoxide on alpine meadows might deliberately photograph the parking lot as part of the story. Who has created the more accurate image? Which image will tell Americans in

a hundred years what our national parks looked like?

Both images are accurate *pieces* of historical evidence. The more pieces we have, the greater the variety of evidence and diversity of experience, the closer we get to understanding what the past was really like.

But historical pieces don't always jibe. For instance, in one of our articles this month, an eastern minister complains about the harsh, slovenly life in Dubuque in 1864. Yet the accompanying images show elegant homes and orderly streets. Who's correct — the minister or the artists?

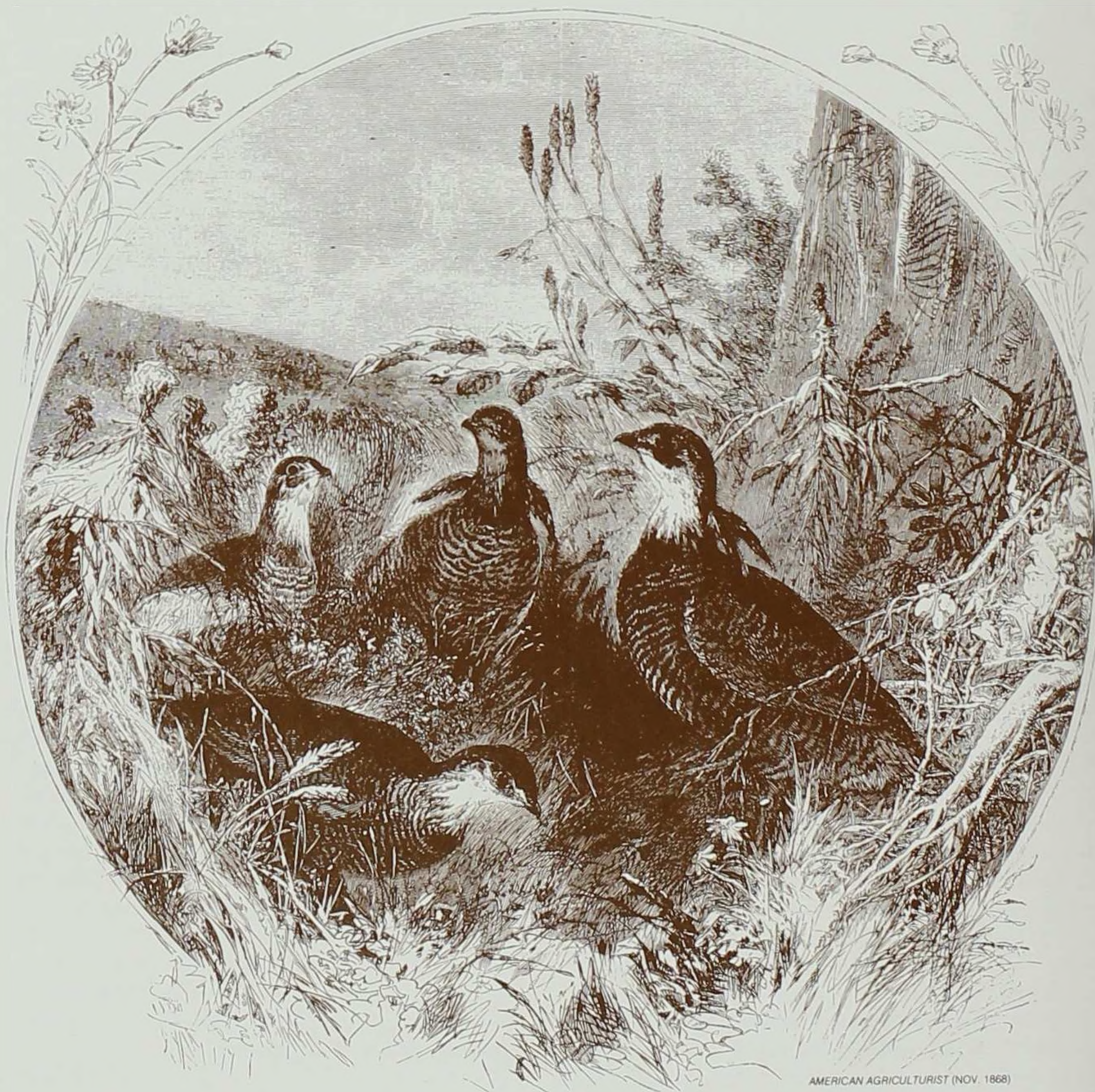
Probably everyone is — to a degree. Early photographs of Dubuque show large, fashionable homes, so we know that those buildings existed in 1860s Iowa, just as they did in the reverend's beloved New England. But the color lithographs may not be entirely accurate in depicting architectural details and the surrounding streets and landscaping.

Mass-produced lithographs and engravings often depicted western towns as bustling, prosperous, and pristine so that East Coast and European investors and immigrants would move west. Newcomers to Iowa (such as our New England minister) sent equally subjective written descriptions back east. Their perspective was based on what they hoped to find in a new home, and on what they missed from their old home.

LIKE MANY a pleasurable conversation, this one has strayed from the original topic — how Titian Ramsay Peale's work is a palimpsest. I hope you find the following group of articles as thought-provoking as I have. You'll see Iowa from the viewpoint of a young natural history illustrator in the 1820s, a frontier priest in the 1840s, an indecisive minister in the 1860s, and a four-year-old child in 1910 — as well as from the viewpoints of the nineteenth-century artists, engravers, lithographers, and photographers who documented Iowa through paintbrush, printing plates, and camera.

The Editor

A Prairie Chicken Vignette



AMERICAN AGRICULTURIST (NOV. 1868)

by Charles P. Bennett

HAVE YOU EVER seen a prairie chicken's nest? I have, and it happened like this.

One sleepy, Sunday afternoon in the summer of 1910 in Ringgold County, my father remarked that the cattle in the far pasture would probably appreciate some salt, and did I want to go with him. Of course, I did! So we went down to the barn south of the house and put a bridle on "Old Lade" (short for "Lady").

Lade was a large, white mare that my Grandfather and Grandmother Jerrems had given my folks, Carolyn and Thayer Bennett, as a wedding gift in 1903. By now Lade had acquired a disease known as the "heaves," so she coughed whenever she engaged in strenuous activity. Sick or not, she was still a very large horse to a four-year-old boy.

Even for my father, who was about 5 feet 7, getting on a draft horse without a saddle was quite a challenge. It involved running and jumping as high on the horse as possible, then getting both elbows over Lade's back and squirming until one leg was on the other side.

Then, with one muscular arm, my father lifted me up and set me down in front of him. Mother handed us a sack of salt, and away we

went over the ridge and down the hill to what the Bennetts have always called the far pasture.

My father tied Old Lade to the fence, and we salted and counted the cattle. On our way back to the house, we traveled up along a draw, deep with slough grass. There was a sudden flurry of wings. A prairie chicken hen came out of the grass like a bullet and flew over the hill out of sight.

Father asked me if I would like to see a prairie chicken's nest. I did, so we got off the horse and easily found the nest under the tall slough grass. There were about a dozen eggs in it.

We spent perhaps ten minutes there, as my father took time to explain to me all about the habits, love life, and history of the prairie chicken. Then he got on Old Lade after a couple of tries, pulled me up, and together we rode back to the house.

The prairie chickens eventually disappeared, unable to adapt to changes in their environment. In fact, many things are gone now, but not my memory of a father who thought his four-year-old son was important enough for the time and effort of explaining what life was all about for a prairie chicken.

I am fully conscious that few men could have been so foolish — or so wise. □

Prairie Chicken Update

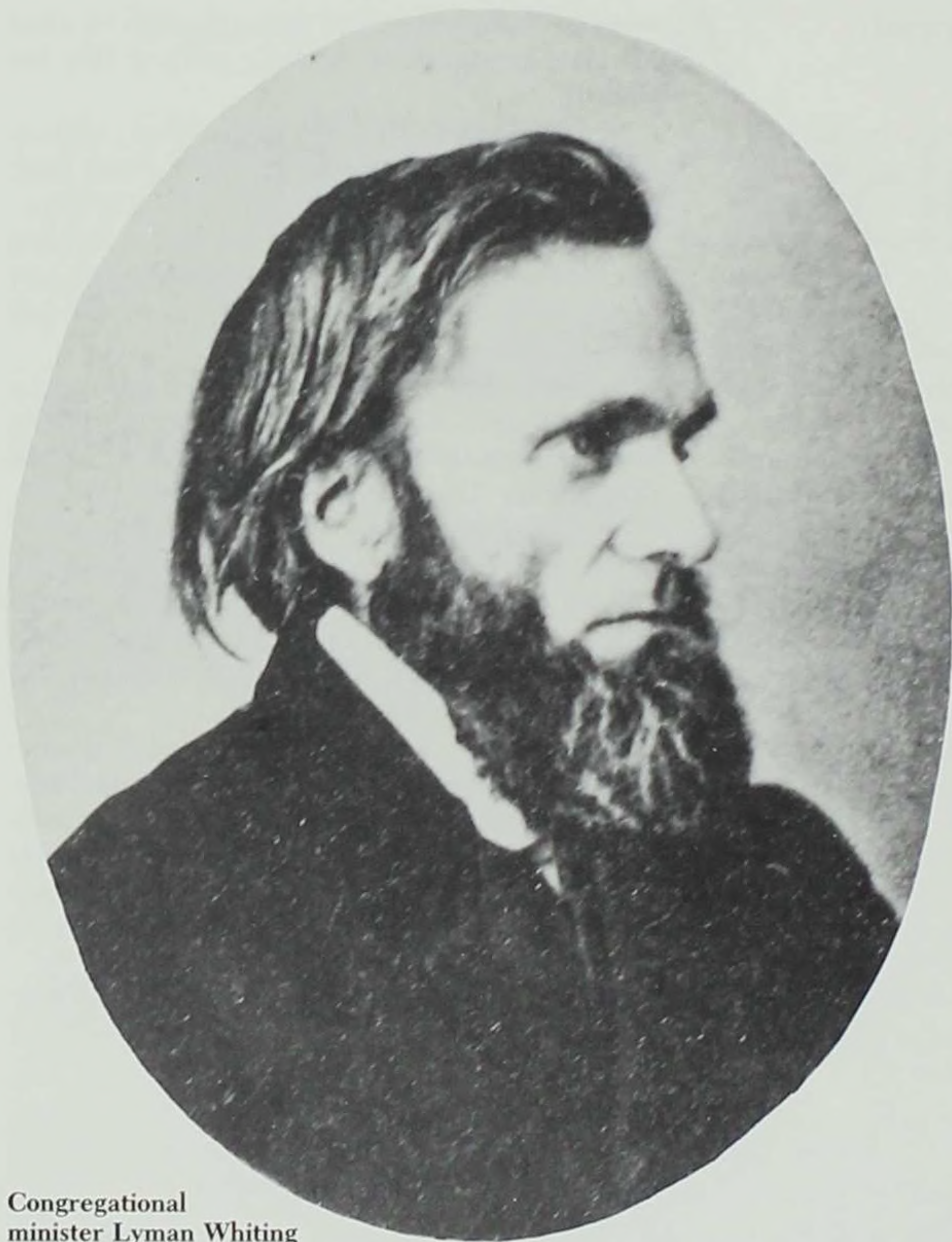
Prairie chickens were the most abundant game bird in Iowa in the nineteenth century. As their prairie habitat became increasingly cultivated, concerns for prairie chicken conservation grew. Iowa was the first state to impose bag limits on prairie chickens in 1878, which bolstered the bird's population temporarily, but could not compensate for the vanishing prairie. The last documented prairie chickens in Iowa were found in Appanoose County in the 1950s.

New hope for Iowa prairie chicken lovers came with 1985 federal farm legislation that included the Conservation Reserve Program,

which contracted farmers to set aside farmland for ten years. In Iowa, as much as 50,000 acres per county has been returned to undisturbed grassland.

With the return of the prairie chicken's habitat came an Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) program to reintroduce a small population of the birds to Iowa. As Mel Moe, DNR wildlife biologist explained, "They epitomize the prairie, so we thought it suitable to bring them back — it's pretty historic." Since 1987, the DNR has brought a total of 450 prairie chickens from a population in Kansas and introduced them in Adair County and in Ringgold County (where our author Charles Bennett, now eighty-seven, still lives).

— Becky Hawbaker



Congregational
minister Lyman Whiting

*'Hundreds of souls
lie in the balance'*

An Eastern Congregational Minister
Ponders Moving West to Iowa

by Paul Gutjahr

LYMAN WHITING faced one of the biggest decisions of his life in the spring of 1864. For months, he had been writing his minister friends asking for their help in locating a church with an opening for a pastor. Finally the Reverend Milton Badger of New York, a longtime friend of Whiting, sent a letter telling of an opening in Dubuque, Iowa. Badger wrote that "Dubuque is a very important fort — a large western city, and has one Congregational Church only in it — I must also say that I have heard of a heartful of worries and debt."

A church full of worries and debt may not have held much promise, but Whiting's need for a job was great and his options were few. Within two months of receiving the letter, Whiting had left Uxbridge, Massachusetts, on his way to Iowa to present himself as a pastoral candidate at Dubuque's First Church.

Being a candidate for a Congregational pastorate was an arduous undertaking. It involved visiting the church for an extended amount of time; preaching numerous closely scrutinized sermons; giving fastidiously evaluated lectures; and finally, interviewing with a number of constituencies of the congregation. It was a grueling ritual even if one really liked the church and community. Within a few days of his arrival in Dubuque, however, Lyman Whiting had serious doubts about whether the church or the town was much to his liking.

Whiting's wife, Sophia, and their six children remained behind in Massachusetts. In the months that followed, as the evaluation process continued, Whiting would write dozens of letters to his family. In them he expressed how much he missed his wife and children, and he asked for their aid in deciding whether to take the position if it was offered. These letters provide a unique window onto a difficult choice facing a Congregational pastor and his wife — whether to leave their comfortable home in the East to minister in the West.

WHITING WAS CERTAINLY not the first eastern Congregational minister to consider moving to Iowa to enter domestic mission work. In 1829 a group of seven Yale seminarians — later known as the Yale Band — had committed themselves to spreading the gospel in the West. The fiery Asa Turner, part of the Yale Band, was one of the first Congregational ministers to cross into Iowa. Turner visited Denmark, Iowa, to organize a church in 1838, and once there, he decided to stay. He immediately began pleading with his counterparts in the East to send him trained ministers to bring Congregationalism to Iowa. "Every little town in the territory has a-plenty of lawyers, and scarcely one in ten has a minister of our order. During the five years in which New England and New York have sent but one minister, who has never been here before, Rome has sent us five [Catholic priests], and I think more." Turner refused to mince words when it came to the working conditions. "Don't come here expecting a paradise," he wrote in 1843. "Our climate will permit men to live long enough, if they do their duty. If they do not, no matter how soon they die."

In 1843 eleven students from Andover Theological Seminary accepted the challenge to be Congregational missionaries in Iowa's earliest years. Later known as the Iowa Band, the eleven were full of energy and vision, declaring that "if each one of us can only plant one good and permanent church, and all together build a college, what a work that will be!" (Indeed, in the next twenty years, nearly 150 Congregational churches and a college were founded.)

This fervor in establishing denominational footholds in western settlements was fueled by a huge number of Congregational pamphlets and newspapers published in the 1840s, '50s, and '60s to boost missionary work within the United States. This promotional literature continually declared that a battle raged in America's West. On the one side stood the Protestants, who considered themselves self-appointed guardians of the true Christian faith. On the other side, the publications claimed, stood the forces of "infidelism, Romanism, Mormonism, and SATANISM in every form."

At the head of these latter minions, accord-

ing to the publications, stood the Pope. As one Congregational writer put it in an 1842 issue of *Home Missionary*, Catholicism "had long directed a hungry eye to the immense tracts of land which comprise the Mississippi Valley, driven forward by an inward heaving and an ambition to compensate herself for her losses in the Old World by her conquests in the New. There is no doubt that the Valley of the Mississippi has been mapped and surveyed by emissaries of the Vatican, and cardinals are exulting in the hope of enriching the Papal See by accessions from the United States."

One important "battleground" in this spiritual war between Protestants and Catholics was indeed in the Mississippi valley — the river town of Dubuque in the newly established Iowa Territory. By 1839 the Dubuque area had come under the watchful eye of the charismatic and industrious Roman Catholic bishop Mathias Loras. As early as 1843, Loras had successfully petitioned the Roman Catholic church for "52,827 francs, or upwards of \$10,000," *Home Missionary* reported, "the largest sum granted to any diocese except that of Vincennes — larger even than that of Cincinnati, and double any other grant except those." At the same time, Protestants were not spending even half that sum for mission labor in that area.

Given the propagandistic tone of the missionary literature, one might expect the troops for this Catholic/Protestant battle to have comprised erudite Jesuits, revival-bent Baptists, and dashing Methodist circuit riders — all equally zealous to establish their respective churches in the West. But a different profile emerges in Lyman Whiting, an indecisive Congregational minister wary of moving west in 1864. His is a story of a reluctant "soldier of Christ," spurred on by dire financial necessity and the vision, courage, and spirituality of his wife, Sophia.

