The PALIMPSEST

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

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

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH
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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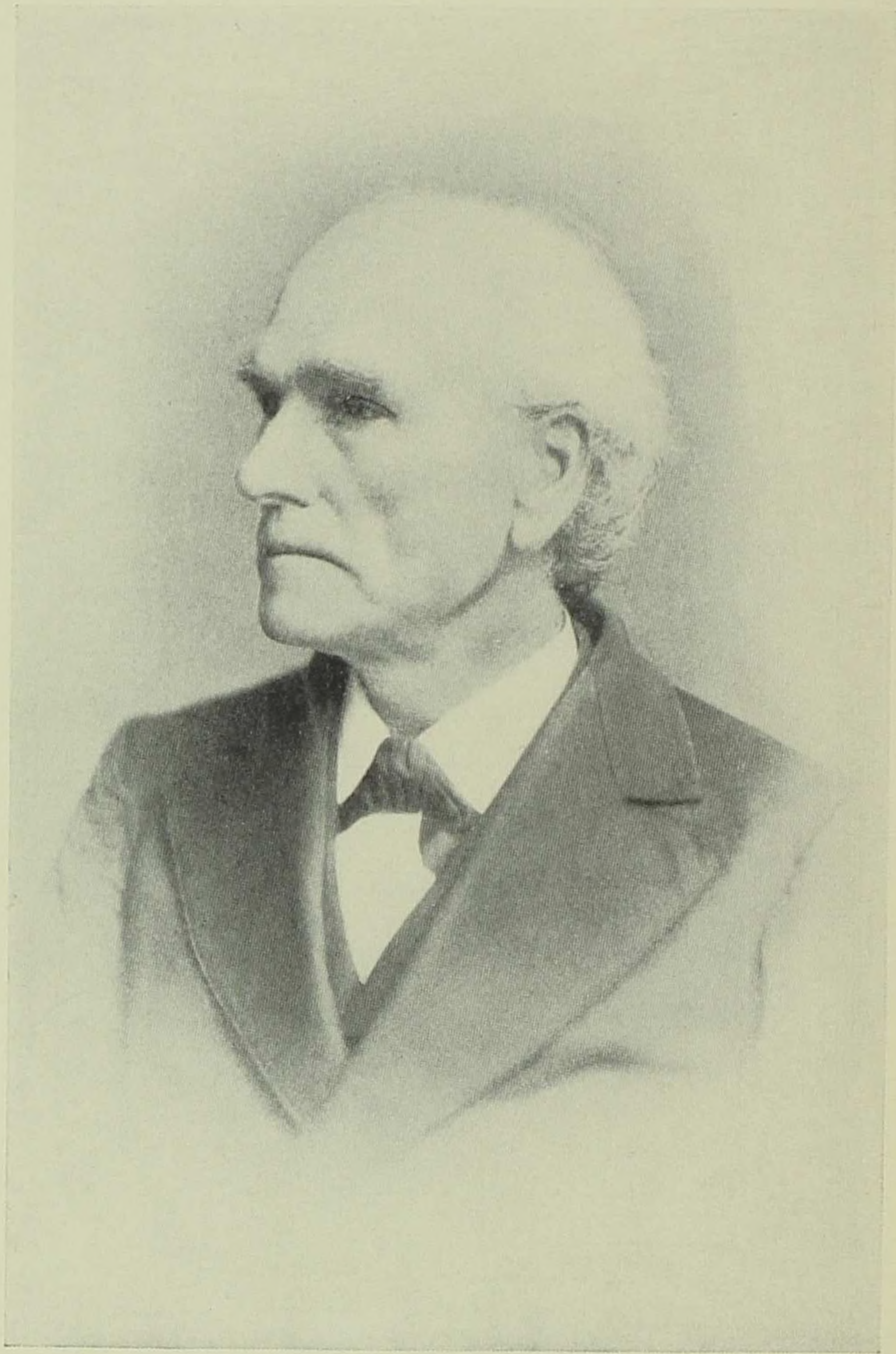

GEORGE BRYANT BOWMAN

THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY JOHN ELY BRIGGS

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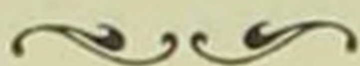

Elder Bowman

The Reverend George Byrant Bowman began his life in North Carolina on May 1, 1812, and ended it in California in 1888. Between those years he lived in Iowa long enough to impress the seal of his character upon the progress of education and religion and to contribute to the welfare of three towns — Iowa City, Dubuque, and Mount Vernon. He was by profession and faith a minister but, being also one who is often described but seldom seen, a "born leader of men", his activities were many faceted and almost all equally successful.

