

The **P**ALIMPSEST

JANUARY 1941

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

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

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

Superintendent

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSESTS

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

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

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THE PALIMPSEST

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The Call to Arms

On Saturday night, April 21, 1861, Captain John B. Smith called the Cedar Falls militia company to attention at precisely eight o'clock. As the orderly sergeant clipped through the roll, Smith listened to the staccato responses of sixty of the eighty-two members on the roster of the Pioneer Greys. A strange tenseness pervaded the company facing their captain in the improvised armory on the third floor of Overman Hall. War loomed ominously near. Both the captain and the Greys knew that within the hour they would vote for or against offering their services in defense of the Union.

The rising tide of Southern hostility, the secession of several States, and the attack upon Fort Sumter had aroused the resentment of loyal citizens. Throughout Iowa national patriotism flared high. Among the 1600 inhabitants of Cedar Falls, as elsewhere, the words "secession", "Confederate States", and "rebellion" elicited

emphatic endorsement of the slogan: "*The Union must and shall be preserved.*"

Captain John B. Smith was nearly forty years old, able-bodied, intelligent, and popular. On New Years Day, 1861, he had become host of the Carter House in Cedar Falls, having left the management of the Julien hotel in Dubuque. He had been active in the organized militia of Dubuque as a member of the famous Governor's Greys. Upon the solicitation of Cedar Falls citizens who were alarmed by the threats of secession, he had immediately organized the Pioneer Greys. In recognition of his well sustained reputation for leadership, the men elected him captain at their first meeting.

As he stood before the Pioneer Greys on that fateful Saturday evening in April, 1861, Captain Smith held in his hand three important documents. Very gravely he began to read aloud President Lincoln's proclamation calling for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion. With special emphasis the captain read the President's "appeal to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate, and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity, and the existence of our National Union and the perpetuity of popular government and to redress wrongs already long enough endured."

Assuming that most of the Greys had read this

proclamation the day before when it appeared in the Cedar Falls *Gazette*, he laid it aside with little comment. More gravely he began to read the second proclamation which most of the Greys had had no opportunity of seeing since it had been issued by Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood on April 18, 1861, and sent to Smith too late for publication in the weekly *Gazette*. The captain's voice moved slowly over the closing phrases: "The Nation is in peril. A fearful attempt is being made to overthrow the Constitution and dissever the Union. The aid of every loyal citizen is invoked to sustain the General Government. For the honor of our State let the requirement of the President be cheerfully and promptly met."

After reading these appeals for enlistment, Captain Smith, with a few terse remarks, laid the calls to arms before his company. Better than the Pioneer Greys, he knew what war would mean to them, and he also understood how apprehensively many citizens of Cedar Falls awaited the decision of this meeting. Preservation of the Union could mean nothing short of war, and war meant the summoning of every military unit to arms. At first the thought had been appalling. Who would be left to carry on the work of the community if the eighty-two men of the local militia company were mustered into service? If the

Greys went to war, their departure would mean that one out of twenty men, women, and children in the town would be absent on military duty. But the wrongs too long endured must be redressed.

Many of the Greys were young married men just beginning to make headway on farms, at trades, or in the professions. To enlist was to subordinate allegiance to family and business to the welfare of the nation. That night as one after another expressed his opinion the tenseness of the first moments gave way to noisy applause and loud cheers. There was no doubt about the ultimate decision. At last Captain Smith put the question of volunteering. The vote stood fifty-seven in favor and three against.

Tremendous applause shook Overman Hall, but Captain Smith checked the cheering of the men while he read an order from Jesse Bowen, the Adjutant General of Iowa. Apparently Bowen entertained no doubt that the Pioneer Greys would offer their services to the national government, for he directed Captain Smith to bring his company up to war-time strength and have it ready for rendezvous by May 20th. According to the official regulations issued by the Adjutant General of the United States on May 4, 1861, each company in the Union army was to consist of a captain, a first lieutenant, a second lieutenant,

a first sergeant, four other sergeants, eight corporals, two musicians, and not less than sixty-four or more than eighty-two privates.