LYMAN WHITING had several personal considerations for staying in the Northeast. First of all, he was forty-seven. This was far older than most ministers who, fresh out of seminary training and challenged by domestic mission work,

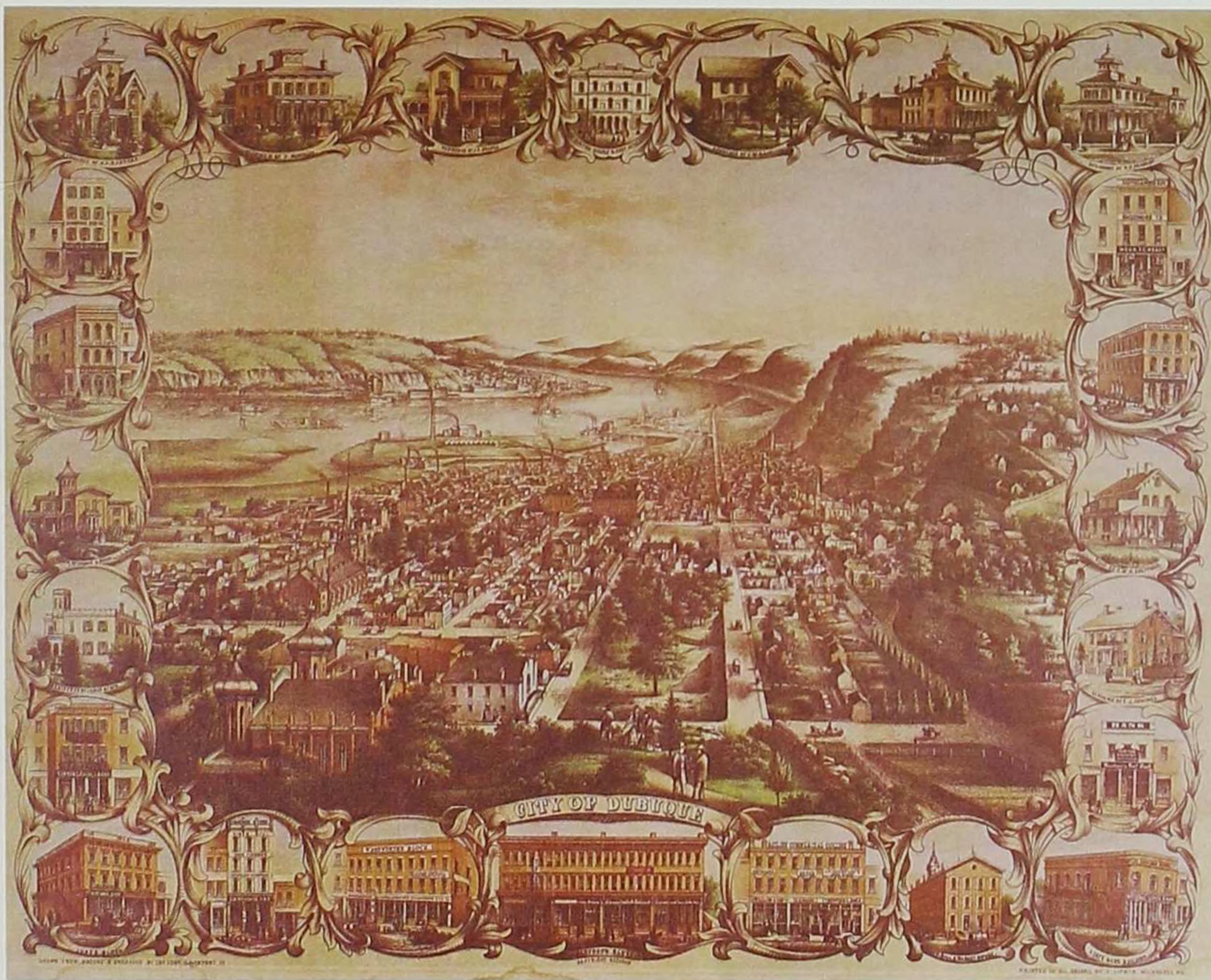
chose to move west. Furthermore, his wife was in poor health, and half of their six children were under the age of ten. He had spent the first twenty-one years of his ministry in Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island — the Northeast, home and hearth of American Congregationalism. Lyman Whiting was too old, too much of an easterner, and had too many family responsibilities to brave the challenges of what he considered an "uncivilized" river town.

Whiting might have better identified Dubuque as an already strong Catholic community, beset by political differences and economic hardships. Roughly a third of Dubuque's population was Catholic, largely German and Irish immigrants. As early as 1854, deep divisions had begun to appear in the community as "Know Nothing" nativists began to vocalize their anti-foreign and anti-Catholic views and recruit followers. The "Know Nothings" struck hard against Dubuque's foreign-born population (about four-fifths) and substantial Catholic minority.

If the tensions inherent in demographic differences were not enough, Dubuque was still suffering from the nation-wide depression of 1857. A Dubuque bank president later described 1857 as the year "the bottom fell out, and every one was left financially without even a fig-leaf. . . . Hundreds were completely ruined, and the fragments of catastrophe were visible . . . for many years after. Many persons left the city, business houses closed, banking and other corporations suspended, improvements ceased, stores and dwellings were given over to vacancy and desolation, and gloom reigned supreme."

When Whiting arrived in 1864 as a candidate for the pastorate, he quickly detected signs of the depression. He wrote his wife: "The town is terribly hurt by 1857. & the war is not helping it as it is us. It looks dejected."

Everywhere Whiting turned, he saw signs of what he interpreted as physical and moral immaturity — dirt, disorganization, and unfinished building projects. The first night he stayed in Dubuque he conveyed his initial impressions to his family: "Dubuque! a vast, rocky grotto, — rude — wild-dirty, rough inconceivably! We reach this house by 168



This lithograph of Dubuque (circa 1866) shows a clean and orderly city with elegant homes and prosperous businesses — far different from Lyman Whiting's perceptions of Dubuque when he arrived in 1864.

stairs fr. main St. You can find nothing finished — a slovenly . . . wilderness, of mud coarse." Two weeks later, his tone still had not changed: "All here is down — credit — customs — posture, life — The work is one of restoration, & a good family will be a mity help — in piety, manners & all. But t. privations! Dust, mud — never once clean! no roads — side-walks, — libraries or finish on any thing! Ruins & ruggedness all about you! Coming & going the order of life." Summing up his first glimpses of Dubuque, he wrote: "Dub. is I'm persuaded the most ragged, [disordered] place I ever saw inhabited."

At times, it seemed to Whiting that the East and West were two separate countries. Manners and customs differed, and the formality of

the East was lacking in the West. Whiting wrote that the word "comfort" had no place in the western dictionary. He found life in the West unpredictable and harsh: "Tis all one sharp emergency — brilliant success & sweeping Disaster — the two poles, — really composing the entire zone of life."

Furthermore, Whiting contended, the spiritual state and attitude of the population was a far cry from that of the Puritan stock of Whiting's New England. In a letter to his daughter Nellie, Whiting noted that the people of Dubuque "live almost wholly on the past in their morality & piety; — on the future as to the gains needful for life. — What they in the East were as Christians & disciples is a mode of thought. — What they expect to be in property

is as much the theme — but they need the Gospel; tho it seems to have little visible effect.” Later he wrote his wife: “The Spiritual life here is much [decayed?] — few faithful praying souls. ‘Tis not a little hopeless.”

CERTAINLY IT WAS with “eastern eyes” that Whiting reluctantly surveyed his new surroundings. But add to these subjective observations a very real obstacle for a pastoral candidate: the huge debt of Dubuque’s First Congregational Church. In 1857, Bishop Mathias Loras had commissioned European-trained architect John Mullany to begin work on a third Catholic church, the massive St. Raphael’s Cathedral. Refusing to be outdone, the Congregational pastor, Reverend John Holbrook, began work that year to erect a huge, new church on the corner of Tenth and Locust streets.

Unfortunately, the small Congregationalist flock could not sustain the costs of such a project, and by 1864 the church found itself \$11,000 in debt. So desperate was their situation that Reverend Holbrook had recommended to Whiting (even before Whiting had arrived to interview) that the church building be sold to the Catholics.

Whiting’s impressions of the new church were equally desperate: “Yellow-honey-combed rock & huge unused building. The church is a shameful abortion of brick & black walnut — not one thing about it is finished. The debt is ‘about \$11,000!’ No organ & no seats built in the galleries. It is a pitiful sight aspiring great things — doing little.”

Given the large debt; church attendance (less than a tenth of the Catholic churches); the cultural and spiritual disparities between the Northeast and Dubuque; and Whiting’s age and large family, it is little wonder that he agonized over leaving the Northeast. This concern appears as a common refrain in several letters: “I think in a N.E. ch — I could do more for Him.”

Nevertheless, when Whiting was offered the position, he accepted it and brought his family to Dubuque. Just as his letters and diaries reveal his hesitation, they also reveal the reasons he finally took the position. First, he was



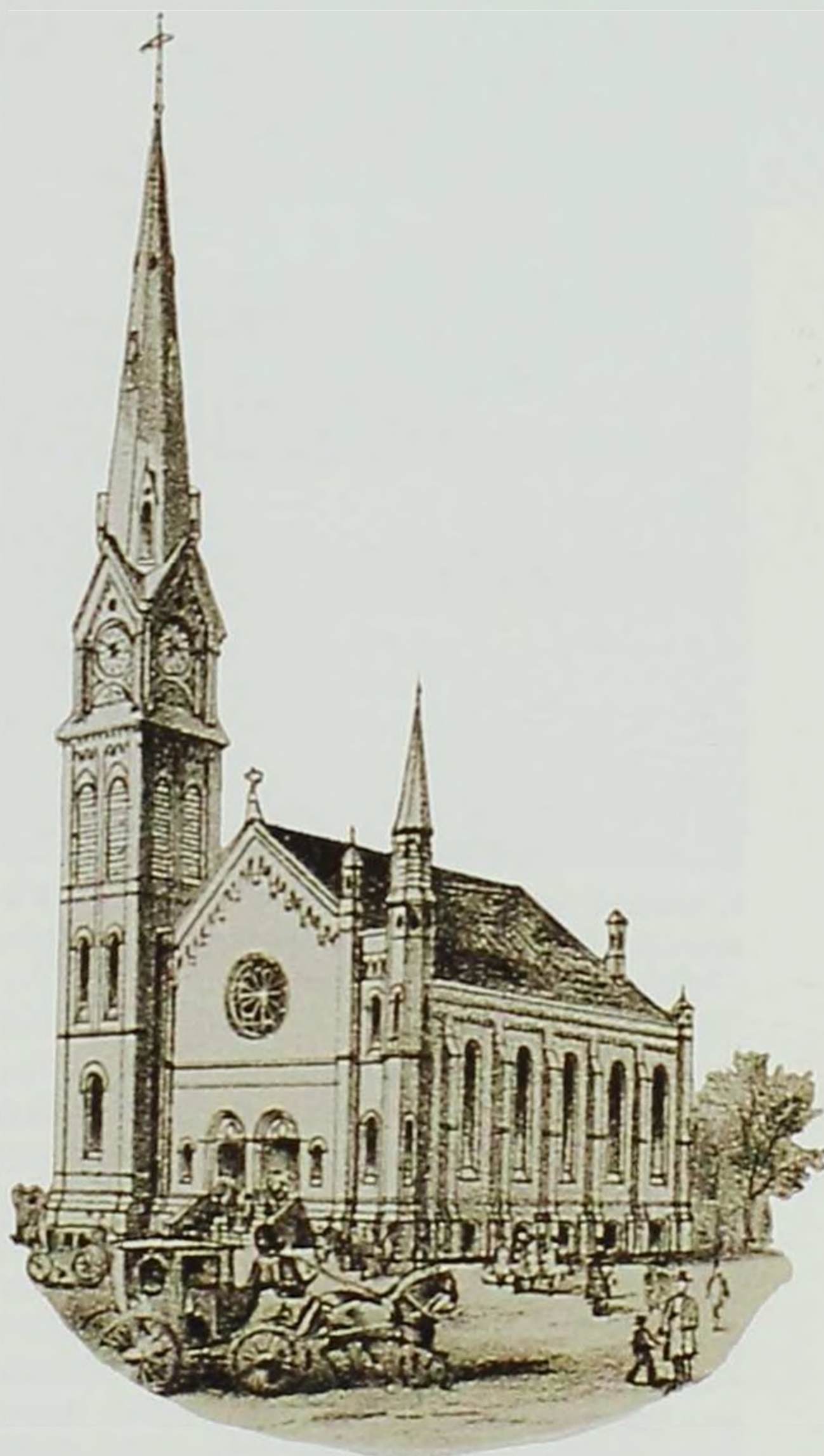
Bishop Mathias Loras and architect John Mullany had great plans for the third Catholic church in Dubuque, St. Raphael’s Cathedral. Its tower, finished later, differed from the one in this 1858 lithograph.

in desperate need of a pastorate. He had been recently removed from his church in Rhode Island through a power struggle with the church's reigning elder (also its chief financial donor). He now had no visible means of supporting his large family. Dismissal from an eastern church was a heavy blow that could have ended his ministerial career. Although a pastor's life was demanding and difficult, the East was oversupplied with Congregational ministers. There were many more pastors than congregations and churches. A pastor who had lost his position and could not count on a favorable recommendation from his former church found himself in a tremendously difficult position.

Secondly, Whiting apparently heeded the advice he sought from his wife, Sophia. We know little about Sophia except that she was often in poor health, gave birth to six children, and died in 1882 after being married to Lyman for thirty-nine years. More importantly, the evidence we do have — through their correspondence — suggests a woman of tremendous strength and determination.

OUR INTRODUCTION to Sophia comes in the form of a covenant she wrote in 1838, when she was sixteen. It is clear in this covenant that Sophia Chamberlain was pondering just what it would mean to marry and leave her home. She wrote: "My mind is deeply impressed with the conviction that God by the way he is now guiding me, is preparing events in such a manner that if I continue the acquaintance with Mr. Whiting, I should some day leave this land of my fathers — this dear home of my youth — these dear friends — and exchange them for the dark hordes of the earth where the glad news of salvation never sounded — and in view of these impressions — I this day enter into a solemn covenant with the Lord to be his forever." She made it unmistakably clear in this covenant that even though she was thinking of leaving her home and marrying Lyman Whiting, her first and foremost commitment was to her Lord.

This same sense of conviction marks every letter Sophia wrote to her husband. While



As the new Catholic cathedral rose up, so did a new First Congregational Church. Pastoral candidate Lyman Whiting was not impressed; a large debt now threatened the church. As with St. Raphael's, the tower was completed later and in a different form than in this 1858 lithograph.



"The church is a shameful abortion of brick & black walnut," Whiting remarked about the new building, "not one thing about it is finished." This 1860s stereograph by Dubuque photographer Samuel Root shows the First Congregational Church apparently before the steeple was finished.

Lyman's letters from Dubuque are filled with indecision, self-pity, and a yearning for eastern comforts. Sophia's replies are in a bold and striking hand. "Don't come back to N.E. to live in ease and comfort a few years more," she advised, "— then to go up to say, 'I might have gone to that little ch. who would have loved me. I might have spoken through the press and in a thousand ways in those wild states. But the prayers of my children might have saved many — their voices might have led multitudes to sing thy praise o[f] Christ.'" She added, "No doubt, hundreds of souls lie in the balance."

Instead of being a passive spouse awaiting her husband's decision, Sophia placed herself

center stage in this drama. She was the driving force behind their vision of ministry meeting the spiritual needs of the West. In her correspondence, she relentlessly pushed her husband to look beyond personal weaknesses and preferences to consider much larger issues — like the glory of God.