This was good, for a pioneer preacher has never trod a path of roses. He has never had a corps of deacons and assistants as a buffer between himself and the outer world. Often he has had to raise his salary, build his fires, help erect his church, and guide the handles of the plow while he prepared his Sunday sermon.

To Elder Bowman, however, these things were

all in a day's undertaking, and it would have been as impossible for him to sit with his feet on the hearth during the week as it would to stay in bed on Sunday. He came to Iowa in 1841 and built a church at Iowa City. Two years later he was transferred to Dubuque, and then from 1845 to 1850 he "rode the circuit", carrying the Gospel to scattered groups of pioneers. He was next transferred to Mount Vernon, where he built his second church, and on July 4, 1852, broke ground for and founded Cornell College. These were the achievements of a preacher whose faith and vision were combined with keen business sense and honest toil.

In 1840 the Methodists of Iowa City organized a class meeting under the direction of Reverend Bartholomew Weed, who was in charge of the Iowa mission. A year later, when the number of Methodists had increased to more than a hundred, they looked for a minister who would have the business capacity to build a church. In the Missouri Conference was a young man by the name of G. B. Bowman who seemed to be very well qualified, but his transfer was hard to effect, for the Conference well nigh refused to part with such a promising man and Bowman himself, after consenting to come, asked to be released. Nevertheless "Brother Bowman went to his new mis-

sion, gathered a large congregation, formed a society, erected a church in Iowa City, and found the means between that and Boston to pay for it."

In the business of erecting the church, Bowman proved himself ingenious as well as enterprising. The congregation was poor and could not possibly raise enough money to erect a building such as the "wants and prospects of the community demanded." Bowman proposed that another minister fill his pulpit while he made a trip east in search of funds. This idea was eagerly accepted, and for six months Bowman went begging and preaching all the way to Philadelphia and New York and back.

When he returned he had "nearly four thousand dollars in money and means." Always resourceful, he immediately rented a building, opened a store, and converted his miscellaneous "means" into cash which could more easily be traded for lumber. When this novel procedure was ended he put the money with the little that his own people could raise, and erected "a splendid brick church, forty-five by sixty feet, with a basement throughout, with a large school room and four class rooms. The church was well finished and handsomely seated, with aisles, four tiers of seats, an altar and a pulpit of the most substantial workmanship." It was no wonder that long after

he had left for other fields, Bowman's begging trip was a topic for fireside commendation.

Several years later, while pastor at Mount Vernon, dissatisfied with the old schoolhouse in which meetings were held, he undertook with his indomitable energy and perseverance to build a church. Again he traveled about the country gathering subscriptions, and presently superintended the building of a substantial brick structure.

During the course of construction he and several other men went to the nearby "Jasper Nick" quarry to obtain the door-sill stones. They took the stones "with the permission of an employee there, during the absence of the proprietors, and afterwards had considerable difficulty in settling therefor with the owners, who threatened the good men with prosecution for stealing." It is not to be doubted that Bowman "held his own" in an affair of this kind. If necessary, he could be a very "scrappy" preacher.

Perhaps some of the most characteristic and lovable memories of the man relate to the period when he was an itinerant preacher, riding the "Linn Grove Circuit" and Presiding Elder of the Dubuque District. The little bands of men and women on the fringes of civilization felt that the coming of Brother Bowman into their religious services marked an occasion to be long remem-

bered. They often felt a keen sense of loneliness and even despair at being settled amid the hardships of the new country, far away from their loved ones, and many a faltering pioneer received divine comfort and renewed courage from the big man with the simple message and the firm hand clasp.

A boy who was present at one of these informal gatherings in a farmer's one-room lean-to cabin afterward related his impressions of the event. "The preacher was late in getting there and I kept looking out through the kitchen door. Finally he came, dismounted, tied his horse, removed his saddle bags from the saddle and came in, stooping to get in through the low kitchen door. I remember his bronzed face as it was framed in that doorway, and then, there he stood in the midst of us, tall and straight and lean, his features well moulded, strong and expressive."

Of Bowman's peculiar fitness for the work, he says that he was "a man with a keen eye to both the spiritual and the business end of God's Kingdom in Iowa. A pioneer preacher of force, of energy and of power, endowed by nature with a missionary spirit for religious conquest. He was one of those rare characters seemingly designed by Providence for a special work. He had a message, and he had motive power and native ability

sufficient to put it into the plain words of a Gospel Pilot pointing the way."