Before adjournment the Pioneer Greys "solemnly expressed" to the Chief Executive of Iowa their loyalty to the Constitution and said they considered "secession traitorous to the country." Last, and most important to them and the community, they duly informed Governor Kirkwood that the Pioneer Greys "cheerfully tendered their services and earnestly entreated him to accept the same."

After the momentous business in hand had been accomplished, Captain Smith surprised the boys with a curt, "Company, fall in!" In double file the Greys followed him down the two flights of stairs into Main Street where all day a great flag had floated over the thoroughfare. Before it had been elevated by a rope, flung from the top of Overman Hall to the roof of the Carter House across the way, some one had inscribed upon it in huge letters, "OUR FLAG — WE WILL DEFEND IT!" At Captain Smith's command the Greys wheeled into a hollow square beneath the emblem and loudly cheered the flag. Taking their stand nearby, members of the Cedar Falls Brass Band played their repertoire of patriotic airs.

The martial music attracted a crowd of Satur-

day-night shoppers who quickly caught the spirit of the hour. Joining in the cheering, they called out, "Now one for the Greys", or "One for Old Glory", or "One for Our Country — Our Whole Country". If any bystanders had entertained any suspicion that the local company would not elect to follow the standard of Lincoln, the spontaneous demonstration gave full assurance that the Pioneer Greys had answered the call to arms.

LUELLE M. WRIGHT

Filling the Quota

On April 21st when the Pioneer Greys offered their military services to the Governor, the *Gazette* noted that eighty-two names were on the company roll. Of these, some men were physically handicapped and others had obligations which prevented their enlistment. Captain Smith hoped to raise the number of his men as far as possible beyond the minimum of seventy-eight requested by Adjutant General Bowen. Not only were local boys invited to join but the Cedar Falls company served as a nucleus for recruits from the "up-country", as the northern tributary valleys of the Cedar were colloquially called.

Two energetic and responsible young men, Thomas Salsbury and Charles Mullarky, were dispatched to recruit as many men as possible from Waverly, Charles City, and neighboring communities. Three days later they galloped across the Cedar River bridge and with a loud shout reined up in front of the Carter House. With them rode fifteen recruits. The emissaries took pride in informing Captain Smith that within a few days between twenty and twenty-five more boys would arrive from the "up-country".

Presently the sound of drums, fifes, and trumpets playing "The Star Spangled Banner" brought hundreds of people into Main Street and an enthusiastic impromptu ovation was staged for the fifteen recruits. In a surprisingly short time a parade formed. The Cedar Falls Brass Band headed the procession in its brightly painted new bandwagon, the pride of the little city. On horseback, behind this gaudy wagon, rode the fifteen recruits who were greeted with cheers on every street corner. The Pioneer Greys, in marching ranks brought up the rear, gaily flaunting all the banners and flags which the company possessed. From the by-standers, the fifteen recruits "called forth such hearty and oft-repeated cheers" that it was reported on excellent authority that one hundred and fifty of the cheerers nursed sore throats for the remainder of the week.

During May the citizens of Iowa anxiously followed the news of the war. The first regiment of volunteers rendezvoused at Keokuk and was mustered into United States service. Enough additional companies to form two more regiments clamored for acceptance. On May 17th Governor Kirkwood received a request from the War Department for more troops and he immediately ordered the second and third Iowa regiments to rendezvous at Keokuk on May 25th and June 3rd

respectively. The Pioneer Greys of Cedar Falls were placed in the Third Regiment of Iowa Volunteer Infantry as Company K. "The term of service", wrote Governor Kirkwood, "will be three years or during the war." Meanwhile, more and more recruits were swelling the ranks of Captain Smith's company. He inaugurated intensive military training during the final week at home, requiring the men to report for drill at nine in the morning, four in the afternoon, and again in the evening.