Whiting confided that if he were a younger man, he might be able to undertake the demands of moving to and ministering in the West. But now as the father of six, he feared he was too old to "carry on his back" so much responsibility and such a large family. Sophia replied that "none of us expect to ride 'on your back.' I expect to walk strongly, hopefully,

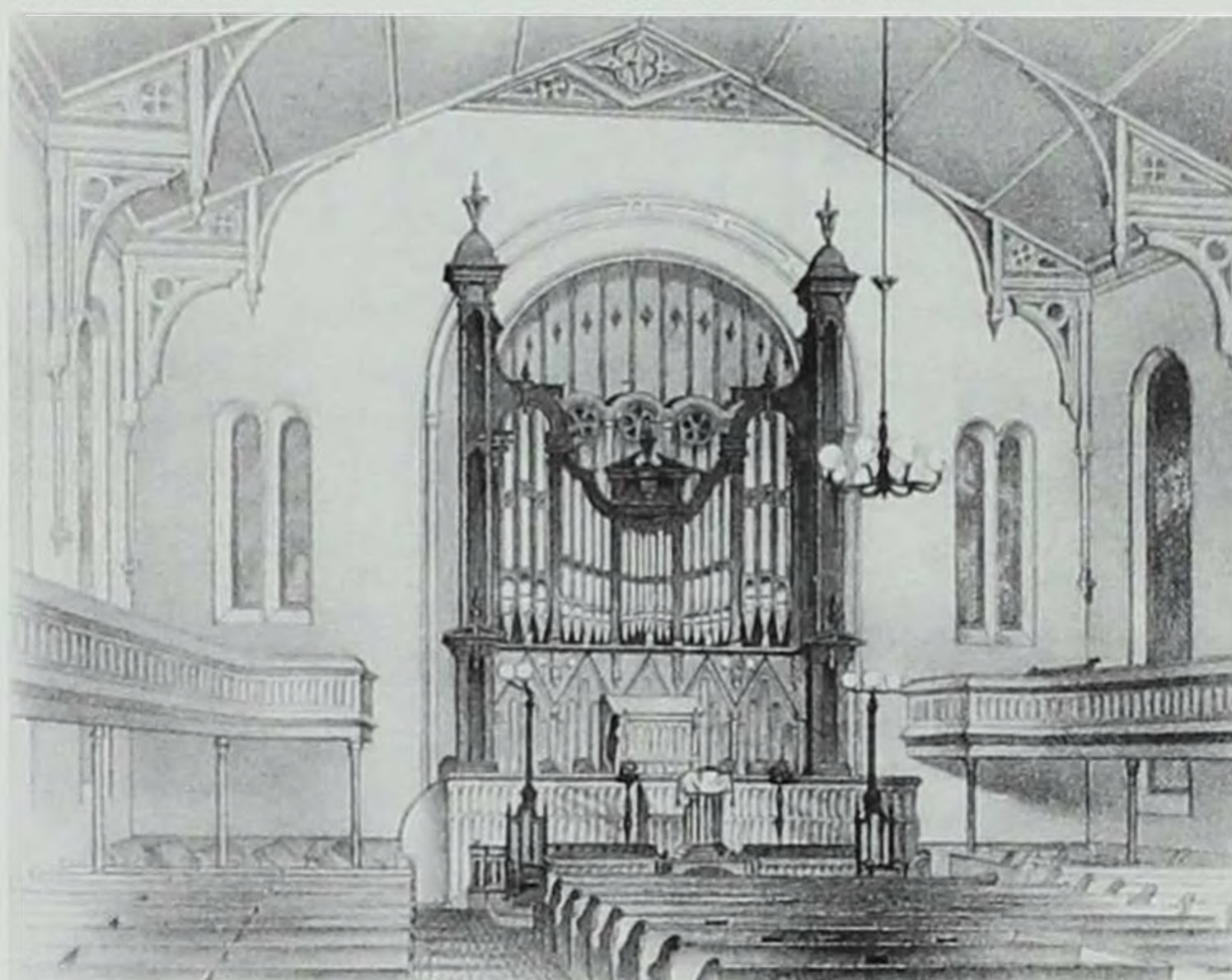
prayerfully, thankfully by your side." In the same letter, she remarked that their daughter Nellie "not only expects to walk, but is dreadfully afraid she should have to carry you on her back before we get there."

We know little about Sophia after she and her children joined Whiting in Dubuque (perhaps by September of 1864). We do not know whether she — like so many of her Congregational sisters in the Northeast — joined the city's Temperance Society, stood for the abolition of slavery, taught Sunday School, or prepared packages for foreign missionaries. But we do know that at a pivotal moment she pushed her husband to accept a pastorate in the West.

In many ways, Lyman Whiting's ministry in Dubuque proved to be a success. The church grew under his care, and the \$11,000 debt was paid off in just two years. Three years after moving to Dubuque, he reflected on his ministry in a New Year's diary entry: "A pleasing mystery veils this Dubuque emigration." While he admitted that he did not fully understand how he had ended up so far from his eastern home, he knew that he had gained a renewed sense of mission and purpose in life. Amazed at what God had wrought in his life, he reasoned that God had brought him and his family west so that they might put their trust more fully in Him. He wrote of his stay in Dubuque: "All pure — time — to God. Do All — dare all — be all — yield all to him."

AFTER FIVE YEARS in Dubuque, Lyman Whiting moved to a new church in Janesville, Wisconsin, which he served for another five years. Then, in 1874, he returned to the East and was pastor in four churches over the next

DRAWN BY ALEXANDER SIMPLOT; PHOTO FROM FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, DUBUQUE



When Whiting arrived, he was distressed that the new church had "no organ & no seats built in the galleries" and called it a "pitiful sight aspiring great things." By 1869, Whiting's last year in Dubuque, a new organ was in place (shown here), the congregation had grown, and the building debt was paid off.

three decades. He remarried in 1884, two years after Sophia died. He died in 1906 in East Charlemont, Massachusetts.

Whiting's correspondence from the early 1860s gives readers today a picture of Dubuque, Iowa, through the eyes of an eastern minister wary of the West — though perhaps his observations tell us more about him and his preconceptions than about the town itself.

The letters also provide a vivid historical example of women's roles in making decisions. Sophia Whiting's letters to her husband undermine stereotypes about wives passively accepting their husbands' decisions. We now know of yet one more woman who stood as the prime mover in a family's move from the relative comforts of the East to meet the spiritual needs of the West. □

NOTE ON SOURCES

The Lyman Whiting Papers, which include Lyman and Sophia's correspondence, are in University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City. Other sources include *Minutes of the General Association of Iowa* (Davenport, June 1854); *The Home Missionary and Pastor's Journal*, vols. 14, 15 (1842); and *Our Country: Its Capabilities, its Perils, and its Hope* (New York: Executive Committee of American Home Missionary Society, 1842). Secondary sources on Congregational history include Gaius Glenn Atkins and

Frederick L. Fagley, *History of American Congregationalism* (Boston, 1942); Truman O. Douglass, *The Pilgrims of Iowa* (Chicago, 1911); Rev. Albert E. Dunning, *Congregationalists in America* (New York, 1894); and William Warren Sweet, *Religion on the American Frontier: 1783-1850*, Vol. III, *The Congregationalists* (Chicago, 1939). Dubuque sources consulted were three Dubuque county histories and William Wilkie, *Dubuque on the Mississippi* (Dubuque, 1987).

Between Science and Art



Samuel Seymour, *Self-Portrait*, detail from his *Hills of the [Floetz] Trap Formation* (28–29 July 1820), watercolor over graphite on paper, 14.5 × 21 cm., Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Two artists — Samuel Seymour and Titian Ramsay Peale — were hired by the Long Expedition to provide a visual record. As shown here, an expedition illustrator often made field sketches, which were later revised into the images that the public would see through official accounts or exhibits.

Titian Ramsay Peale's Long Expedition Sketches, Newly Recovered at the State Historical Society of Iowa

by Kenneth Haltman



IN MID-SEPTEMBER 1819, a small company of "scientific gentlemen" bound the next year for the Rocky Mountains under orders from the U.S. War Department made camp for the winter several miles below Council Bluffs along the west bank of the Missouri (across the river and slightly north from the present-day Iowa city of that name). They had traveled down the Ohio and up the Mississippi from Pittsburgh in the *Western Engineer*, an experimental steamboat designed by their commander, Major Stephen Harriman Long of the newly formed Army Corps of Topographic Engineers. The *Western Engineer* now lay moored offshore, a floating storehouse for their crates of fragile scientific instruments (including sextants, telescopes, artificial horizons, and a microscope) and an extensive library of reference books. The team of civilian scientists settled into snug log cabins they and their military escort had hurriedly built against the coming winter in the shelter of the bluffs along the river, within sight of Fort Lisa, a Missouri Fur Company trading post. Come spring, they would embark upon the first systematic field reconnaissance ever undertaken west of the Mississippi.

Despite wide recognition by editorialists and politicians, as well as by scientists, of the desirability of cataloging the flora, fauna, and mineral resources of the vast territory that had been acquired by the United States through the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, much of the interior, and principally the river systems of the plains, had yet to be explored. The Long Expedition, as it has come to be known, was the first organized attempt by the federal government to take stock of this new territory since the return of Lewis and Clark in 1806. On that earlier expedition, the work of science had been left to the two military commanders. Lacking the specialized training to comply with Jefferson's request for detailed description, they produced only amateur results.

Cognizant of this, Major Long in choosing his command included a number of the nation's leading scientists, selected on the advice of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. William Baldwin, who was to have served as the expedition's physician and botanist until his death that fall; Edwin James, who



Charles Willson Peale, *Maj. Stephen Harriman Long* (1819), oil on canvas, 61.6 × 51.4 cm., Independence National Historical Park.

This portrait of expedition leader Stephen Long was painted by renowned artist Charles Willson Peale — whose son Titian accompanied Long's expedition.

replaced him in both capacities; Thomas Say, the expedition's distinguished zoologist; and Augustus Edward Jessup, who (until his resignation that winter) was to have served as its geologist, were all men superbly trained to study the western habitat and to accurately report their discoveries back east.

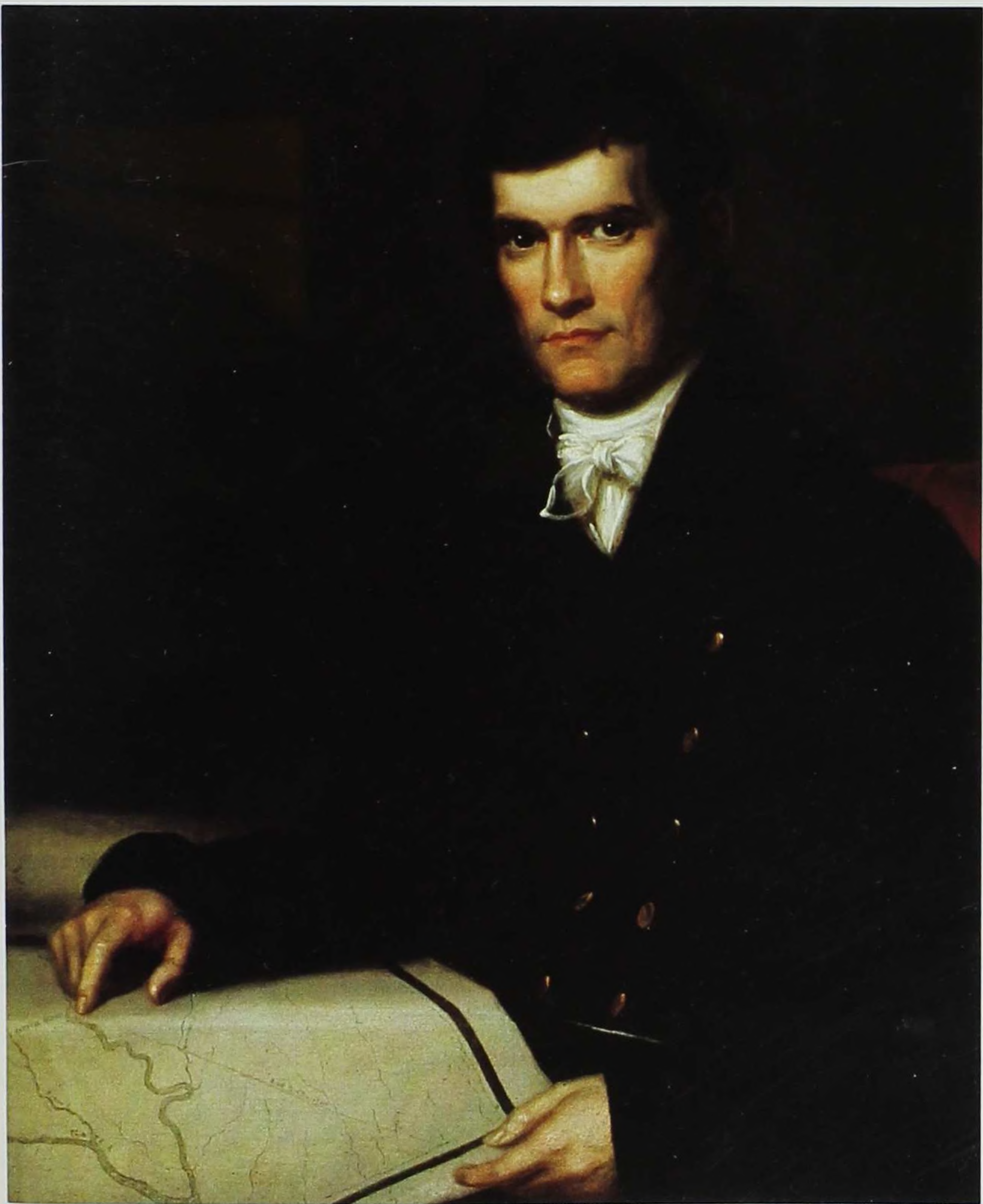
As Secretary of War John C. Calhoun (as well as Long himself) had noted, not only had Lewis and Clark lacked proficiency in the natural sciences, they had lacked the necessary artistic training to produce detailed and accurate sketches as illustrations of their observations in the field. Such images, they knew, might better have served the cause of science by helping, for example, to describe previously undocumented specimens too cumbersome or delicate to transport home. But Calhoun and Long were interested in more than propagating scientific knowledge for its own sake. They were also aware of the value such documentary images might have in encouraging congressional and public support of present and future expenditures on exploration. Long hoped to publish a multi-volume account compiled from

the journals he asked each member of his scientific team to keep, while any specimens collected were to be held for study and eventual exhibition in the Philadelphia Museum alongside the specimens collected by Lewis and Clark, deposited a decade earlier.

In this way, in planning for the Long Expedition, elaborate care was taken to satisfy the several constituencies eager for specific intelligence regarding the territories that lay far beyond the western frontier. They included scientists, both amateur and professional; members of the political class; businessmen with an interest in western expansion; and, last but not least, ordinary citizens whose appetites had been whetted for scientific knowledge (and whose eyes had been turned west) by the popular press.

BECAUSE PEOPLE desired not only to *know* but also to *see*, the organizers of the expedition found it expedient to provide for a visual record. President Monroe himself is thought to have approved the hiring of not one but two artists to supply the required illustrations: Samuel Seymour, a middle-aged, British-born watercolorist, hired to furnish sketches of "distinguished Indians" and "groups of savages" as well as western landscapes; and, as natural history illustrator (also serving as assistant naturalist), Titian Ramsay Peale. About Seymour little is known. Of the 150 sketches he produced, fewer than two dozen survive. Some of these, chosen to illustrate the official *Account* of the expedition published in 1822 and 1823, have become recognizable icons of western exploration.

Peale's life and his expeditionary artwork, on the other hand, though less familiar, are much better documented. Only eighteen years old when the *Western Engineer* raised anchor in Pittsburgh in May 1819 — he would celebrate his nineteenth birthday that fall near Council Bluffs — Peale descended from a highly visible Philadelphia family. He was the youngest son of Charles Willson Peale, painter, scientist, and proprietor of the nation's first natural history museum, the Philadelphia Museum (also known after its founder as the Peale Museum),



Charles Bird King, *John C. Calhoun* (ca. 1818–20), oil on canvas, 91.4 × 71.8 cm., The Chrysler Museum.

Secretary of War John C. Calhoun recognized that accurate images of what the Long Expedition discovered would encourage congressional and public support of future expeditions. Here, Calhoun's forefinger points to the area labeled "Council Bluff" along the Missouri River; near there, the Long Expedition wintered over in 1819/20.

located in what is now Independence Hall.

From the time of his birth in 1799 Titian Peale had been surrounded by the nation's foremost artist-naturalists and, after 1809, as fate would have it, by the artifacts gathered in the northern Rockies by Lewis and Clark. By his late teens he had gained a solid reputation as a taxidermist and a local renown for the delicacy and precociousness of his specimen drawings. The museum housed a gallery of portraits by the elder Peale and by a number of Titian's many older siblings, both sisters and brothers. It was thus appropriate that his official responsibilities on the Long Expedition should involve both science *and* art.

His instructions were to assist the senior naturalists in collecting specimens, which he was then to preserve for shipment back to Philadelphia for safekeeping. As was typical of the scientific practice of the day, he was to supplement these physical specimens with detailed drawings. From these more formal descriptions, museum displays and eventual paintings could later be made. In early March 1819, Long had put in an order with Beck and Stewart's emporium in Philadelphia for a wide assortment of pencils, colors, brushes, and sketchbooks of good quality Whatman paper measuring approximately 5 × 8 inches. Small and light enough to be carried easily in the field, these sketchbooks were well suited for taking notes and making sketches in all conditions.

It appears that Peale made good use of the supply of sketchbooks. We can gauge the scope of his expedition activities from the accession records of the Philadelphia Museum. On the same day in March 1821, some 123 field studies in his hand (of which 33 represented insects, 23 mammals, 13 plants, 27 birds, 9 fish, 12 reptiles, and 6 shells) entered the museum collection, along with 58 preserved zoological and ornithological specimens to which these studies closely corresponded.

NEWLY DISCOVERED WORKS indicate that Peale's productivity on the expedition was far more catholic than even this extended inventory would suggest. Only a few years ago

a Peale descendant brought to light five complete sketchbooks containing over 80 previously unknown western images. State Historical Society of Iowa staff recently uncovered six additional Peale images related to the expedition, five sketches and one finished watercolor (see pages 82–83), bringing the total of his *known* Long Expedition images to 235 or thereabouts.

These latest additions to the historical record have changed our understanding of Peale's work in crucial ways. For one thing, it now seems clear that he was as concerned as his colleague Seymour with the representation both of western landscape and of human figures in that landscape, Native Americans in particular. More than this, Peale's work can now be seen to have been marked by two very different styles of vision, the one more immediate and associated with preparatory sketches executed in the field, the other more formal and conventional, learned in the museum setting in which he grew up and characteristic of his most highly polished field sketches and the careful watercolors he completed after them.

IT IS IMPORTANT in considering the meaning of this expeditionary production that we recognize what has become a commonplace of contemporary museum studies and art history: An image, even when seemingly most factual, is *never* objective in any simple way, but inevitably tells as much about the interests, and the prejudices, of its maker as it does about the world it represents. This seems especially useful to bear in mind when looking at images by an artist sent west in the employ of the federal government to chronicle and celebrate the adventure of imperialism while simultaneously chronicling and celebrating the similarly expansionist adventures of Enlightenment science.