This attractiveness and acumen did not lessen with the years. Much later a fellow minister reported that when Reverend Bowman presided over a meeting it was "like a celestial benison". Though he had grown gray, he was not old. "He had a wonderful fellow feeling that gushed forth like an exuberant spring. He was as artless, gentle and loving as a child, but withal he took a strong grip upon the business of the Conference."

But Bowman was more than a preacher. He was a pioneer among pioneers: one of the first in that rough country to feel that people needed something besides faith to help them lead noble lives, and that that need was education. So it was that while in Iowa City, in 1843, he became one of the founders of Iowa City College, organized under the direction of a Methodist Conference.

The work of the institution was "elementary, although it was designed ultimately to assume the work of a real college." Professor James Harlan was the principal instructor, and the public was assured that additional professors would be added as they were needed; and also that "efficient instruction would be given in all the primary and regular college studies."

But for all the sanguine hopes of its founders,

the life of the school was brief for there was neither enough "money or patronage to warrant it." However, had it not been for the collapse of this enterprise, Elder Bowman would have felt no need for cherishing his ideal for education until 1852, when it blossomed more brightly and bore fruit at Mount Vernon.

The rugged preacher had traveled on horseback over his vast circuit, growing to know its hills and valleys and sweeps of prairie as a friend knows a familiar face. And of all the places that he saw, he felt that the country around Mount Vernon was the most beautiful. It was the locality for which he had been searching ever since the failure of the educational venture at Iowa City. He was a "man of mighty faith and hope and confidence. Scholars now put these qualities all into one word and call it 'vision', but vision can only reach to the skyline, while faith and hope and confidence reach farther and away beyond. His vision, however, was far-reaching enough to see the need of an institution of learning in this locality, and the appropriateness of the hill which he called beautiful as a site for college grounds."

There is a legend about his finding the spot. "The pioneer itinerant in 1851 ascended this beautiful mount on horseback, and from the summit opened his eyes upon this charming landscape of

blending prairie and forest stretching amphitheatre-like for ten or fifteen miles in all directions. His illuminated eyes saw here the ideal site for a Christian college, and there were revealed to him in prophetic vision future buildings, inspiring teachers, and an oncoming host of students. He dismounted and sought a concealed bower in a clump of native hazel, where, kneeling before Almighty God, he dedicated the site and himself to the cause of Christian education."

Be that as it may, Elder Bowman immediately set about in his characteristic way to found a college. Without any "authority from Church or State, without any board of trustees, without even a title deed to the land, he formed his plans" for building the institution.

On July 4, 1852, his project was made known to the public at a big celebration. The gathering was advertised on handbills throughout the country and people poured in on all the roads, coming in wagons, carriages, and on horseback from as far as "Anamosa, Marion, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Burlington, and Dubuque." A great feast was prepared — "such a plethora of edibles" as was never "seen west of the Mississippi River up to that date" — and after the scraps were partially cleared away the gathering listened attentively to the speech of the day. The orator was

James Harlan, first State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and his subject was "Education". Nowadays it would be hard to hold a Fourth of July audience with such a theme, but at that time education was an ideal as yet unrealized, a bright torch which the people dreamed of carrying in the parade of progress.

At the close of the speech Elder Bowman delivered a characteristic address which sparkled with enthusiasm and vitality, and then, "in the presence of the vast assemblage, the ground was broken for the foundation of the first building, now known as Science Hall."

In the following month, Elder Bowman obtained "in his own name a title deed from I. H. Julian and Reuben Ash to the original site of the school." In September, at the session of the Iowa Conference held at Burlington, a report was adopted accepting a gift of fifteen acres of land "upon which there is now in progress of erection a large and substantial edifice adapted to and designed for educational and collegiate purposes." Such was the rapidity with which Elder Bowman started things moving. He was never deterred if the horse wasn't ready when he needed it, but promptly started off with the cart.

The school was commonly referred to as the Mount Vernon Wesleyan Seminary but in 1854 it

was incorporated as the Iowa Conference Seminary. In 1855 the name was changed to Cornell College, "in honor of William W. Cornell, of New York City, one of the early contributors to the institution."

Elder Bowman was not content, however, in merely launching the infant school. During the first year he was appointed "agent" of the institution, and the duties of this office seemed to include everything from raising money to raising the building. With indefatigable energy he made a personal canvass asking for funds. One minister related that since there was nothing of value in his home Bowman insisted upon confiscating his large Dutch watch. The only thing that saved the treasure was the owner's remark that he wouldn't know when to leave off preaching without it.