On Sunday morning, May 26th, the citizens in Cedar Falls on their way to church learned that Captain Smith had received the official summons to report for active military duty with his company. The news circulated rapidly that the Pioneer Greys must be ready in a few days to leave Cedar Falls. Officials of the Dubuque and Sioux City Railroad had been ordered to have five passenger cars at the station to transport the Greys to Dubuque. There they would be transferred to a Mississippi steamboat bound for Keokuk, where they would be mustered into the army and receive intensive training.

As the news spread that afternoon from house to house in Cedar Falls and from farm to farm in the upper valley of the Cedar, the realization that the country was actually at war came home to the

people. The thoughts of all were directed to the Tuesday morning ten days hence when considerably over a hundred men would leave Cedar Falls to take part in the War of the Rebellion.

During the five weeks which had intervened since the first call to arms, partisanship had apparently been forgotten. Throughout the city the Stars and Stripes floated from attic windows, porch posts, and fences. One observer counted twenty-seven flags in the four blocks of the business district. Every person who could afford to spend twenty-five cents, purchased and wore a silver pin engraved with the words, CONSTITUTION AND UNION. With colored sugar one young bride inscribed the words, THE UNION FOREVER as a patriotic insignia for her wedding cake. Citizens digging into the pockets of their homespun jeans or tailormade trousers contributed liberally to soldier relief funds, demonstrating that they "stood ready to meet the great struggle for Union, Law and Freedom." It seemed that no one could do too much for the Pioneer Greys. Fathers, mothers, neighbors, and friends proffered help and everybody responded according to his resources and capabilities.

LUELLA M. WRIGHT

The Community Gift

By means of handbills, hurriedly printed by George D. and H. A. Perkins at the *Gazette* office, prominent business men called a Citizens' Mass Meeting for Monday night, May 27th. Throughout Cedar Falls these bills were distributed by boys and carried by men on horseback to the countryside. The object of the meeting was two-fold: to consider plans for giving financial assistance to families of soldiers who would otherwise be left without support, and to honor the Pioneer Greys on their departure with a tangible gift in token of community esteem.

Not until the war had dragged far into its second year and both money and provisions were running low did the pioneer settlers of Iowa seriously consider the idea of requesting county or State aid in providing for destitute families of soldiers. Even then the proposal met bitter opposition in some quarters. In meeting such emergencies the people of Cedar Falls displayed characteristic self-reliance. In preparation for the departure of the first contingent of troops, citizens were urged to attend the community meeting and help plan for the adequate support of wives and

children of the men who were going to the front.

The handbills and the imminence of entrainment brought over 600 persons to the Citizens' Mass Meeting on Monday night, a record attendance at patriotic demonstrations of this nature. Colonel W. H. Sessions, a veteran of the Mexican War, presided. Acting upon a motion, he appointed a committee of five men — J. M. Overman, G. M. Harris, Thomas Walkup, T. B. Carpenter, and B. V. White — to withdraw to the Horticultural Society rooms on the floor below with specific directions to prepare a suitable plan to be submitted later in the evening to the whole meeting for action.

Considerably more than two hours passed before the committee felt ready to report. Instead of growing restless, the 600 who crowded Overman Hall displayed the resourcefulness of the pioneers, for among their own members they found entertainment which one of the participants said "made their hearts vibrate and pulsate." The early settlers, believing in the power of the individual and in the gospel of progress, were wholly convinced that both ideas sprang from democratic principles. In 1861 the citizens of Cedar Falls stood ready to maintain those ideals by demonstrating both their independence and patriotism. Oratory had not yet yielded its place in American

life to metropolitan dailies or to the radio. The speaker who could sway an audience with eloquence could secure listeners.