The West Peale drew and painted — and arguably the West he saw — was a contested terrain informed by preconceptions and by vested interests. We know from his letters and journal entries that Peale himself felt deep ambivalence regarding the region. The West meant an opportunity to participate in the ordering of the world through Enlightenment



Charles Willson Peale, *Titian Ramsay Peale II* (1819), oil on canvas, 62.2 × 51.4 cm., Private Collection.

Just before Titian Ramsay Peale departed on the Long Expedition, his father painted this portrait of Titian. Already the young Peale had proved his skill in taxidermy and specimen drawing in his father's Philadelphia museum.



Fig. 1. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Bison Hunt* (15–25 February 1820), graphite on paper, 12.7 × 20.1 cm., American Philosophical Society.

Based on a hunting trip along the Boyer River in Iowa, this sketch (above) and watercolor (below) were the first images of western bison hunts by a white artist.

Fig. 2. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Bison Hunt* (15–25 February 1820), watercolor over ink on paper, 14.15 × 23.3 cm., American Philosophical Society.



science, but also a chance to escape into disorder and adventure, far from the control of a domineering father such as Charles Willson Peale. Titian Peale's proficiency in natural history, indeed, seems to have stemmed as much from his love of hunting and the open as from any love he had for work in a museum serving the greater glory of scientific progress.

It is not that Peale's technical skills were in any way deficient — he was in fact at the cutting edge of the science of his day — but rather that his sketches reveal a more personal agenda at work. Specimen studies and landscapes, captured in field sketches as fragments of a world, were typically arranged in his finished works in patterns that suggest the importance to Peale of questions of power and territorial control. Neither the preparatory sketches nor the finished works are necessarily the more accurate. But the spontaneity of Peale's initial views seems to acknowledge and embrace a personal response made less visible in later paintings through a process of studious revision.

In a sense this movement from hurriedly made field notes into far more calculated works of art intended for public display typified the workings of the expedition in general. Consistently, the private perceptions of the expedition as a struggle against odds, which we find in journals kept by its members, were subsequently edited in published accounts into heroic public statements of environmental order marked by optimism concerning the possibility of conquest. In this respect at least, Peale's vision coincided with and reinforced the expedition's public ideology — with its suggestions that the containment of the West was, in fact, as "natural" as it was inevitable. Nonetheless, his sketchbooks reveal both doubts about the possibilities of white control and personal ambivalence regarding viewer access to a wilderness on whose essential *inaccessibility* his status as heroic westerner relied.

The assessment of Peale's expedition work to follow, though it draws upon an extensive study of his art and life, is based on a simple underlying premise: To usefully compare the early and late states of his images, we must first understand his purposes and intended



Fig. 3. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Sioux Lodge Captured by Ottos* (May 1820), ink over graphite on paper, 12.8 × 20.2 cm., Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Ramsay MacMullen, M.A.H. 1967.

Peale's sketch is the earliest recorded image of the Plains "skin lodge" or traveling tepee.

audience in each case, with some sense of the intellectual and artistic conventions at play. Nearly two hundred years after the Long Expedition, viewers today face the challenge of making sense of these long-lost works, both through aesthetic appreciation and close interpretation.

AS WE KNOW from his own journals and letters and the official published expedition *Account*, in the fall and early winter of 1819, Peale was principally engaged in collecting geological, zoological, ornithological, and botanical specimens. With sketchbook and supplies in hand, he tramped through woods and prairies and along the river, tracking game, setting traps, and fishing through holes cut in the ice of the Missouri. Hunting was a favorite activity of Peale's, and his February hunting trip to Boyer Creek (the Boyer River in present-day Iowa) yielded the first images of western bison hunts by a white artist (figures 1 and 2). That winter Peale also produced the earliest recorded images of the Plains "skin lodge" or traveling tepee (fig. 3).

The recently recovered sketches now augment this written and visual record of Peale's

activities on the expedition. For example, four of the sketches uncovered at the State Historical Society of Iowa — *Indians at Council Bluffs*, *Omahas and Ottoes*, *Heeteeka and Big Soldier*, and *Three Omahas*, each probably dating to early fall (figures 4–7) — tell us that Peale was recording his encounters with members of tribes who had come to Fort Lisa to trade.

These sketches, loosely organized on the page by posture or theme, seem to document random encounters. In *Indians at Council Bluffs* (fig. 4), for instance, Peale records the full-length portraits of three men — two standing, wrapped in blankets or hides, and a third seated cross-legged much closer to the picture plane or the extreme front edge of the image. Alongside are bust portraits of two other men, one of whom, drawn larger in scale and at a right angle to the others, wears a peace medal

on his bare chest. In *Omahas and Ottoes* (fig. 5), two men with their backs half turned to the viewer serve to demonstrate a dance position on the left side of the sheet, while the two men to their right are, again, much larger in scale, and seem to be convincing psychological portraits of individuals, one of whom stares out of the image directly at the viewer, his features highlighted in red wash.

ALTHOUGH NONE of the expedition's scientists were explicitly assigned to study Native American cultures, zoologist Thomas Say actually contributed most of the ethnographic passages in the *Account*. He proved to be a keen observer, and some of Peale's sketches



Fig. 4. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Indians at Council Bluffs* (October–December 1819), watercolor over graphite on paper, 12.5 × 20.1 cm., State Historical Society of Iowa.

Peale probably sketched these Native Americans (shown in figures 4–7) as they visited nearby Fort Lisa to trade or as he wandered through their villages. These four sketches are among the six newly discovered images by Peale in the State Historical Society of Iowa. Faint watermarks were clues for matching them to the sketchbooks.



Fig. 5. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Omahas and Ottoes* (October–December 1819), watercolor over graphite on paper, 12.5 × 20 cm., State Historical Society of Iowa.



Fig. 6. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Heeteeka and Big Soldier* (October–December 1819), watercolor over graphite on paper, 12.5 × 19.5 cm., State Historical Society of Iowa.



Fig. 7. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Three Omahas* (October–December 1819), watercolor over graphite on paper, 12.5 x 20 cm., State Historical Society of Iowa.

appear to depict the same subjects about which Say was writing. But just as Say's science in this case was "unofficial," so too was the art Peale made in its support. Peale, for his part, may simply have been following the advice he had been given by his brother Rembrandt in a letter, suggesting that he bring home images of "Indians in their warrior dresses" and "accurate drawings of their habitations." Nevertheless, Peale's ethnographic images (figures 4–7) and similar ones apparently removed from the same sketchbook, are perhaps his most original and important "specimen studies."

Painting Indians, it will be recalled, was officially the province of Peale's colleague Seymour; but this overlap in production between the two men can be explained by the fact that in the early nineteenth century, Indians as subjects of depiction were understood as belonging equally to scientific illustrators and to picturesque artists who traveled the globe in search of exotic subject matter. The two modes of description shared a vision of Indians as "natural" objects of scrutiny. Some of Peale's

sketches convey details about ornament and dress and communicate an essential individuality. In other studies, and in finished works based on them, such particulars as these give way to ideal forms calculated to strike a chord in Eastern audiences accustomed to viewing Native Americans stereotypically as savages characterized by a stoic nobility reminiscent of ancient Rome.

A simple comparison suggests this range of approach nicely. Consider first Peale's study of two men, identified — most probably by a later owner of the study — as Kansa or Oto (fig. 8). This sketch presents much realistic-seeming detail, for example, scalp locks, buckskin leggings, and a bearclaw necklace. The men are shown seated, one in three-quarter profile and the other viewed from the front; both are pensive and awkward, an attribute of the drawing's style as well as of their pose. The eye locates the men's position in space only with difficulty because very little ground plane has been provided. Although they are thus depicted "out of context," they do convey, especially in the case

of the figure on the right, a strong sense of individual character.

In figure 9, on the other hand, Peale depicts two men who seem only "generically" Indian — not real people in authentic dress but rather representations of a type, and a Roman type at that. Their contemplative posture is strikingly similar to that in the former sketch (hand on chin, elbow on knee), but here it conveys neither ethnographic detail nor individual character but romantic cliché. The two Indians, furthermore, have been artfully arranged to frame an expanse of open prairie — a convention common in nineteenth-century painting, and here used to provide white viewers a point of logical access to a virgin wilderness proclaiming its openness to being entered and controlled.

In his more elaborate images, Peale practiced a style of formal pictorial composition innovated in the family museum, where each display was a carefully arranged visual "text"



Fig. 8. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Ottoes (May 1820)*, graphite on paper, 12.9 × 21.1 cm., Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Ramsay MacMullen, M.A.H. 1967.

This sketch conveys both ethnographic details of clothing and ornamentation, and an individuality in pose and expression. Compare it to figure 9 (below).



Fig. 9. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Contemplative Indians (1820)*, graphite on paper, 13 × 20.2 cm., Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Ramsay MacMullen, M.A.H. 1967.

Compared to the men in figure 8, these Native Americans are depicted in a similar pose (elbow on knee). Yet here Peale positions them to "frame" the landscape and direct the viewer's eye towards the open expanse.

designed to be read easily by visitors. In the museum, natural history specimens were ordered and classified in neat rows with painted backdrops showing the environment where each had been collected. In a number of his expedition images, Peale made unknown or exotic subject matter comprehensible to viewers by setting specimens similarly in carefully constructed landscapes.

An example of this is *Konza Village* (fig. 10; "Konza" was a nineteenth-century spelling for "Kansa"). In this drawing, which dates to late summer 1819, we overlook a permanent encampment of mud lodges from a vantage point on slightly higher ground. Peale has structured the image so as to place this village and its inhabitants in a neatly ordered natural world, revealed to us in successive horizontal planes. The composition of the picture organizes our appreciation of the world it represents. From a vaguely articulated foreground, we first look down upon a cluster of circular lodges where two figures are visible,

one indoors and one out, both perhaps women. A third figure atop the furthest lodge gazes with us, deeper into the composition still, across an extended open plain on which riders, perhaps male hunters, are galloping on their horses. Beyond, open plain yields to a line of trees (and perhaps a hidden river) followed by low hills, all encompassed within the extended embrace of a rising sun. The Kansa, Peale suggests, gaze out upon their world much as white viewers do, but with this difference: The white vision (that is to say, white understanding) is unbeknownst to the Kansa — and it subsumes the vision of the Kansa.

PERHAPS THE MOST LITERAL, visually persuasive assertion of white cultural control over the western landscape in Peale's expedition artwork can be seen in his finished watercolor *Engineer Cantonment with Western Engineer*



Fig. 10. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Konza Village* (21–24 August 1819), graphite with ink on paper, 13.1 × 20.9 cm., Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Ramsay MacMullen, M.A.H. 1967.

Thomas Say, the expedition's zoologist, reports in the *Account* that this Kansa village comprised as many as 120 lodges. Peale's drawing appears to have been made from the roof of the largest, in which the expedition passed the night.

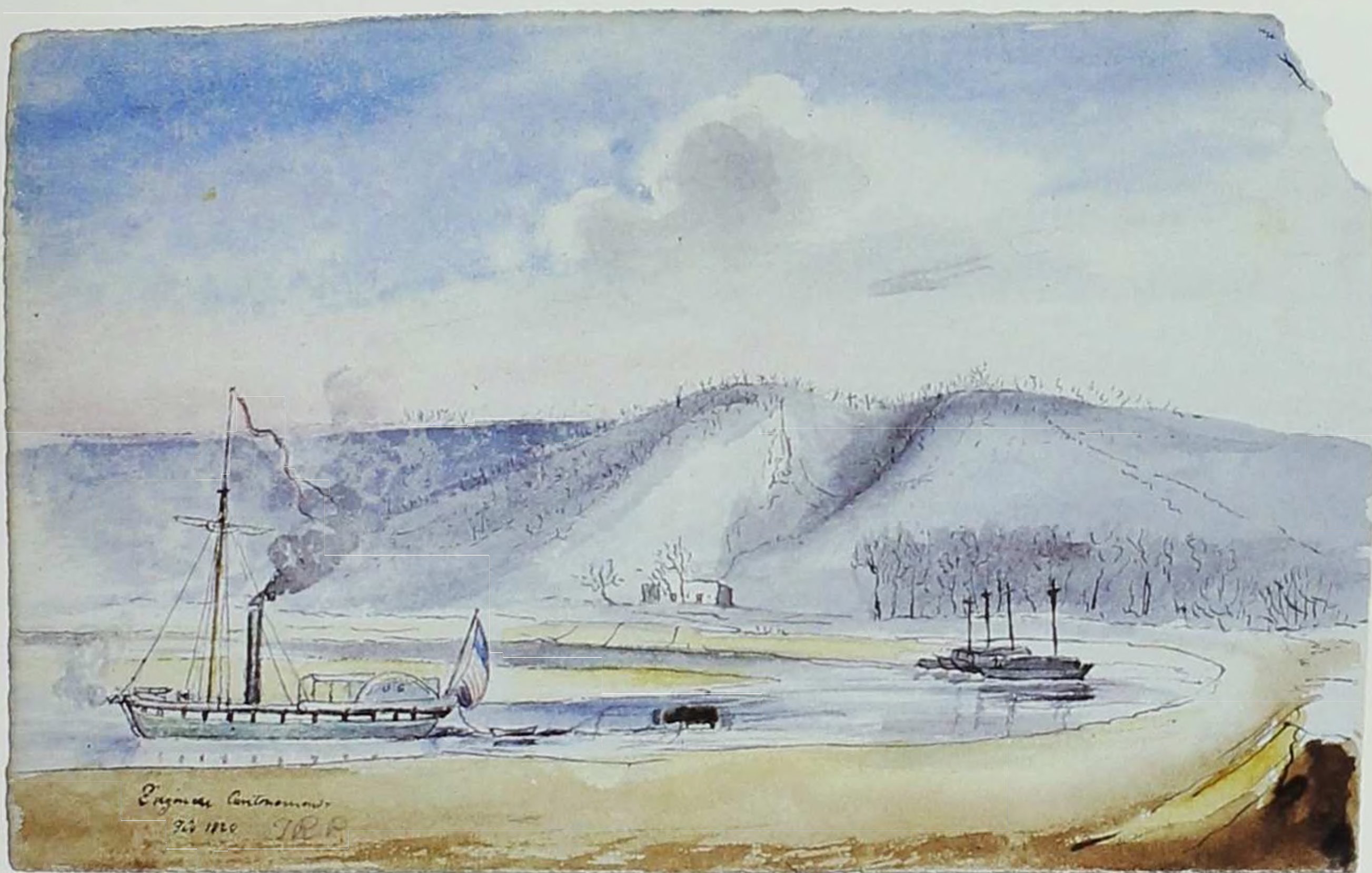


Fig. 11. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Engineer Cantonment with Western Engineer* (ca. 1822), watercolor and ink over graphite, 12 × 19.2 cm., American Philosophical Society.

Created for the public and the government after the expedition was over, this composite watercolor depicts the steamboat *Western Engineer* heading upriver in February 1820 — an unlikely scene because the boat was moored and dismantled until late spring.

(fig. 11). We stand on the west bank of the Missouri River facing roughly south. The rectangular building at distant midground center is the trading post Fort Lisa. Our backs are to the expedition camp itself (the “cantonment”) from where this view must have been taken. At near midground left, the steamboat *Western Engineer* rests in the shallows, steam up, its American flag unfurled. At further midground right, a half dozen small-masted boats are tied along shore, possibly iced in. The bluffs are nearly bare of trees, and those we see are without leaves. From Peale’s inscription in the sand at lower left we know the season more exactly. It is February 1820 — the very dead of winter.

The only signs of life, in fact, are aboard the *Western Engineer* itself. A cloud of black smoke pours from a tall, cylindrical stack at midship. A red banner flutters from the top of the ship’s mast. An American flag hangs from its transom. These gestures might symbolize

confident control, establishing the human measure of the land. Perhaps more fundamentally, the touches of red in the steamboat’s flag are, like its plume of black smoke, visual reminders of the ship’s heart of fire, the steam engine, burning away invisibly below deck.

In 1819, steam power was widely considered the force that would reshape the continent, fueling both factory production and a revolution in transport. One of the first steamboats built, the *Western Engineer* was specifically designed to ascend the shallow waters of the Missouri. It had been hailed by the press as the very embodiment of progress. Peale is known to have done at least two earlier drawings of the boat, one a small ink drawing with what may be Cincinnati in the background (fig. 12, now at the American Philosophical Society) and the other (fig. 13) a larger field study found among the State Historical Society of Iowa sketches. Each is essentially a portrait of the *Western*

Engineer alone, intended to capture the steamboat's likeness.

In comparing the finished watercolor (fig. 11) with its preliminary sketches (figures 12 and 13), we behold a typical example of Peale's process in transforming personal studies into works intended for public consumption. Beginning with immediate impressions and factual notation, Peale would translate rather than directly transcribe these into a far more aesthetic composition inscribed with rich symbolic meaning.

For instance, whereas the steamboat's American flag appears in the sketches, its presence there is merely factual. In the watercolor, by contrast, the flag — and, because of the flag, the steamboat itself — serve as signs of an heroic nationalism. We know, in fact, from the London edition of the *Account* that neither boat nor flag *could* have appeared as they do in Peale's painting in February 1820. The *Western Engineer* had been moored and dismantled for the winter, not to be reassembled until late



Fig. 12. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Western Engineer* (1819), ink and wash over graphite on paper, 7.3 × 8.9 cm., American Philosophical Society.

The lettering on the port wheel of the steamboat in figures 12 and 13 is changed in figure 11. The buildings in the back are probably Cincinnati. The expedition had traveled down the Ohio to the Mississippi, then to the Missouri.