Notwithstanding these activities, Bowman was continually on hand to superintend the erection of the building. The Board of Trustees said of him in 1855, "He has secured donations, and made all the purchases of real estate and building material, made all contracts with the workmen, superintended the erection of the buildings, collected all the funds, and paid off all demands in person, from the commencement to the completion of the buildings."

The first structure erected was "forty feet by

seventy-two, and three stories high including the basement." When school opened in September, 1853, the "walls were up, the roof was on, windows in, doors hung, and floors laid; but nothing was painted throughout the building, only one coat of plastering on the partitions, and no plastering on the outer brick walls." In this unfinished state, school was conducted until the close of the first year.

Elder Bowman felt, however, as did every one connected with the institution, that the first precarious year had gone exceedingly well. He expected an influx of settlers, and consequently laid out in lots Bowman's first addition and Bowman's second addition. His real estate venture went well, and soon the plots were incorporated into the town of Mount Vernon.

During these intensive years he also owned a store in the village which netted him a neat profit. Though he was seldom seen behind the counter, everybody knew it as "Bowman's store".

In 1858 the endless toil began to show its effect, and soon he was compelled to move to California because of ill health. Cornell did not cease to occupy his "loving interest", however, for presently he sent back to his friends the magnificent gift of $10,000 to be used toward the erection of a new building, Bowman Hall.

An acquaintance of the time spoke of him as without "the culture of the schools, yet possessed of wide information, broad sympathies, and magnetic personality." Moreover, he was "a man of profound convictions, unconquerable purpose, and strong, imperious will. He knew men, and was a man of affairs. He knew Jesus Christ, and was well versed in the Bible. He was a tireless worker — he brought things to pass. Difficulties only stimulated him to greater effort. Defeat to him meant subsequent victory."

There is a picture of Elder Bowman in clerical garb which hangs in one of the college halls. It is labeled "The Founder of Cornell College", and is a fine, dignified, scholarly looking portrait of an enterprising man. There is another picture in the hearts of pioneers which recalls him as he rode horseback over the hills — a tall, sinewy form, a face bronzed by the sun and wind, an alert eye, and a simple faith which proclaimed him a messenger of Christ in a new country. But whatever the picture, however the memory, there has always been the same high praise. Elder Bowman was beloved by all.

PAULINE GRAHAME

The Adair Train Robbery

When John Rafferty climbed into the high cab and opened the throttle of his fast Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific engine, he little dreamed that he was pulling out of Council Bluffs for the last time. Ahead were shadowy ravines and the swales of the Iowa prairie, and far against the western sky the July sun stretched out long fingers of heat. As Rafferty glanced back along his train he counted two baggage and express cars, four coaches, and two sleeping-cars. In one of the express cars stood a heavy iron safe containing nearly two thousand dollars in currency. Silver bullion completed the treasure cargo.

For three and a half hours on that sultry evening of July 21, 1873, Rafferty's fireman, Dennis Foley, shoveled coal into the flaming firepit. Outside, fields and villages fled past. When the train came to a grinding halt at its scheduled stops, Conductor William A. Smith strolled forward to compare watches with the thirty-five-year-old engineer. Then, too, the express guard unlatched his heavy sliding doors to load mail and packages and to catch a breath of air. In the coaches, thirty Chinese, come to the United States

to be educated in New England universities, stuck their queued heads from windows to gape at prairie towns. Village loafers made bold and uncouth comments concerning the Orientals.

A few miles west of Adair, a sleepy little village where the general store served more idlers than customers, the track swung shortly around a sharp curve. Rafferty's watch pointed to eight-thirty when he reduced his speed to about twenty miles an hour. Behind was safety and security, while ahead lurked Jesse Woodson James and his band of border ruffians. By their side stood Death.

> Jesse James was a two gun man,
> (*Roll on, Missouri!*)
> Strong-arm chief of an outlaw clan.
> (*From Kansas to Illinois!*)
> He twirled an old Colt forty-five;
> (*Roll on, Missouri!*)
> They never took Jesse James alive.
> (*Roll, Missouri, roll!*)

For weeks the outlaws had planned this holdup. Already the James gang was notorious for its bold bank crackings, its stagecoach stick-ups, and its train robberies. Led by Jesse and Frank James, both crack shots, these highwaymen were criminal adventurers who soon were to sweep into prominence as America's most famous bandits. But in 1873 Jesse, then only a common robber, had not

assumed his place among the nation's strenuous men. Yet even then he was taking on those legendary characteristics which a democratic people ascribed to their heroes — Daniel Boone, Mike Fink, and Paul Bunyan. Jesse, crowned by "Manifest Destiny", was soon to be described as a "hawse an' a man together" who lived in a mountain cave with "a rattlesnake, a wolf, an' a bear."