That night in Cedar Falls, while their committee wrestled with resolutions and plans, the friends of the Pioneer Greys, soberly serious at first, listened to impromptu speeches of legislators, lawyers, and farmers until the excitement of the occasion swept them into volleys of applause. They heard praise of the courage of Greys, one of the first thirty companies summoned by Governor Kirkwood for service; and, emotionally filled with patriotic fervor, they responded to passionate appeals for the defense of the Constitution and the Union.

Zimri Streeter, "Old Black Hawk" to the Iowa legislators, and State Senator J. B. Powers gave the keynote speeches. Both vigorously proclaimed the grave peril which threatened to impair the Constitution. Both declared secession to be the greatest danger to national unity which the United States of America had ever faced. They were emphatic in stating that the time for negotiation had passed and the time for action had arrived. The word appeasement had not then found a place in the vocabulary of war. Unanimously they declared, "The Nation, the whole Nation, must be preserved!"

Six other men were called upon to speak extemporaneously. In the excitement of war hysteria no one seemed to note that the speakers reiterated the same points. R. B. Fifield, the Congregational pastor, regretted that the state of his health forbade his shouldering arms. William Porterfield, the Presbyterian minister, declared his willingness to enlist whenever the government needed him. He had, he said, five sons whom, if they were old enough, he would gladly see march against the South. A merchant was singled out for an impromptu speech. Somewhat disturbed, he rose hesitatingly to say that he had no gift for words, but made his patriotism dramatic by pointing a trembling finger at the great flag on the platform and saying quietly, "There's Old Glory! That's my flag!"

By the time the committee of five had returned to Overman Hall, the reiteration of democratic ideals and the approaching departure of the Pioneer Greys had so welded the temper of the audience that all were in a receptive mood for the plan submitted. Colonel Sessions beckoned the chairman of the committee, J. M. Overman, to the platform. First of all, Overman explained the urgent need of a constructive plan whereby support could be assured to families dependent upon the earning power of the enlisted men. As an immediate step

he urged that the community should supply all deficiencies in the clothing of any needy volunteer, such as underclothing, shoes, or socks. Moreover, he proposed that a generous fund should be subscribed by the citizens before the meeting adjourned. He paused a long moment before presenting the last point on which his committee had agreed. They recommended that every man in the company be presented with a fatigue uniform as a free gift from the community. As Overman hoped, his last suggestion prompted a burst of prolonged applause from the audience.

By the time that Overman had presented the usual formal resolutions and had answered questions from the floor, the Mass Meeting had been in session for three hours. Undaunted by the length of the meeting, Colonel Sessions began to call for volunteer donations and so completely had the occasion and the speeches unified the citizens that responses from all over the hall came rapidly. In fifteen minutes Secretary George D. Perkins had listed over six hundred dollars in pledges for a soldiers' relief fund. Among those contributing, the J. M. Overman Milling Company subscribed the largest amount, \$150; two merchants, Joseph Rosenbaum and T. B. Carpenter each gave fifty; the Perkins brothers, who for a year had been offering to accept stovewood, hens, or garden truck

in lieu of subscriptions to the Cedar Falls *Gazette*, gave twenty-five; and the Congregational pastor contributed fifteen.

This was not all. Another committee working on the streets of Cedar Falls succeeded the next day in raising \$350 in addition to the relief funds subscribed at the Monday Mass Meeting. The whole amount was definitely earmarked for the purchasing of fatigue uniforms, the gift of the community to the Pioneer Greys.

From Wednesday afternoon, May 29, 1861, until Saturday night of that week sixty sewing machines at work upon bolts of gray wool and blue cotton cloth made the exhibition rooms of the Horticultural Society hum with activity. As soon as the local tailors, J. J. Ball, Rob Roy, and Samuel Berry, were informed of the community gift they volunteered their services to the committee in charge of the fatigue uniforms; offered their apprentices, their sadirons, their pressing boards, and six or seven sewing machines of the latest model; and in addition supervised the installation of the apparatus.