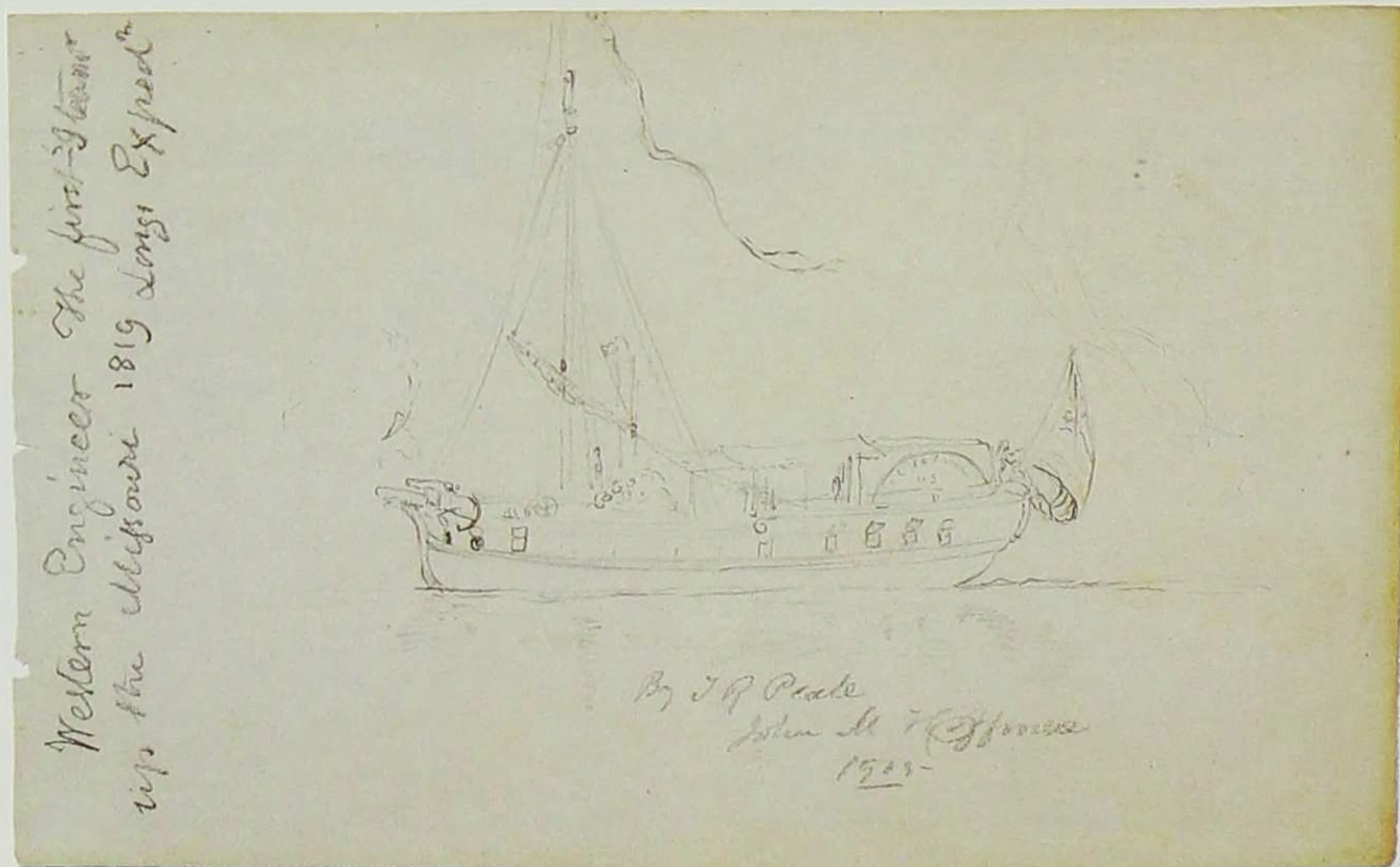


Fig. 13. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Western Engineer* (1819), graphite on paper, 12.4 × 20 cm., State Historical Society of Iowa.

A field sketch of the steamboat. The serpent figurehead appears here and in figures 11 and 12.



Fig. 14. Titian Ramsay Peale, untitled study of *Engineer Cantonment* (February 1820), watercolor and ink over graphite on paper, 13.3 × 21.2 cm., American Philosophical Society.

A frozen landscape without the *Western Engineer* is what Peale more likely saw in February 1820, while the steamboat was moored and dismantled. Below the large ink blot is the fur-trading post Fort Lisa.

the following spring. Peale may have chosen to place the boat in this winter landscape with steam up and flag flying in order to appeal to the desire of his viewers (including, perhaps most importantly, his employers in the War Department) to read the presence in the West of white Americans as confident, even as quietly triumphant.

THE TENOR of this fiction-making can be better gauged by looking to the original, untitled field sketch of the *landscape* with which Peale began (fig. 14). Comparing this pencil study with the watercolor *Engineer Cantonment with Western Engineer* (fig. 11) reveals the dramatic nature of the revision Peale achieved through the addition of color and subtle manipulations of vantage. In figure 14, he began with

a bleak view of a barren wilderness outpost in winter, imbued with an overwhelming sense of frozen isolation. A squat fort sits in the middle distance. Neither this building nor the boats along the shore assert their presence in the landscape with any force. The viewer is left nowhere to stand and has nowhere to go.

But the emotional impact of the later watercolor (fig. 11, probably completed back in Philadelphia more than a year later) is altogether different. The presence of the steamboat in its foreground serves as invitation to the viewer to imagine entry into picture space as possible. Peale underscores this quiet suggestion of vicarious participation with a visual pun. Look back at his two sketches (figures 12 and 13) of the steamboat alone: the inscription on the cover of the port wheel facing us, just to the left of the flag, consists of two parts: the monogram initials of the United States surrounded by letters spelling the name J. C. CALHOUN. In

the watercolor, this text has been reduced to the letters U S, which stand out clearly, and without punctuation, against a blue hemispheric field, suggesting to nineteenth-century viewers in the East that this steamboat, shown establishing an outpost in the wilderness, was there on their behalf. "We see the future," Peale invites them to conclude, "and it is US."

We must not allow this watercolor's calm simplicity to in any way obscure the power of its symbolism. The boat is both an engine of material conversion *in* this landscape, and a symbol of the intellectual conversion *of* this landscape from an unknown to a known environment. This historical and cultural conversion had been taking effect slowly, implemented by white and métis traders over a period of more than a century. The Long Expedition would now dramatically accelerate this process. The steamboat was an eastern dynamo sent west, burning its way into the wilderness, devouring trees as fuel and converting nature into European-American culture.

SYMBOLIC OF TECHNOLOGY and industry, the steamboat itself was adorned with a symbol of power: a serpent's head mounted on its bow, visible in all three of Peale's images. This figure-head, presumably designed by Long, was not merely decorative but functional. Peale

described it in his journal as "a large Serpent through the gapping [*sic*] mouth of which the [steamboat's] waste steam issues. [I]t will give no doubt to the Indians an Idea that the boat is pulled along by this Monster."

The *St. Louis Enquirer* of June 19, 1819, described the effect more colorfully: "The bow of the vessel exhibits the form of a huge serpent, black and scaley, rising out of the water from under the boat, his head as high as the deck, darting forward, his mouth open, vomiting smoke, and apparently carrying the boat on his back. . . . To the eye of ignorance the illusion is complete, that a monster of the deep carries her on his back smoking with fatigue, and lashing the waves with violent exertion."

Carrying along a boatload of scientists and artists and their books and equipment on its back, this serpent serves to figure the expedition itself as an intruder in the garden, an intellectual machine determined to overcome any resistance in ingesting and processing Nature (which, of course, in the last century *included* Indians). Immediately following his written description of the boat, Peale chose, appropriately enough, to inventory its considerable arsenal. In addition to its "four brass 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ inch howitzers, two on swivels, and two on field carriages" and a quantity of small arms, the steamboat was equipped with a "brass four pounder" mounted in the bow, just above the serpent's head.

Surely Stephen Long intended his well-

After the adventure

Despite its scientific and symbolic successes, the Long Expedition's trek out to the Rockies and back in the spring and summer of 1820 was not all that its organizers had hoped for. Due to funding cuts and a late start, the expedition was forced to make do with inadequate supplies and to travel quickly. There were logistical errors made as well — the Canadian River was mistaken for the Red River — and, in the end, deserters among the military escort made off not just with the best horses and supplies, but with five precious notebooks filled with careful scientific observations.

The *Account* of the expedition, published in two text volumes and an illustrated atlas in 1822 and 1823, received largely positive

reviews. But it also suffered from a tragic lack of funding, so that in the end only two of Peale's expedition illustrations (and six of Seymour's) were included.

Peale himself returned to Philadelphia, where he played a leading role in the family museum, until his appointment in 1836 to perhaps the most elaborate exploratory venture of the century, the Wilkes Expedition to the South Seas. Serving as one of several naturalists, he filled many more sketchbooks with pencil drawings and watercolors.

Peale spent the last decades of his colorful, productive life as an examiner in the Patent Office in Washington, D.C.

— Kenneth Haltman

armed and well-equipped *Western Engineer* to inspire awe and respect not only from native peoples encountered on the expedition but from the British as well, competitors for the very lucrative fur trade in the region. Peale's audience, on the other hand, was composed of Americans back east. He completed his composite watercolor after the expedition was over, when it came time to organize the public record. What this meant for Peale was displaying not his earlier, relatively sober pencil and ink sketches of either steamboat or western landscape, but rather a composite image — in which the steamboat, symbol of the future, heads off into the future under a full head of steam with US aboard. This image was calculated to inspire viewer confidence (and to encourage viewer complicity) in an imperialist impulse to carve up vast chunks of the western wilderness.

PEALE'S WATERCOLOR *Engineer Cantonment with Western Engineer* offered his viewers a vicarious participation in the expedition's project of defining and controlling the natural world through intellectual understanding. But despite his professional sympathy with both the ideology of containment implicit in the conventions of specimen drawing and museum display, and with the expansionist policies of the War Department, Peale's work also evidences what I take to be a more personal ambivalence regarding public access to the West.

Sometime shortly after he completed *Engineer Cantonment with Western Engineer*, Peale painted a second watercolor version of the same view, one he left untitled but that we might reasonably call *Engineer Cantonment with Deer* (fig. 16, next page). The painting is one of those only recently uncovered in Iowa — certainly the most consummate of his works held by the State Historical Society, and among the most consummate of his works known. Much remains the same in the two images, and much has changed. It is no surprise that Peale, as a skilled taxidermist and avid hunter, should have chosen to feature a deer in this landscape where he lived and



Fig. 15. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Yellow Headed Blackbird* (May 14, 1820), watercolor over graphite on paper, 18.8 × 22.7 cm., American Philosophical Society.

Watercolors (such as this one) and museum dioramas in the family museum in Philadelphia were based on Peale's field sketches, which showed groupings of species in natural surroundings.

worked for the better part of a year. As natural history illustrator on the expedition, he sketched and painted many specimen-in-landscape studies on which later museum dioramas would be based, and in 1822 or thereabouts he completed several dozen graceful watercolors after them, including his *Yellow Headed Blackbird*, which you see here (fig. 15).

Engineer Cantonment with Deer has something in common with these works as well, with its suggestion of environmental context both explaining and explained by wildlife posing with a calm expectancy within. Yet several factors here suggest more personal meaning. For one thing, Peale painted his specifically *scientific* watercolors like *Yellow Headed Blackbird* on stiffer, whiter, larger sheets of paper; *Engineer Cantonment with Deer*, as evidenced by the work's unfinished left edge, was done directly in an expedition sketchbook, suggesting that it was not intended for a public audience. In his animal series, moreover, creatures were intended to represent their species, and so were pictured in family groupings. But this deer appears alone.

If we compare the two watercolors — *Engineer Cantonment with Western Engineer* and *Engineer Cantonment with Deer* — what strikes one immediately is the exactness of the substitution of deer for steamboat. The curve of the animal's breast corresponds precisely, in position and contour, to the curve of the American flag flying from the ship's stern. Both ship



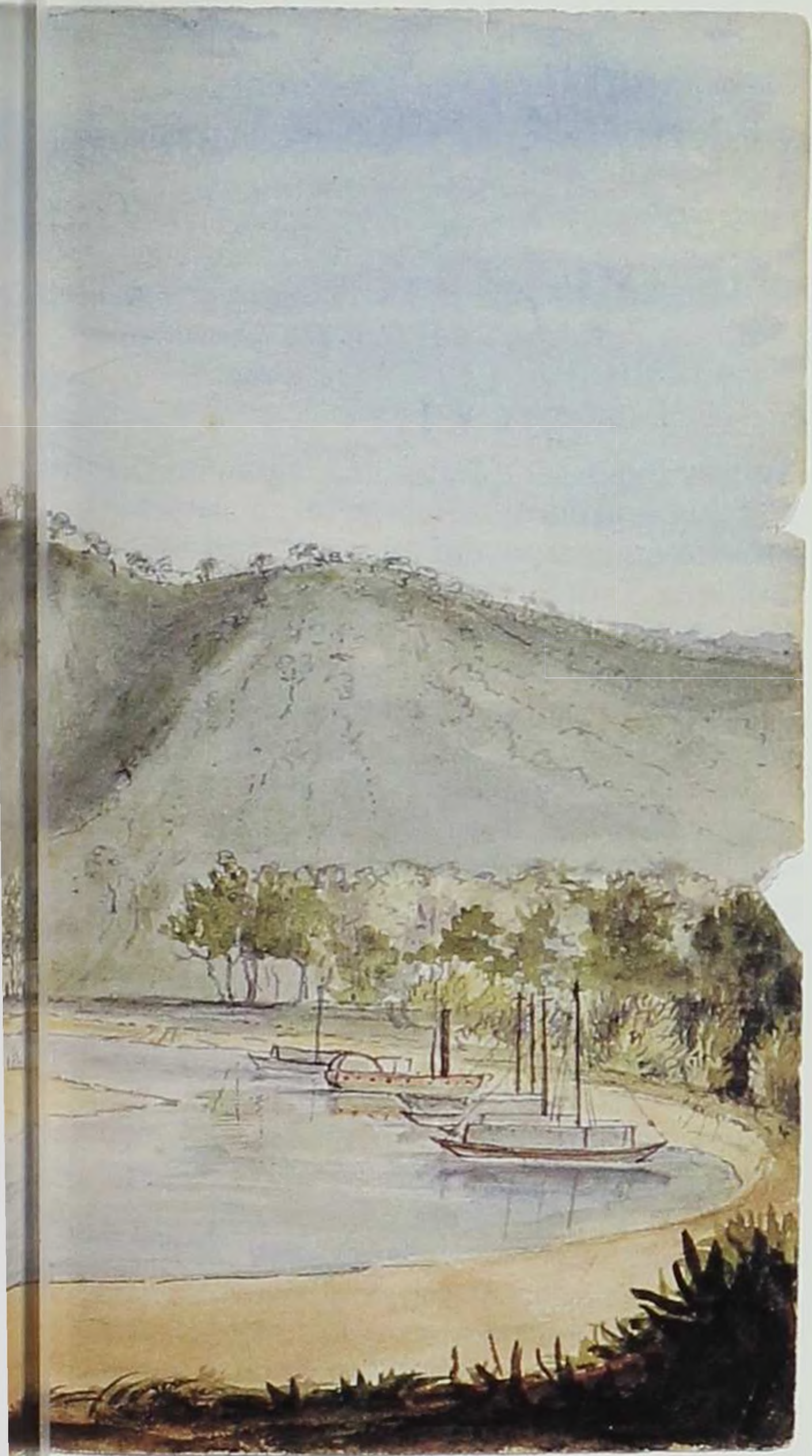
Fig. 16. Titian Ramsay Peale, *Engineer Cantonment with Deer* (1822), watercolor over graphite on paper, 12.1 × 20.2 cm., State Historical Society of Iowa.

A newly recovered addition to Peale's body of work, this watercolor suggests a more personal vision of the West than what the young artist was hired to produce.

and deer appear in profile, animate but still. Aside from the obvious change in subject matter — from technology to zoology, from steamboat to deer — winter here has turned to spring or early summer, and the trees have leafed out. Peale's palette has become more temperate.

I believe this second version of the view from the expedition camp provided Peale a symbolic opportunity to register his own ambivalent response to the very process of "opening" the West in which he himself had played a role,

albeit a minor one. There is good evidence that the deer, which he has substituted in this image for the steamboat, is one that he had shot himself, perhaps here along the river. As is typical of Peale's specimen studies, this deer stands posed as one might pose a taxidermic mount, and this is no coincidence. Peale's work as a painter relied quite literally on his work as a taxidermist, which itself relied quite literally on his work as a hunter. In other words, what Peale represents in this public portrait of a deer



is the record of his own handiwork, a form of self-portraiture, evidence of his own skillful transformation and appropriation of a "real" deer as an act of individual accomplishment. We might, in fact, read Peale's watercolor *Engineer Cantonment with Deer* as a form of symbolic self-assertion offered as an artisanal

counterweight to the corporate, technological vision of the future represented by the steamboat's engine of conquest.

THE DEER, in other words, stands here for Peale's desire for identity in two worlds — the one, a technological eastern United States, the other, a pre-industrial western frontier; the one professional, the other personal; the one disciplined, the other free; the one public, the other private. It is this ambivalence Peale appears to have struggled with throughout the expedition. Assigned to document an unknown territory and to illustrate its economic potential to eastern viewers, he seems to have enjoyed its *undeveloped* qualities — its danger and adventure — far more than the anticipation of the arrival of the very civilization he had fled in coming west in the first place. If the deer in some sense symbolizes Peale's aspirations as a subsistence hunter, the steamboat represents extractive industry, the dramatic approach of a market economy ever nearer its source of supply with steam up and American flag flying.

Science and art on the Long Expedition were two essentially complementary means of making sense of the unknown, both a region (the West) and an experience (historic change). Titian Ramsay Peale contributed importantly to both endeavors precisely because his work was marked so strongly by his *personal* response to what he saw. From the images he left us we can learn much about the natural and human environments of the Missouri River valley and what is now western Iowa early in the last century. If we read them carefully, we can also learn how this world was first seen and then imaginatively transformed by one precocious young man from the East who, like many others to follow, saw fit to project his own desires upon the land. □

NOTE ON SOURCES

The vast majority of Peale's sketches from the Long Expedition are held in the collections of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia and Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven. For further information, readers are referred to the two-volume *Account of An Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, compiled by Edwin James and published in Philadelphia by Carey & Lea in 1822 (with an illustrated atlas issued early in 1823), and to the following secondary works: Jessie

Poesch, "Titian Ramsay Peale, Artist-Naturalist" (M.A. thesis, Delaware, 1956); Roger L. Nichols and Patrick Halley, *Stephen Long and American Frontier Exploration* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1980); Roger B. Stein, "Packaging the Great Plains: The Role of the Visual Arts," *Great Plains Quarterly* 5 (Winter 1985); Amy R. W. Meyers, "Sketches from the Wilderness" (Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1985); and Kenneth Haltman, "Figures In A Western Landscape" (Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1992).

A REUNION OF IMAGES

Reassembling Peale's Vision

by Jodene K. Evans

“AM VERY SORRY that you did not stop & see me when you were on here,” the letter began. “I could have told you so much better about these sketches than I can write you. They were taken by Mr. T.R. Peale who was Artist to Maj. Long’s Expedition up the Missouri River in 1819. The little landscape is the Camp of the Expedition named Engineer Cantonement. It was very near the present sight of Council Bluffs. The likeness[es] of the [Omahas] & Ottoes speak for themselves. I have duplicates something like these & I am sure that you and I are the only ones that have a sketch of the situation of Council Bluffs as it was in the year 1819. I took these sketches from Mr. Peale’s Sketch Book to send to you as I thought as you lived near Council Bluffs you would take much interest in them, as I hope you will.”

This letter was dated October 1, 1915, and signed by John M. Hoffmire of New Jersey. Hoffmire was the nephew of Lucinda (MacMullen) Peale, the second wife of Titian

Ramsay Peale. The letter accompanied five sketches and one watercolor, all packaged in a handmade cardboard envelope addressed to James S. Callanan of Des Moines, Iowa. (We do not know the relationship between Hoffmire and Callanan.)

In one of those serendipitous occasions common to history professionals, I found these Peale images and Hoffmire’s letter in a large box, where they had been placed for safekeeping years ago. As museum registrar for the State Historical Society of Iowa, I had been sorting through material related to our museum collections when I came across this box, marked “Correspondence.” The box was temporarily stored in my office in early 1988, when the State Historical Society of Iowa moved its collections from our old, crowded building to our new facility on East Sixth and Locust.

Because hundreds of sketches by Titian Ramsay Peale are among the historical collections related to science at the American Philosophical Society (APS) in Philadelphia, I

Peale returned to the East Coast with 8 × 5 inch sketchbooks such as this one, filled with sketches of flora and fauna, landscapes, and Native Americans. Apparently at some point his wife’s nephew, John Hoffmire, tore several pages out of a sketchbook and dispersed them to various acquaintances, including Iowan James S. Callanan. (Photo courtesy Kenneth Haltman)



notified APS about our six images. By comparing watermarks, penciled notations in Hoffmire's handwriting, and subject matter (depictions of the cantonment, the deer, and the steamboat), we eventually determined that these six images had been removed from Peale's sketchbooks decades before the sketchbooks were acquired by APS.

MEANWHILE, Kenneth Haltman was researching Peale for his dissertation at Yale University. In 1989 Haltman had noted that Peale's sketchbooks were incomplete and that "at least twenty-four sheets have been visibly removed." With my permission, the APS informed Haltman about the six images here at the State Historical Society of Iowa. In my ensuing correspondence with Haltman, I sent him descriptions of the sketches and watercolor.

"It's exactly what I needed," Haltman wrote back. "I'm finding the John Hoffmire connection to be a more and more important one in explaining the present state of much of Peale's Long Expedition work, at the APS as well as in your collection and in one or two other places. What I haven't yet succeeded in doing is getting a deep sense of what motivated the man to deal with the sketches as he did, taking great care on the one hand to label them . . . and yet, as was standard practice I suppose in the early century, cutting them up, scattering them without record being kept, or apparently so."

Every historical object, document, and image has a story, or context, that connects it to people, places, purposes, and time periods. Curators, archivists, and librarians work to discover, record, and preserve that context, because knowing the story behind an item helps us understand its historical significance.

Hoffmire's letter to Callanan did provide context for this small set of Peale images. Without the letter or Hoffmire's penciled notations on the sketches, how would we have discovered that they were by Titian

Peale? Nevertheless, by generously sending these to his Iowa friend, Hoffmire unwittingly did a disservice to Peale by dispersing individual pages of the sketchbooks. He was eroding the context of Peale's larger body of work.

HISTORIANS know that questions of context — how, when, where, why, and by whom an item is created — are seldom completely answered. But each time these questions are asked, the search reveals more nuances and deepens our understanding of the past.

One of these nuances is a focus of Haltman's dissertation. As Haltman wrote in a 1989 article, "Recapturing a sense of Peale's sketchbooks as he originally kept them is important if we are to understand the true complexity of his achievement. Previous discussions of his artistic contributions to the Long Expedition, and of his compositional techniques in general, have reached a consensus based on Peale's finished or public works alone."

Just as Haltman has studied Peale's art to determine the order in which pieces were created, historians attempt to piece together seemingly random events, individuals, and objects to establish an accurate, contextual narrative that tells the story. When all or most of the pieces are available, we can trace the onset of an event, the actual event, and its aftermath. Actually, a historical account is seldom that seamless. When many of the facts surrounding an event or object are lost, gaps appear in the narrative.

The sketches torn out of the sketchbooks were certainly gaps in Peale's work. Individually, his sketches indicate his talent. Collectively, however, Peale's sketchbooks reveal his vision. Looking at the images in their original order and overall context, we perceive that vision. We also learn, as Haltman points out in this issue of *The Palimpsest*, that differences between Peale's sketches and his public work suggest that the artist had more than one vision of the West. □

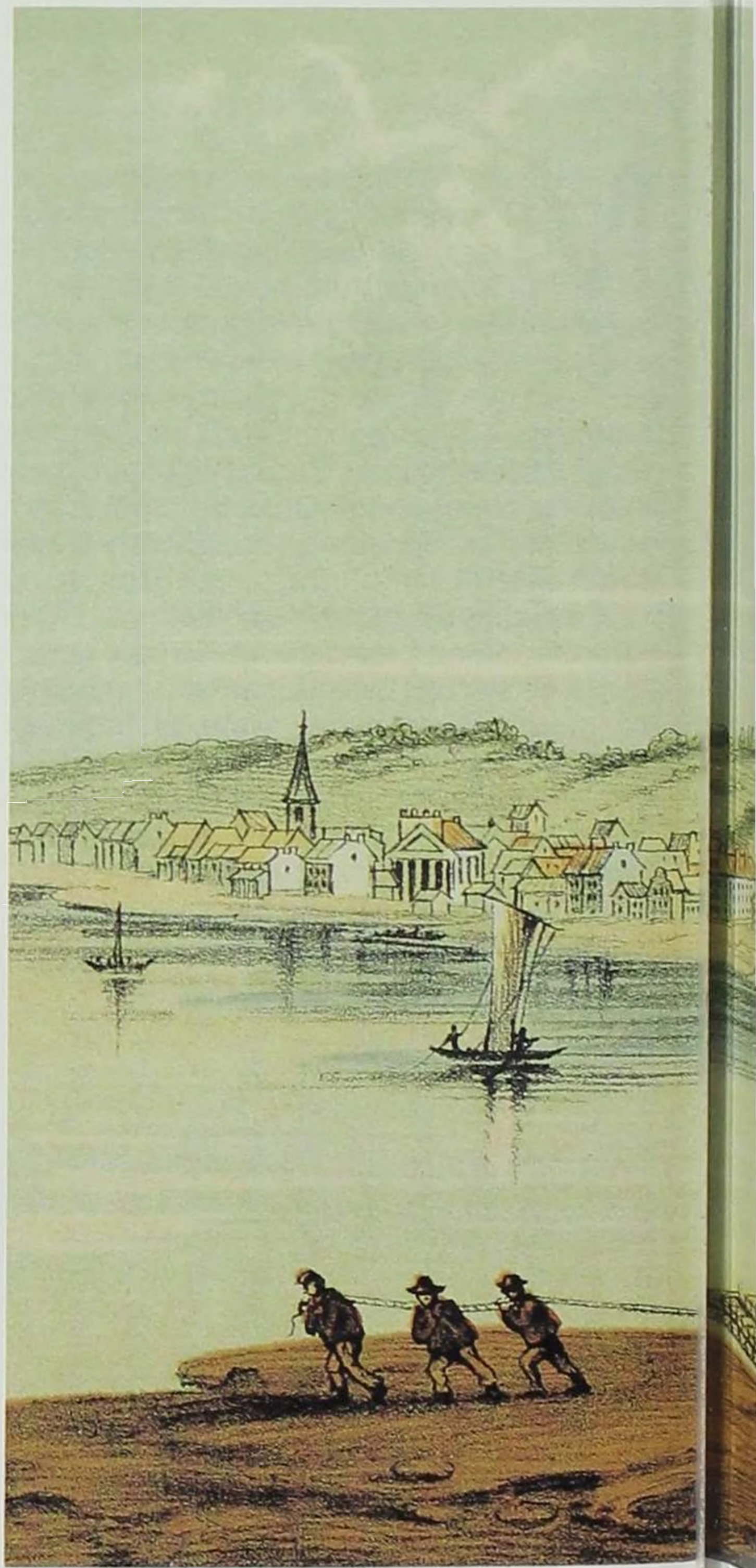
The Priest Behind the Legends

Father John Alleman

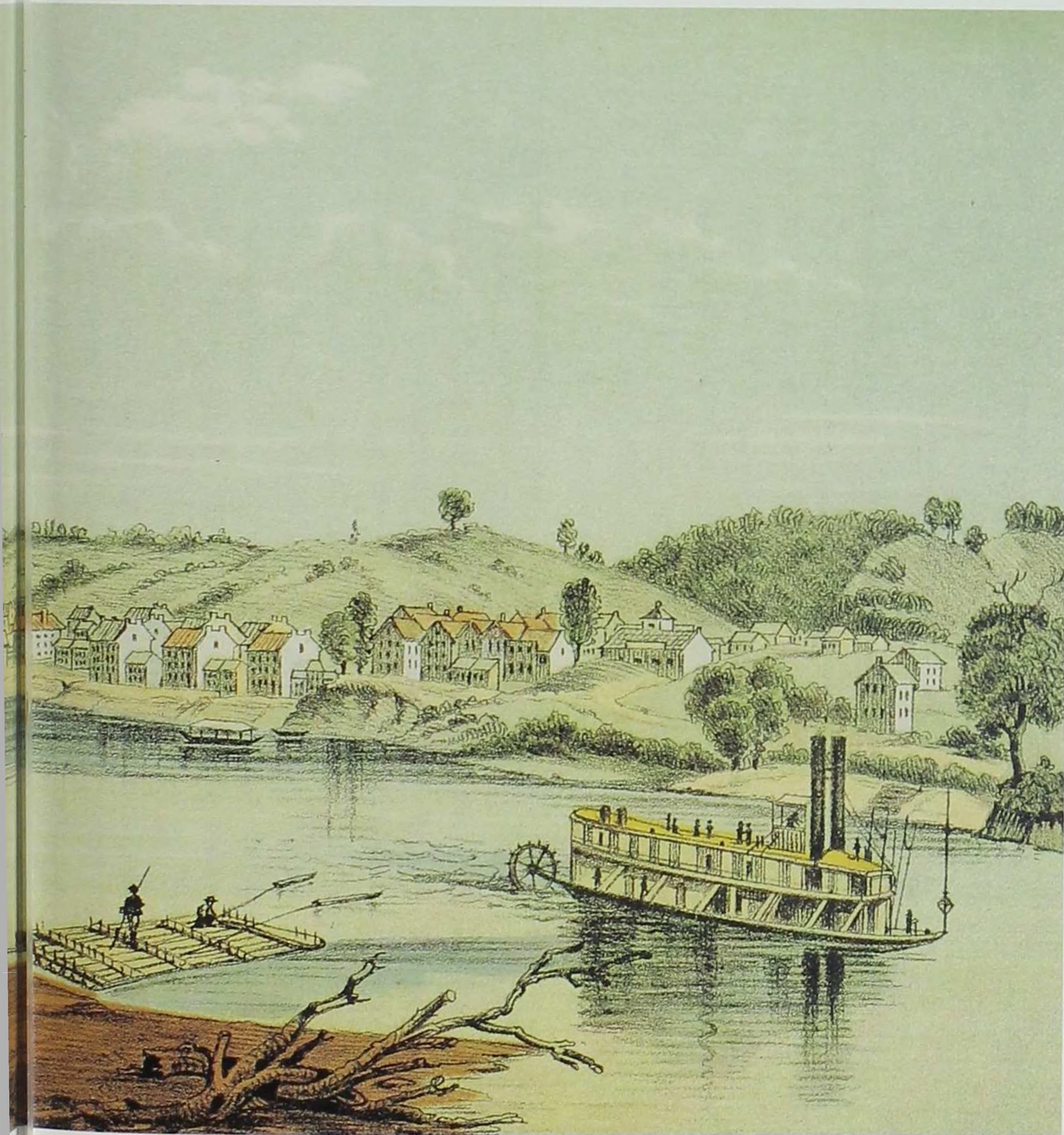
by Thomas Auge

THE AMERICAN FRONTIER offered a second chance to those who had failed in more settled and organized societies. Such was the experience of Father John Alleman. Described as "a dead loss" by his Dominican superior and eventually expelled from that order, Alleman later served with great zeal and success as a missionary priest on the Iowa-Illinois frontier.

Father Alleman lives fondly in the memories of the descendants of the people he served. In the one hundred and fifty years since he arrived in Fort Madison, legends and stories concerning his self-sacrificing accomplishments have flourished. Unfortunately the real Father Alleman has been lost in these exaggerated and even implausible stories. But piec-



Fort Madison was Father John Alleman's first parish in the Iowa Territory. The Catholic priest arrived here in 1841, about five years before this sketch was made by German emigrant-artist Henry Lewis.



HENRY LEWIS, DAS ILLUSTRIERTE MISSISSIPPITHAL (1854- 57)

ing together the historical evidence suggests that John Alleman was a person who struggled amidst difficult circumstances, who sometimes failed, and who was finally overwhelmed by the burdens facing frontier priests.

For the most part the historical record fails us with regard to Alleman's early life. We do know that he was born on December 3, 1804, in the village of Attenschwiller in Alsace, France. In 1832 at age twenty-eight, he was preparing to become a priest at the Dominican priory at St. Rose, Kentucky. Unfortunately, we have no knowledge of his formative years, nor do we know what circumstances led him to America and the seminary at St. Rose. Nevertheless, historians, like all who deal in second-hand goods, must fill their shelves with what they can find, even if the goods are incomplete and imperfect.

Proceeding from effect to cause, therefore, we can write with assurance that Alleman brought with him to Kentucky the fruits of a good education. He was fluent not only in his native German but in English and French as well. Furthermore, he must have come to St. Rose armed with some knowledge of philosophy and theology since he spent only two years at the seminary rather than the usual four. That he was nearly thirty years old when, in June 1834, he received the sacrament of Holy Orders, also suggests training prior to his arrival at St. Rose. Finally his letters, the few that have survived, are those of an educated person.

THE NEWLY ORDAINED Father Alleman possessed in great measure the qualities necessary for ministering to the scattered Catholics of the American West. A very large man, Alleman would benefit from his great strength and endurance. Full of zeal, he challenged the rigors of frontier life, dedicating himself completely to the vocation to which he was committed. His mastery of three languages also stood him in good stead, because the American Catholic church in the mid-nineteenth century was an institution whose congregations comprised for the most part German and Irish immigrants, while many



of the clergy and hierarchy were French. Few, indeed, were the priests who came to the frontier as well-armed as Father John Alleman.

Despite these admirable traits and skills, he failed dismally in Ohio. After having served the Catholics of Canton, Zanesville, and Somerset, Ohio, he was ordered by his superiors to return



FROM HERRMANN J. MEYER, UNITED STATES ILLUSTRATED (1852-53)

to St. Rose, Kentucky, where he could be more closely supervised. His return to the priory did not solve his problems and in 1840 the Dominicans expelled him from their community.