At one o'clock that afternoon, in hooped skirts and pelisses, the other "fifty-three or four" sewing machines arrived. "These", Editor George D. Perkins of the *Gazette* facetiously declared, "belonged to the common, though ingenious and com-

plicated variety, known as 'Woman' and were inferior" to the mechanical type, operated by foot treddles, only "in respect to speed".

Like many other towns in the North, Cedar Falls outfitted her first volunteers in gray. Not until the government became aware that the Southerners were on the march in gray was blue substituted. The three tailors of Cedar Falls cut the woolen cloth into trousers, belts, and caps. They also measured the boys and fitted the garments and, if the words of the reporter may be trusted, they boldly assumed the prerogative of "bossing the ladies". Until Saturday night the sewing machines clattered and thimbles wore blisters on second fingers of the fifty-three feminine seamstresses. The gray wool and blue cotton goods were folded, cut, and stitched; ravellings littered the floor; and steam hissed as the heavy sadirons pressed down the edges of the seams.

Above the noise of the sewing machines and the coming and going of citizens and soldiers, the women raised their voices to speak of the war and more particularly of the special cases of need in Cedar Falls where widows and mothers of little children would be left partially or wholly dependent upon the community. Of the dangers confronting the boys of the company, they said very little aloud. They would have been far more dis-

tressed if they could have looked ahead, not to a brief campaign as they anticipated, but to a titanic struggle that was destined to lengthen into four long years.

On Saturday night the fifty-three women and their "tailor bosses" looked with weary satisfaction upon their accumulated handiwork: a hundred completed fatigue uniforms — gray trousers, caps, and belts, and blue shirts. Later they would be publicly thanked, but that night, as they snuffed the candles on the working tables in the Horticultural Society rooms, their reward lay in realizing that they had turned a potential gift to the departing Greys into an actuality.

LUELLA M. WRIGHT

Farewell Assemblies

For several hours on Sunday, June 2nd, Overman Hall resounded to the thud of marching feet. Captain Smith had found it necessary to lengthen the periods for drill to teach the recruits some of the fundamental military maneuvers. In the stress of emergency no one in this extremely conservative town apparently expressed surprise when the boys were summoned to drill at the regular hour for church services.

As soon as barnyard chores could be completed, farm wagons, buggies, and many saddled horses brought hundreds of people into Cedar Falls from Black Hawk and surrounding counties. Perhaps on account of the special religious service that afternoon, announced as the Farewell Union Service for the Pioneer Greys, the out-of-town visitors, after finding hitching posts along the elm-lined streets, preferred to join the large, almost silent crowd congregated between First and Second streets in front of the Overman Block on Main Street rather than to attend worship in any of the eight churches of which Cedar Falls boasted. Apprehensive of what lay ahead of the Greys, they heard through the open windows above the sound

of marching. Some drew in their breath a little or sighed audibly as the "shrill energetic orders of their commander" directed the boys in their marching practice.

All over town parents and friends prepared ample food for the last Sunday dinner which the Pioneer Greys would eat with their families. In the grove along the river and in Court House Square (now Overman Park) covers were removed from picnic baskets and red-checked cloths were spread out over the prairie grass. Upon these, cold pork and beef, corn bread and rhubarb pies were set out by the families and friends of the recruits from the "up country".

At twelve o'clock, as soon as Captain Smith snapped "Company dismissed!" a special committee, headed by J. B. Van Saun, undertook the task of transforming Overman Hall from an armory into an auditorium suitable for the Soldier's Farewell Service scheduled for two-thirty. With complete disregard for fire hazards they crowded all available space with chairs. Even before the last tack had been driven into the wall to hold in place the red, white, and blue bunting and before the last flag support had been adjusted, townspeople and farmers began to fill the hall. Exactly at the appointed time, with Captain Smith at their head and all the ministers in town bringing up the rear,

the boys of Company K and the Cedar Falls Band marched in and took the places reserved for them directly in front of the flag-decorated platform.