Possibly his difficulties were psychological. His Dominican superior, Rev. Nicholas Young, O.P., described Alleman as "crazy at

Across the Mississippi and downriver from Alleman's first parish in Fort Madison, lay Nauvoo, Illinois, where he also served the few Catholics in this Mormon town of 20,000. The Mormon temple gleams in this idyllic lithograph. After the Mormons departed in 1846, Alleman is said to have hauled loads of stone from their abandoned quarries and temple across the frozen river to Fort Madison.



Catholic parishes in small settlements such as Keokuk (above) lacked resident priests and had to rely on visiting priests every five or six weeks. Keokuk was one of Alleman's stations; fortunately he could reach it by steamboat. Traveling to settlements not on the Mississippi was slow, rough, and unpredictable.

times." Young, it should be understood, was part of the problem. He was, according to one writer, "a determined and exacting superior." Unfortunately, almost all of the information we have concerning Alleman's difficulties in this period comes from the pen of Young. Since Alleman suffered from psychological troubles late in his life, perhaps we can assume that certain traits, which were always present in his personality, came to the surface because of his troubles with Young.

His rejection by the Dominicans in 1840 did not weaken Alleman's resolve to follow his priestly vocation, now as a secular priest no longer under the rule of a religious order. But where was he to go? Alleman's response was that of many Americans of that day who turned westward. The place Alleman chose to start his new life was in the diocese of Dubuque, newly established in frontier Iowa Territory.

REV. SAMUEL MAZZUCHELLI, O.P., may have had something to do with Alleman's decision. In 1835 the youthful Mazzuchelli, already an experienced and successful missionary, visited with his Dominican brothers in Ohio. Perhaps in the course of this short stay, he met the newly ordained Alleman. Mazzuchelli may have been aware of Alleman's situation, having himself crossed swords with the intractable Young. Mathias Loras, the bishop of Dubuque, would never have accepted into his diocese a priest deemed unfit by the Dominicans unless Mazzuchelli vouched for him. Nor would the sensible Mazzuchelli have recommended Alleman to Loras if there were any questions as to his mental stability and priestly ability to perform his duties.

The diocese that Alleman joined in 1841 was huge, covering most of the present states of

Iowa and Minnesota, stretching from the Mississippi to the Missouri. Established just a few years earlier, it was truly a frontier diocese. Only eight priests were available to serve this vast region, and when Bishop Loras had arrived in 1839, he had found only three churches ready to greet him. The population consisted mostly of scattered Indian tribes, fur traders, and soldiers. Only in the eastern part of Iowa Territory were there small towns with Irish and German Catholics as a part of their populations.

Bishop Loras desperately needed priests, especially a German-speaking one. Aside from the Italian Mazzuchelli, the Dubuque clergy were all French. With each passing day more Germans settled in the diocese. These new arrivals were particularly numerous in Lee County, Iowa, on the southeastern border of the diocese. Unable to do much for these people because of the language barrier, Loras apparently had arranged with St. Louis bishop Joseph Rosati for a German-speaking priest from St. Louis to minister to the Catholics of Lee County. (In return, Loras would serve Galena, Illinois, some fifteen miles east of Dubuque and part of Rosati's diocese.) Now, with the addition of Alleman to the roster of the Dubuque clergy, Loras had the means of serving the German-speaking Catholics in his own diocese.

We can assume that Loras kept his new recruit in Dubuque for some time before assigning him to a parish. The bishop was a careful, precise man who would want to assess Alleman, despite Father Mazzuchelli's affirmation. Alleman apparently passed the test and, in 1841, Loras appointed him pastor for Fort Madison, Iowa Territory.

When Alleman arrived at his post in 1841, he found a crude frontier town in an area officially open to European-American settlement for only eight years. As such, Fort Madison shared the inconvenience, impermanence, and disorder common to places with no roots and few traditions. Still, as he disembarked on the steamboat landing at Fort Madison, Alleman must have been pleased by the natural beauty of the hills surrounding the town and the green islands dotting the Mississippi River.

The town itself, however, was not so attrac-

tive. Aside from a few large brick buildings, most of the structures were little more than wooden shanties. When it rained the streets became impassable seas of mud. Livestock roamed the streets, and carcasses lay here and there. Drunkenness and violence were commonplace. Perhaps fittingly, on the eastern edge of the town stood the Iowa Territorial Prison.

ALLEMAN FOUND that Loras had already purchased lots in the center of the town, perhaps for a church building and as a general investment. Aside from this there was nothing else in the way of a parish: no organized congregation, no money, no church, school, or rectory. Taking up residence in the home of the John Schwartz family (one of the eight Catholic families who had awaited Alleman), Alleman immediately began the construction of a small, brick church — St. Joseph's — on the lots Loras had bought.

Thirteen by eighteen feet, the church was too small even before the first Mass was celebrated in it. More Catholics were settling in the town because of the presence of a priest and now a church. By 1844 Alleman could report to the bishop that since his arrival in 1841 he had baptized eighty-eight children, married five couples, and buried five persons. As these figures illustrate, the congregation of St. Joseph's comprised mostly young married couples raising their children. The congregation continued to grow; in 1851, it included over a hundred families.

We can assume that the inadequate first church reflected the limited resources available to Alleman. Perhaps newly arrived parishioners, faced with the rigors of frontier life and the daily needs of their families, had little money and labor to contribute to their pastor. Whatever the reasons for constructing such a tiny church, as soon as he completed the first St. Joseph's, Alleman immediately had to commit time and money toward a second and larger church.

Alleman also hoped to build a school and a

rectory. Meanwhile, he taught the children catechism in the church. It does not appear that a rectory stood high in his priorities, for he never broke ground for such a building. In the absence of a house, Alleman lived in the church basement, first in the constricted space of the first St. Joseph's and in 1847 in the roomier, second church. In both circumstances Alleman's living space was dark and dank, particularly uncomfortable in the cold of a midwestern winter. With limited cooking facilities, the priest boarded out all of his years in Fort Madison, either at a parishioner's home or a boardinghouse.

HIS MEAGER POSSESSIONS — a few books, a change of clothes — fit easily in his cramped basement room. He is commonly portrayed as one who owned little and shared all. A Lee County history, for instance, written a few years after Alleman's death, described him as "a generous, kind-hearted man, willing at any time to divide his last farthing with anyone needing assistance."

Frontier priests generally engaged in physical labor, often helping build the actual church structures. It is likely that Alleman, who led his parishes by example, worked side-by-side with parishioners in building the two Fort Madison churches. He purchased building materials as well, storing thousands of bricks in the churchyard. One winter he hauled over a hundred loads of stone across the frozen river from the abandoned Mormon quarries at Nauvoo. He also obtained cut stone from the burnt-out Mormon Temple there. On many fall days, Alleman could be found on an island in the Mississippi cutting firewood for the church.

Perhaps as a respite from such back-breaking labor, Alleman cultivated flowers, fruits, and vegetables, and shared them with his parishioners. He enjoyed trying to develop new strains of plants; it is claimed that he produced a new rose, named "The Alleman Rose." His gardening forged a tie with his bishop; Loras



In the 1840s Bishop Mathias Loras (above) had only a handful of priests for the scattered parishes and stations in his enormous frontier diocese. Expecting much of his priests, he accomplished much himself; he recruited thousands of Catholics to Iowa. No image of Father John Alleman appears to exist.

also was a gardener and Alleman often shipped upriver young shoots and other produce of his labors.

Bishop Loras was a man of rules who demanded that his priests follow a way of life befitting their religious vocation. Loras strongly advocated temperance for both his priests and his people. Father Alleman, the priest who could not get along with his Dominican superiors, dutifully followed the wishes of Bishop Loras. Alleman helped organize a Lee County temperance society, at a time when frontier drunkenness was rampant.

Likewise, Loras insisted that his clergy appear in public in clerical garb. So it was that the huge figure of Father Alleman appeared often on the streets of Fort Madison in a long, black robe and a broad-brimmed hat. No doubt many who saw him hurrying down the street, dressed entirely in black, perhaps carrying a bouquet of flowers, remembered the scene for

many years. Such an image is indeed the stuff out of which legends are made.

WHEN ALLEMAN accepted the pastorate for Fort Madison, he also accepted responsibility for all of Lee County. He was pastor of St. Joseph's in Fort Madison, with "stations" at Keokuk, West Point, Sugar Creek (today St. Paul), and Farmington. These stations were parishes without a resident pastor and therefore unable to celebrate the fundamental Catholic worship, that of the Mass, without relying on nearby or visiting priests such as Alleman. Because of Alleman's heavy schedule, he was able to visit these stations only every five or six weeks.

Traveling to and from communities on the Mississippi was relatively easy for Alleman. Fort Madison had easy access to other river towns. Dubuque was 150 miles upriver by steamboat; Keokuk was only 20 miles downriver. But aside from Keokuk, Alleman's other stations could only be reached by overland travel — slow, arduous, at times dangerous. West Point was nearly 15 miles from Fort Madison, with Sugar Creek another 5, and Farmington even further. Roads were little more than wagon tracks, muddy in the spring, dusty in the summer, and frozen in the winter. Bridges did not exist; a traveler crossed streams by ferry or by fording. This last method could be dangerous, especially when rivers and creeks ran high. Alleman once wrote matter-of-factly to Loras that he had nearly drowned while fording the Skunk River on his way from Fort Madison to Burlington.

Legend has it that Father Alleman, saddlebags over his shoulders, traveled by foot to his far-flung stations. This seems unlikely; even a man of Alleman's strength and vigor would find it difficult to walk fifteen or twenty miles across frontier terrain on a regular basis. Certainly on occasion he did walk to his destination; just as certainly, he often went by horse. In a letter to Loras, Alleman makes this clear: "I was called to St. James (Sugar Creek) for a

burial and came on foot having no place to keep my horse there."

His travels were not confined to Lee County. More than a hundred miles northwest of Fort Madison lay Iowa City, the territorial capital. Its Catholic church included many Germans. Alleman, still the only priest in the diocese with a command of the German language, disliked greatly the long journey to Iowa City, but, obeying Loras's order, he traveled there several times each year, and stopped also for a nearby German congregation on the English River (near the present town of Riverside).

At times Loras used Alleman to minister to German parishes relatively close to Dubuque itself. Baptismal and marriage records inform us that Alleman performed these rites in Sherrill, some ten miles north of Dubuque, and at New Vienna, some twenty-five miles west.

IN 1844 IT APPEARED that Alleman would receive some relief from the constant travel. Father Lucien Galtier was appointed pastor of Keokuk, with Farmington as a station also under his care. Galtier was not untested as a frontier priest, yet his subsequent responses to this appointment reveal more of the challenges facing frontier priests such as Alleman. Galtier had come to America with Loras in 1838, and his first assignment had been a difficult one. Loras had chosen him to establish the Catholic church in the wilds of Minnesota. Galtier had built a small, wooden chapel above the Falls of St. Anthony, which he named St. Paul. For four years the young priest served a congregation of fur traders, French-Indians, and soldiers from nearby Fort Snelling.

These years in the Minnesota wilderness had broken young Galtier's spirit. From his first days in Keokuk, Iowa Territory, he bombarded Loras with complaints. Keokuk, he wrote his bishop, was the worst place to station a priest. Only a few Catholics resided there, and these were lukewarm in their commitment. He bemoaned the privations that he endured —

his home a wooden shanty, his diet meager and unsatisfactory. Although Loras sent his builder, Hugh Gildea, to construct a church, the pastor was expected to assist. Galtier wrote bitterly of this; he had not come to America to do the dirty work of a carpenter but to be a priest and to do priestly service. He also expressed dismay over the absence of other priests, from whom he could receive emotional and spiritual consolation.

Galtier finally admitted that he did not want to be a pastor under the conditions that Alleman had faced. He asked the bishop for permission to transfer out. Thus after some six months of struggle, Galtier left the Dubuque diocese. Although Loras granted him the transfer, he did not offer much sympathy. What he demanded of his priests was no worse than what other frontier pastors endured.

Galtier's defection in 1845 meant that Alleman was again responsible for Keokuk and Farmington. Then, in 1846, the pastorate at Burlington, some twenty miles upriver from Fort Madison, became vacant. With still only eight priests on the diocesan roll — no more than in 1841 — Loras had no choice but to add Burlington and the settlements of Dodgeville and Augusta to Alleman's responsibilities.

By now Alleman was clearly feeling the burden of travel, as illustrated by an episode with the Sugar Creek congregation. The Catholics at Sugar Creek had built the first Catholic church in Lee County. Even before the arrival of Bishop Loras in 1839, the spire of St. James had graced the surrounding landscape. Naturally, the congregation had wanted a priest for their church. Just as naturally, Alleman disliked traveling the additional five miles from West Point to Sugar Creek, and back again. He now refused to visit Sugar Creek, much to the chagrin of the St. James parishioners. A quarrel ensued, but Alleman refused to give in, removing St. James from his itinerary and insisting that its parishioners were a part of the West Point parish — and should therefore travel to West Point to worship.

Finally, Alleman obtained some relief with an influx of priests into the diocese, one each to serve at Burlington, Keokuk, and West Point. By 1851, Alleman would serve as the pastor of only St. Joseph's Church in Fort Madison.

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION: DIAMOND JUBILEE OF ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH, FT. MADISON (1915)



Building a church for Fort Madison's eight Catholic families was one of Alleman's first actions upon arrival in 1841. Faced with limited resources, Alleman built a small structure — only 13 × 18 feet (shown here in a 1913 drawing). According to a church history, Alleman received the bell from a steamboat captain and hung it in the grape arbor.

WHILE CIRCUMSTANCES and duty united to make Alleman's life difficult as a frontier priest, his ecclesiastical superior also added to his woes. In seeking to establish the Catholic church firmly in the soil of Iowa Territory, the zealous Bishop Loras expected much from his priests. To his credit, he also demanded much of himself. He, too, traveled far and often; a few years before his death, already a man in his sixties, Loras made a journey by horse and buggy to Fort Dodge, Iowa, a round trip of nearly four hundred miles. Yet despite the example he set of asceticism and dedication, Loras was not a particularly successful director of his clergy, principally because of his close-fisted handling of money.

The son of a wealthy, mercantile family of Lyon, France, Loras often seemed to view his diocese as a business enterprise. He watched every penny, while investing funds (often from European missionary societies, such as The Society for the Propagation of the Faith) in long-range capital investments. Thus, he was able to purchase thousands of acres of public

land in Dubuque County. He also owned a block of buildings in Dubuque and in Davenport, a store in Burlington, and city lots in Fort Madison. Certainly this was not all ill-advised. When, in 1849, a group of Irish Trappist monks sought to found a monastery in America, Loras persuaded them to settle in Dubuque County by offering them the gift of nearly four hundred acres of prairie land.

Regarding parishes and priests, Loras's policy was to supply seed money to a parish. But as soon as possible the parish was encouraged to stand on its own. Loras and his priests had agreed at an 1840 synod that the diocese would pay each priest ten dollars a month; if this failed to meet the pastor's needs, the parish would have to supply what was lacking. Often the members of new parishes had barely enough to survive. If a parish had to borrow money to build a church, Bishop Loras held the pastor responsible for the debt.

Most priests under Loras were not very accommodating of his miserliness. Father Alexander Hattenberger, Alleman's successor at Fort Madison, would write Loras in strong language demanding greater financial assistance. Other clergymen took the more drastic step of leaving the diocese (one of the reasons Loras had trouble increasing the number of priests on his roster).

Like many priests, Alleman found himself caught between a penurious bishop and an impecunious parish. Acumen in money matters was not one of his strengths. Nor did his ascetic way of life sharpen his financial sense. And yet everywhere he looked there was the need to build, to expand, to spend.

LORAS, apparently, had little confidence in Alleman's financial skills. Once when Alleman asked for help, Loras insisted that the pastor send him an itemized account of his expenses. Always dutiful, Alleman sent the bishop a list of his expenditures, which included one dollar for new glasses. In response, Loras ordered Alleman to sell the bricks he had accumulated for church construction in Fort Madison, presumably because of the debt incurred in purchasing them.

In his first years in Fort Madison, Alleman had accepted without complaint his bishop's criticisms and demands. Indeed, on one occasion in 1844 he actually apologized to Loras over the debts incurred: "I feel very much afflicted to see your Lordship so much and so many times inquiring for my debts, and positively I shall depend upon my efforts alone to pay them."

At times, Loras apparently neglected to pay the ten-dollar monthly stipend to his priest. In 1844 Alleman had written the bishop that he could meet his financial obligations "if your Lordship would allow me the \$10 a month according to the rules of the diocese." Finally, a January 1847 letter to Loras shows that Alleman had reached his limit. "Your letter bothered me more than anything in my life," Alleman wrote. "As far as my debts, everything is fine unless I was a fool for having built churches and organized good property for them."

IN THAT YEAR, Alleman's financial problems came to a head. He was finishing the second St. Joseph's Church in Fort Madison; a rectory and a schoolhouse awaited the necessary funds to become realities. In West Point, church construction was under way. Alleman fell into debt at both places, enough to arouse the bishop's ire. Concluding that the parishioners, particularly those at West Point, were negligent in financially supporting Alleman, Loras took the drastic step of recalling Alleman to Dubuque — leaving Lee County without a priest.

As Loras intended, this brought forth a quick response. A West Point physician, Daniel Lowry, wrote to Alleman, asking him what the people at West Point could do to restore a priest to their locale. Alleman was now at St. Patrick's in Garryowen, an entirely Irish parish near Dubuque. Alleman responded that West Point must pay the money owed on the church and must also promise Loras that it would provide support for any priest who served the parish. He ended the letter on a plaintive note, telling Lowry that he would "hate to see my work destroyed."

Lowry, following Alleman's advice, then



By 1847, sixty-seven more Catholic families had settled in Fort Madison, and Alleman had completed construction of this second, larger St. Joseph's Church. Alleman never built a rectory; he lived in the church basement and boarded out.

wrote Loras, assuring the bishop that the parish would meet the conditions necessary to restore a priest. Lowry, however, also emphasized that the parishioners were not eager to contribute money when a priest came among them only once in every five or six weeks. Lowry promised that the parish could easily pay off the debt, a tacit admission that the West Point people could have contributed more if they had so wished. The doctor also promised that any priest who came to West Point would be provided for sufficiently; he personally would supply room and board if necessary. With these assurances in hand, Loras agreed to return Alleman to Lee County.

EXACTLY HOW LONG Alleman remained away from his southeast Iowa parishes is unclear, but his own actions during this financial crisis show a new desperation. He engaged a lawyer to sue the Dominicans to obtain payment for the six years he had given to them in Ohio and Kentucky as a priest in their order. Yet he had little chance of winning the suit because he had taken a vow of poverty and obedience and had voluntarily undertaken the work. Even if

the suit had no merit, it signals how distraught he was over his financial difficulties.

Father Young, Alleman's old adversary in Kentucky, informed Bishop Loras of the priest's legal actions. Young's letter was vituperative, describing Alleman in the harshest terms. (Whatever were Young's virtues, forgiveness was not one of them.) Loras immediately ordered Alleman to drop the law suit and promised that he would pay off Alleman's debts if the priest agreed to avoid indebtedness in the future.

Although Alleman's situation improved, he continued to have money problems to some degree. In late 1847, after his return to Lee County, he wrote to Loras, "I am doing very well and would be better if your Lordship would open his purse strings." In 1849 Alleman would write again to inform the bishop that his financial difficulties had not ended.

Alleman's financial crisis of 1847 was the nadir of his pastorate in Lee County. Late that year, Alleman celebrated Mass in the larger St. Joseph's Church, though it was still under construction. Furthermore, Alleman received some recognition for his labors. Bishop Loras, not one to lavish praise, publicly acknowledged the priest's role in the building of the new

church. He wrote in *The Catholic Almanac* of 1848: "Fort Madison, Lee County, St. Joseph. A neat brick church has just been completed in the very center of the town through the exertions of Rev. J. G. Alleman who officiates there and preaches in German and English." Meager praise, no doubt, but surely rewarding to one who had received little in the way of acknowledgement in his fourteen years as a priest.

BY 1851, ALLEMAN'S responsibilities had been lightened. He now served only St. Joseph's. Yet he only briefly enjoyed the reduced duties of a pastor with a single parish. That year he transferred from the Dubuque diocese to the Chicago diocese, becoming now a pastor for western Illinois along the Mississippi.

Once again the historical record fails us by providing no plausible reason for this surprising change. Perhaps Loras now possessed sufficient clergy to allow him to surrender Alleman and his fluency in German to a diocese that had greater need for such a priest. From what we know of Loras, this seems unlikely. Another possibility is that Alleman, tired of the penny-pinching Loras, initiated the transfer himself. One might also conjecture that Alleman's failing health necessitated the transfer. Years of service, incessant travel, and financial anxiety had demanded their price. Although he was only forty-seven in 1851, he had already been referred to as "the old priest" by Father George Reffe, the pastor of Burlington two years earlier. But this last explanation is the least likely, because Alleman again shouldered manifold burdens in this more demanding post. He was now responsible for Rock Island, Moline, and nearby stations, and for Nauvoo and a station in Warsaw.

Furthermore, Alleman apparently remained involved with Fort Madison's church, despite the transfer. In *The Catholic Almanac* for 1852 Loras reported: "Fort Madison, Lee County, a fine town on the Mississippi. St. Joseph's. Several lots were bought by the Bishop of the diocese for the location of the church and garden for the priest. Lots have been purchased and the foundations of a house laid for the sisters of Charity. Rev. J. Alleman visits the

church from Rock Island on the 2nd (Sunday) of each month and the Rev. Mathias Michels from West Point on the fourth (Sunday). Sermons chiefly in German."

Alleman actually spent most of this first year of his Illinois assignment in Nauvoo rather than Rock Island. He had a long-time connection with Nauvoo, having served the Catholics there since his arrival in Fort Madison. Although Nauvoo was not in the Dubuque diocese, its proximity to Fort Madison, just across the river, inevitably resulted in Alleman becoming involved with them. One source, in fact, claims that in the early 1840s Alleman had escaped the enmity and hatred existing between Mormons in Nauvoo and non-Mormons, and had developed instead a relationship of mutual respect and admiration with the Mormon leader Joseph Smith. According to this source, Smith even loaned his personal boat to Catholics around Nauvoo who wanted to cross the Mississippi to seek out Father Alleman. While all of this appears implausible considering the bitter feelings between Mormons and Catholics, it remains part of the legend of Father John Alleman.

About this time he helped purchase the former home of Mormon leader Parley Pratt, to be used as a Catholic church, rectory, and school in Nauvoo. According to the baptismal record, Alleman baptized eighteen children in the town between June 1851 and June 1852, apparently residing there through the winter. In 1852, his position at Nauvoo and Warsaw ended when a permanent, full-time pastor was appointed.

ALLEMAN'S attention shifted next to Rock Island. If the pastorship of Rock Island had been intended as a sinecure for Alleman, it was anything but that. As in Fort Madison, the priest had to locate the Catholics in the area, organize the parish, raise money, and build a church and eventually a school and rectory. And again, he found himself short of money. Consequently, although the cornerstone for St. James Church (later St. Mary's) was laid in August 1851, the church was not completed for another two years.

From the beginning, he faced the tasks of

serving a rapidly growing parish. St. James records for 1851 show 18 baptisms and 4 marriages. Five years later, in 1856, the numbers had grown to 169 baptisms and 54 marriages. At this point the beleaguered Alleman received assistance, as the Rev. John Donelon joined him.

In the years that followed, his labors finally did diminish. In his last year there, 1862, the records show that he baptized only four children. That same year he transferred again, this time to Collinsville, Illinois, in the Alton diocese, presumably so that his ill health could be treated better at a Catholic hospital in nearby St. Louis.

ON NOVEMBER 16, 1863, Alleman entered St. Vincent's Sanatorium in St. Louis, where he died on July 24, 1865. St. Vincent's listed the cause of death as "Melancholia" — or as we would describe it today, depression.

It would appear that Alleman had suffered from depression and its companion, reclusiveness, for some time. Patrick Lee, a member of the St. James parish in Rock Island who had assisted Alleman in his duties, later described the priest as "a very peculiar man" who "lived a very secluded life and lived much to himself." He had become "morose and difficult to approach and was at last induced to go to a hospital," later wrote Father J. B. Culemans.

Can we assume that the reclusive traits in his personality were behind his early failure as a Dominican in Ohio and Kentucky? An order such as the Dominicans, which provided many frontier missionary priests, would have had no place for a recluse. On the other hand, there is little to suggest that Alleman displayed reclusive tendencies while at Fort Madison.

In fact, certain accounts suggest a stable, even gregarious personality. In a December 1847 letter to Loras, Alleman wrote of staying overnight at the home of a man named Moffitt in Augusta, Iowa: "Had church at Mr. Moffitt's and cheery it was to have such good company, especially the excellent Mrs. Moffitt." Furthermore, Alleman's practice for ten years in Fort Madison of eating his principal meal either with various families or with strangers in a boardinghouse, rather than alone in his living

quarters, suggests a man who preferred the company of others.

In another instance, Philip Laurent, a priest in the Dubuque diocese in the 1850s, pictured Alleman as having a friendly personality. "In his frequent missionary journeys," Laurent related, "Father Alleman made use whenever possible of the only fast means of travel in that day, the steamboat. He never had money to pay his fare. But fortunately, every steamboat captain of the upper river knew the good priest of Fort Madison and esteemed his friendship."

The Rev. John Kempker, a later successor of Alleman and the first historian of the Catholic church in Iowa, had these insights: "Father Alleman was an exceedingly pious, and saintly and zealous man. But he had some eccentricities; and in addition to these he really possessed, he was given credit for much more than he really deserved in that direction, little or no allowance being made for the hardship, infirmities and unavoidable defects which naturally had to come to one enduring his privations."

Alleman's eventual breakdown more likely resulted from excessive labor, travel, and heavy responsibilities than from a reclusive nature. To balance the legendary portrayals of Alleman — both the hard-working ascetic and the peculiar recluse — one must consider the historical evidence offered here, from church records and correspondence between Loras, Alleman, and other priests. In the harsh light of frontier Iowa, these sources reveal the challenges faced by frontier clergy. Accepting Father Alleman as a fallible human — not as a legend — not only maximizes his accomplishments in these demanding circumstances, but provides a detailed and candid portrait of a frontier priest in mid-nineteenth-century Iowa and Illinois. □

NOTE ON SOURCES

Principal primary sources for this essay include the unpublished letters of Rev. John Alleman to Bishop Mathias Loras, and the Annual Reports of Alleman and other pastors (Archives of the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa). Major secondary sources include *The Catholic Almanac* (annual reports of the bishops of the United States); J. B. Culemans, "A Great Illinois Pioneer — the Rev. John George Alleman," *The Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, vol. 2 (1919/20), pp. 208–22; Sister Mary Jean Ellen Shields, BVM, "Father John Alleman" (master's thesis, St. Louis University, 1954); and Rev. Arthur Zaiser, *The Diamond Jubilee of St. Joseph's Parish, Fort Madison, Iowa* (Techney, Ill., 1915).

CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas Auge is Professor Emeritus at Loras College in Dubuque and now directs the college's Center for Dubuque History. His articles on Julien Dubuque and Mathias Loras appeared earlier in *The Palimpsest*. He is also the author of an article on culture of the Upper Mississippi Valley, and has published several articles and a book on modern European history.

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Kenneth Haltman researches, gardens, and writes in New Haven, Connecticut. He is completing a book on the art produced on the Long Expedition by Samuel Seymour and Titian Peale, on which the present article is based. Though an easterner, he is no stranger to the Midwest, having done much local research on lead mining around Galena in relation to the 1825 treaty council of Prairie du Chien.

SUBMISSIONS

The editor welcomes manuscripts and edited documents on the history of Iowa and the Midwest that may interest a general reading audience. Submissions that focus on visual material (photographs, maps, drawings) or on material culture are also invited. Originality and significance of the topic, as well as the quality of research and writing, will determine acceptance for publication. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double-spaced, and follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (13th edition). Please send two copies. Standard length is within ten to twenty manuscript pages, but shorter or longer submissions will be considered. Although the *Palimpsest* presents brief bibliographies rather than footnoted articles, footnotes should appear in the original submission. When using newspaper sources, please cite page as well as date of issue. Include a brief biographical sketch. Because illustrative material is integral to the *Palimpsest*, the editor encourages authors to include photographs and illustrations (or suggestions). Please send submissions or queries to Ginalie Swaim, Editor, *The Palimpsest*, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Garbison photos

I want to rave about the Garbison article in the last issue of *The Palimpsest*. The photos are fantastic! What an idyllic mood surrounds each one of them. . . . I liked the telephone articles, too, but I simply "drooled" over the Garbison photos and the write-up about them. I plan to order an extra copy for friends who used to live in Milo and Lacona.

Harriet Heusinkveld (Pella, Iowa)

Genealogical update on Friendly Sumner Lucas

I was delighted to read the article on Friendly Sumner Lucas in the Spring 1992 *Palimpsest* because Edward Culver Sumner, her father, is an ancestor of mine. For genealogists who are always searching for dates and places, it is fascinating to discover human interest stories that illustrate the life of people beyond vital or court records.

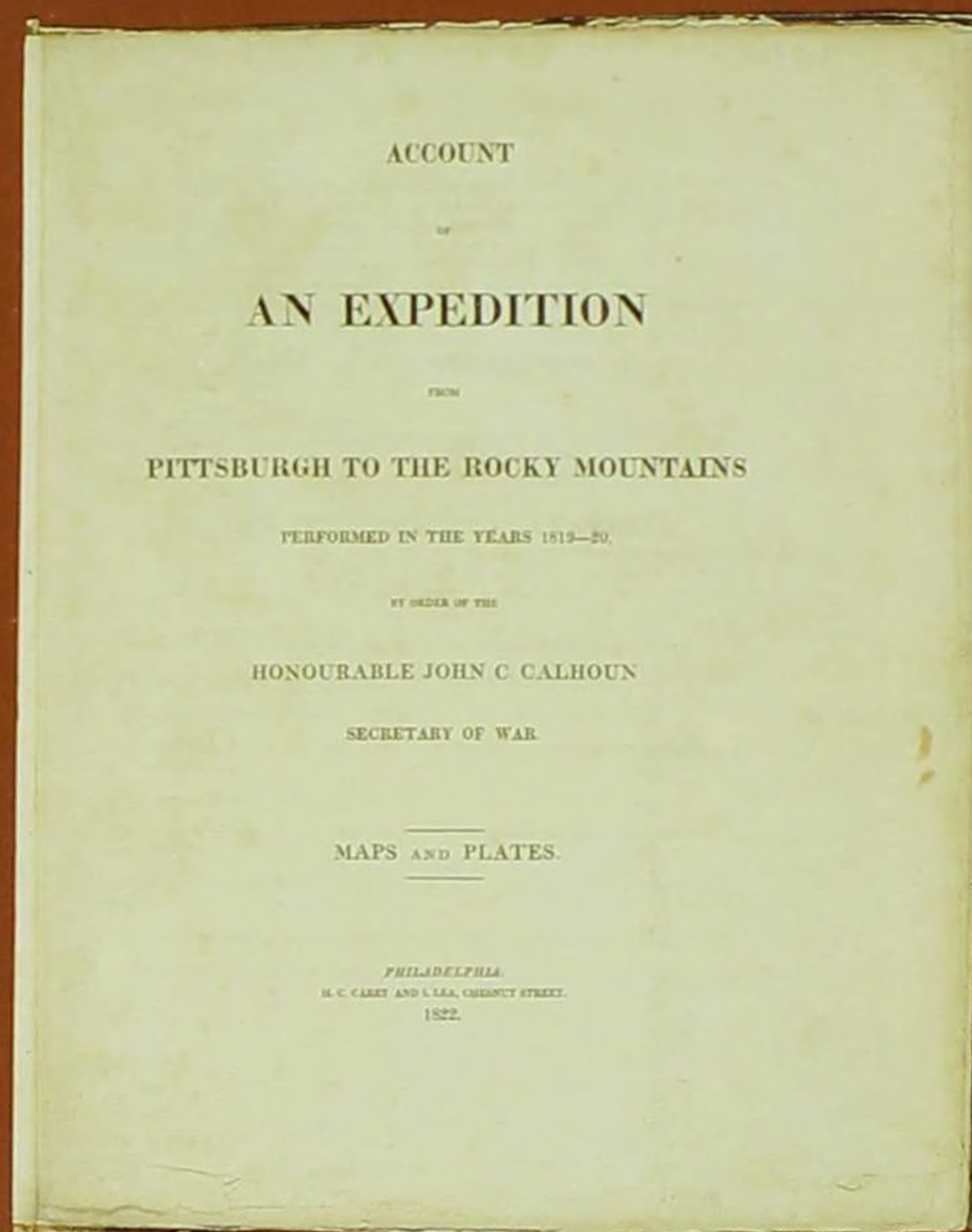
There is one piece of information that needs to be corrected. It is on page 19: "Friendly's father, Edward Culver Sumner, had served in the Revolutionary army, attaining the rank of captain." I do not have access to the publications in the author's list of sources on page 31 so do not know which of them made reference to his serving in the Revolution. Edward Culver Sumner was born 14 October 1764 in Lebanon, Conn. (Conn. Vital Records) and he would have been too young to have served in the Revolution. His father, Jonathan Sumner, may have served, but no records of his service have been discovered. In 1797 Edward C. Sumner was appointed First Lieutenant of the Company of Cavalry, 2nd Regiment in Vermont (photocopy from Vermont State Library). Later, in print, he is referred to as captain, but his service record has not been found.

There is one other slight misconception that I only recently discovered when researching deeds in Peacham, Vermont. The town clerk brought out the plot map and we traced Edward's landholdings. From the deeds it appears he moved from Peacham to Barnet because he is first "of Peacham" and then "of Barnet." But when you look at the map, you see that he extended his landholdings in Peacham to include some land just over the border in Barnet. In fact, he did not move, only the boundaries of his landholdings did. [Finally, in microfilmed Piermont, New Hampshire town records, I found] many references to Edward C. Sumner. He was a resident of the town of Piermont in Haverhill County by 1811 [not "of Haverhill," as page 20 states].

Ragnhild M. Bairnsfather
(Winchester, Massachusetts)

We welcome letters! Published letters may be edited for clarity and brevity. Write: *Palimpsest* Editor, State Historical Society, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

Editorial assistance for this issue was provided by Becky Hawbaker and Darleen Lev.



COURTESY KENNETH HALTMAN

Left: Title page of the official account (published in 1819/20) of the Stephen Long Expedition. The expedition, which camped on the west side of the Missouri River not far from present-day Council Bluffs, included Titian Ramsay Peale. As the natural history illustrator, Peale produced sketches and watercolors, including the one on the front cover: *Engineer Cantonment with Deer* (1822), recently uncovered in the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa.



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