Reverend Fifield's address to the soldiers had been announced at the Citizens' Mass Meeting on the previous Monday night and had been duly stressed with three announcements in the Friday issue of the weekly *Gazette*. Also in their mid-week search for recruits Salsbury and Mullarky had circulated word of this meeting as far north as Charles City. A special committee for this service had chosen the eloquent Congregational minister as the speaker of the day because his "earnest impetuous style of oratory" could be counted upon to impress the departing boys and their relatives and friends with the critical character of the period through which the nation was passing and with the patriotic quality of the service which the Greys were rendering. Fifield had been trained for the ministry when grandiloquence of speech and appeals to sentiment were cultivated as special qualifications for public speaking.

On this occasion his earnestness and sincerity, added to his emotional delivery, carried conviction. As a patriot he eulogized the Pioneer Greys because they had chosen to make a voluntary response to the President's and Governor's calls for aid. As a minister he cautioned the boys against

evils in camp and army life; urged them to adopt Christian principles of living and to be satisfied with nothing less than moral and physical courage. His address reached its climax when he set before Company K the examples of "gallant Havelock", the hero of the Battle of Lucknow, and of Colonel E. E. Ellsworth of the New York Zouaves, who only the week before had lost his life in protecting the American flag from dishonor. The speaker rounded his address to an oratorical close with an appeal to the Pioneer Greys to emulate these "examples of knightly patriotism".

Though the sermon on Sunday afternoon was much more political and military than Biblical, the occasion was essentially religious in spirit. The soldiers and their friends left the hall with reverent appreciation of spiritual solace. Faith in the divinity of destiny would provide comfort in the trying days to come.

It never entered the minds of the conservative citizens of Cedar Falls to send their soldiers to war with a sumptuous banquet or a gay ball. Instead, as the local editor noted, they called another Citizens' Mass Meeting on June 3rd, the eve of departure, "to give expression to the love and interest they felt in the sons and brothers and fathers who in the morning would go forth to the performance of a dangerous duty." This gather-

ing differed from the two earlier ones, held on April 30th and May 27th, only in the special honors that were conferred upon the Greys. Though the program was lightened by vocal solos, duets, and music by the band, this meeting began as solemnly as had the religious service of the afternoon before. "Each person assembled there," Editor Perkins reported, "seemed to realize that it was a solemn hour when mirth and levity would be out of place."

By dint of close crowding of chairs 800 people, the largest group which had ever gathered in Overman Hall, found standing or sitting room there. Hon. A. F. Brown, the local State Senator, acting as presiding officer, called upon the Presbyterian minister, William Porterfield, to give the invocation. The choral singing of "America" introduced the patriotic note in the evening's ceremonies.

Enthusiastic applause greeted every announcement of the chairman. During the afternoon the Greys had held a meeting and organized as a military unit in the democratic manner then followed. Senator Brown congratulated the men on their choice of officers, and assured the audience that Company K was leaving Cedar Falls under excellent leadership. He took pleasure in praising John B. Smith, the reëlected captain, for his thor-

oughness as a drillmaster and for his executive ability. During his few brief months of residence in Cedar Falls, Captain Smith had made a place for himself not only as host of the Carter House but as the organizer of the local militia. He praised, too, the choice of the other officers: Fitzroy Sessions, the first lieutenant; C. H. Mullarky, the second lieutenant; and W. B. Hamill, the orderly sergeant. Within a month the twenty-nine-year-old first lieutenant was promoted to the position of regimental adjutant.

Particularly for the benefit of visitors, the chairman enlarged upon two events of the past week — the work of the fifty-three feminine seamstresses and the arrival that afternoon of twenty additional recruits. Eulogistically he referred to the long days of tedious work which the women of Cedar Falls had cheerfully given to the fashioning of the hundred fatigue uniforms. Not only had they donated laborious hours of time, but some had engaged in a successful house-to-house canvass and secured more supplies of socks, drawers, and shoes for needy soldiers. All in all, he made it clear that the feminine contingent had rendered a distinguished and patriotic service to the community and to the Pioneer Greys.

Chairman A. F. Brown waxed even more eloquent when he described to the audience the cele-

bration that had occurred just before Company K met for election of its officers. Over the Cedar River Bridge a cavalcade of forty teams brought into Cedar Falls upwards of 350 people from farms and hamlets along the Shell Rock and Cedar rivers. With them came twenty recruits, mostly from Waverly, the largest group to enlist from the "up country" under Captain John B. Smith. The brass band again headed an impromptu parade in honor of these newest recruits, and the mayor of Cedar Falls congratulated them. As Chairman Brown pointed them out where they sat with the Greys in the audience, cheer after cheer greeted their ears.

Two other events, coming as surprises, continued to transform the mass meeting which had begun with solemnity into a patriotic demonstration. Darius Allen, an attorney, rose to make a presentation speech. Walking to the platform he requested Lieutenant Sessions to come forward. Then, speaking in behalf of young Sessions's neighbors, John O. Carter and B. F. White, he presented the first lieutenant of Company K with a Colt navy revolver.

Following this a second presentation was made by Chairman Brown himself. Summoning Captain Smith forward, he informed him and the audience that certain public-spirited citizens of Cedar

Falls, on that very afternoon, had raised a fund for the purchase of a sword and epaulettes suitable for the captain of Company K. Although local stores could not supply them, these martial insignia would be delivered as soon as possible. After thanking the donors, Captain Smith generously announced that he would regard the gift not "so much as a compliment to him as to the Greys" of whom, he declared, "I am very proud."

Before the evening was over, eight additional speakers were called upon to praise or advise the Greys, and to call attention to the sacrifices the boys were making for Iowa and the nation in leaving their homes, their farms, and their forges. The first two speakers had represented the locality in the State legislature, Zimri Streeter and J. B. Powers. Both eulogized the Pioneer Greys as patriotic soldiers who were going forth not as drafted men but as volunteers who, without compulsion, chose to defend their country.

At a late hour W. H. Nichols was designated to deliver the parting remarks to the boys of Company K. No record remains of this speech except that his words were "impressive and pertinent". They must have been sincere, for on June 8th, after riding overland with three other boys from Cedar Falls, Thomas Boggs, Michael Rambach, and L. S. Taggart, he joined the company at Keokuk

and with them was there mustered into the army. After Nichols's address, to the accompaniment of the band, eight hundred men, women, and children rose to join in the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner". A little later they passed down the two long flights of stairs into the June night. Swinging lanterns lighted the people to their homes or to their wagons or saddled ponies. Many of those, however, who attended the Citizens' Farewell Meeting remained overnight in Cedar Falls to watch the entrainment of the company on the following morning.

LUELLE M. WRIGHT

The Departure

No occasion in the first decade of the history of Cedar Falls had brought to town such crowds of people as poured in on the morning of June 4, 1861. Many farmers from counties to the north and west must have driven their teams all night in order to be present. Five thousand people gathered to see the Pioneer Greys entrain. In comparison, the crowds, hitherto considered great, at the Cedar Valley Agricultural Fair and those which had assembled two months earlier to participate in the Grand Railroad Jubilees, when the first train on the Dubuque and Sioux City Railroad had puffed into town, seemed small.

The earliest arrivals, forming the nucleus of a greater crowd, congregated near the head of Main Street just south of the Millrace Bridge. From there they could look across the Cedar River to the railway station and see the troop train with its engine and five box-like passenger cars profusely decorated with evergreens and flags. With a grim sense of irony, men recalled that, under far different conditions, the first train had been welcomed only a few weeks before with band music, cedar arches, speeches, a banquet,

and a grand ball. One old pioneer, shaking his head sadly, said, "Seems like that train arrived just in time to take our boys away." Some one else commented plaintively in reply, "But today those cars face east not west."

From the windows of his editorial sanctum in the Overman Block, George D. Perkins watched that constantly increasing but quiet mass of people with a reportorial eye. Reared in a school that had not learned to scoff at sentiment or to cultivate sophistication, he etched the picture of this group in his mind so that he could portray it for readers of his *Gazette* on the coming Friday. "Mingling hither and thither among the mass could be seen the Greys bidding their friends farewell . . . Words were few but actions told the feelings of the heart more plainly than they. Stout men would grasp each other by the hand, and while they would not trust themselves to speak the thoughts that came rushing thick and fast, the eyes would suffuse with tears, tears that were no disgrace to manhood. Fathers were parting with children; husbands with wives and brothers with sisters. . . . At last came the order for the Greys to fall in; the father snatched the last kiss from his wife and little ones, whose love-grasp upon him had to be rudely severed; and parents had to speak the last words of counsel

and advice it might be their privilege to offer. But though love of kindred, friends and home were strong, yet duty was paramount to all these, and the Greys promptly obeyed its call."

At nine o'clock the bugler sounded the call for assembly. Almost instantly the crowd opened up passageways enabling the soldiers to make their way to the bugler and to Captain Smith, stationed at the approach to the Millrace Bridge. First in line, the Cedar Falls Band headed the procession with the June sunshine flashing on the polished brass of their instruments. Next the veterans of former wars took their places. These were followed by the remnant of the Pioneer Greys who for special reasons had found it impossible to entrain that morning. Last, marched Company K, nearly one hundred strong. The throng of citizens and visitors followed the procession over the Millrace and Cedar River bridges to the new, scarcely completed, railway depot, a quarter of a mile beyond. Before it stood the waiting flag-and-cedar decorated train, with a plume of smoke pouring from the squat smokestack of the engine.

At the station the Greys broke ranks. Relatives and friends crowded close for parting words. One hysterical woman with two little children clinging to her skirts entreated her husband with tears and sobs to remain. So intense was her

grief that three young men, stirred either by her suffering or the excitement of the occasion, offered to take his place. The man, however, it was reported, remained obdurate in his intention. "He was determined to go and go he did."

At nine-thirty Conductor Northup shouted, "All aboard!" According to the *Gazette*, Engineer Cawley backed the little train to insure a good start, and as it came rushing by the crowded station platform, "such an earnest heartfelt shout went up for the departing soldiers as must have carried conviction to the heart of each and every member of Company K that the hearts of the people were with them." Then in silence hundreds of men and women, facing east, watched the engine and its five cars move on toward the bend in the Cedar River and disappear among the oaks in the distance.

The story of the departure of the Pioneer Greys logically ends with the horizon toward which the train carrying Captain Smith, the Cedar Falls company, and forty local citizens, who accompanied the boys to Dubuque, was headed. At the point of embarkation, however, occurred an incident which, inasmuch as it graphically revealed the firm belief of Company K in one nation indivisible and united, may serve as an appropriate epilogue.

On Thursday evening, June 6th, as Company K was embarking on the *Key City* for the rendezvous of the Third Iowa Volunteer Infantry at Keokuk, a man on the wharf audaciously hurrahed for secession. One of the soldiers on the boat quickly flung a pail at the Copperhead who with equal celerity hurled it back to the deck of the boat. The missile struck Lieutenant Fitzroy Sessions of Cedar Falls squarely on his breast. This double insult to his nation's honor and his own caused the Lieutenant's Scotch-Irish temper to flare.

Even though the boat was actually leaving the wharf, Sessions placed his bowie knife between his teeth, grasped his new Colt revolver, and jumped ashore. With his free fist he gave the advocate of secession such a blow that he fell back about a rod. Then, although the boat had already swung away from the shore, the Lieutenant dexterously leaped several feet through the air and regained his place on the moving boat. Editor Perkins, who witnessed the feat and related it to *Gazette* readers, remarked laconically, "It seemed to be the prevalent idea that Secession had received a hard blow."

LUELLE M. WRIGHT

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