His fame, preserved for young America in hundreds of dime novels, those yellow-backed tales of excitement published by Beadle and others, equaled that of any contemporary hero. Small boys of the decades of the eighties and nineties smuggled the gory adventures of Jesse James behind the wide leaves of prosaic geographies. Even adults were not immune. Many a sedate American found thrills when he stepped to the counter for a "Jesse James Five Cent Cigar — Sold over the Entire United States — Unsurpassed in Quality".

And Jesse E. James, the not-too-brilliant son of the bandit, secured fame by writing, *Jesse James, My Father . . . The First and Only True Story of His Adventures Ever Written*. As a matter of fact, neither the account written by the phlegmatic son nor the scores of other romances of terror tell the true life of the criminal whom poets now immortalize. For the biography of Jesse

James stands not clear-etched for all the world to read, but lies devious and hidden behind the powder smoke of rumor and romanticism. The facts are few; the rumors, many.

His father was the Reverend Robert James, a Baptist preacher abundant in piety, but short of cash. He died in the California gold fields where he had gone to seek his fortune. It is recorded that he was buried "in a soil unhallowed by the dust of kinsmen, in a grave unbedecked by the tears of the loved ones left behind." But the wife and two small sons were not long without protectors, for Mrs. James remarried twice, the second time to a physician.

Jesse, born on September 5, 1847, apparently liked his stepfather, frequently speaking of him with warmth and cordiality. The two lads, Jesse and Frank, enjoyed a normal boyhood in Clay County, Missouri. There is nothing to indicate, as one lurid biographer writes, that the "jocund laughter of innocent youth seldom broke from their lips, but, instead, oaths and curses, and bitter threatens, mingled with gross profanity" or that "Cutting off the ears and tails of dogs and cats, and the wings of birds, was a cherished practice, and the pitiful cries of the dumb suffering things was a sort of music they delighted in."

One thing seems certain, however. Both

brothers early learned the use of firearms, and Jesse became remarkably proficient with the pistol. When he heard a little noise in the house, said his brother, Jesse would "whip out his pistol so quick you couldn't see the motion of his hand." It was said that he could kill a red-headed woodpecker at fifty yards. He was always armed, declares one biographer, "with two 45-calibre Colt's revolvers and three cartridge belts, together with plenty of spare shells in his pockets to be used in case of emergencies; and when he went 'on a trip' he carried a valise full of cartridges and a Winchester rifle concealed within a large umbrella."

Jesse's first taste of violence seems to have occurred about 1863 when a troop of Union soldiers invaded his home in search of the famous Missouri bushwhacker and guerrilla, Quantrill. Neither Jesse nor his stepfather, Dr. Reuben Samuels, both Southern sympathizers, gave the blue-coated cavalry assistance. The enraged soldiers, thereupon, hung Dr. Samuels to a tree until he was nearly dead, and slashed Jesse's back with a knotted rope. The lad's action was immediate. "Ma," he cried, "I'll join Quantrill!" And he did.

For the next two or three years Jesse James, in Quantrill's service, preyed upon Union soldiers. Wounded twice through the right lung and finally captured, he managed to escape to return to his

home county, there to wed his nurse and to join the Baptist Church. His conversion, avers one commentator, was complete, for from this time on Jesse never "slew a human being except in the protection of his own life".

The light of history shines dimly upon Jesse's activities for the next few months. Then, in the floodlight of notoriety, stands a two-gun bandit leader. Jesse James, America's "Impossibly Bad Man", was the cynosure of the nation's eyes. "He committed hundreds of murders and robberies, and acted the part of the Red Cross Knight toward fair ladies in distress", wrote an over-enthusiastic author; "he cleaned out a bank in Texas, and held up a train in Missouri on the same day; he despoiled capitalists of all their wealth, and then gave it to poor widows and bereaved orphans. He shot his enemies from ambush, kissed his mother when they met and parted, betrayed his friends, and crammed his children's stockings with bulging presents at Christmas."

Such was the man who, with a heavily-armed gang, lay in wait for John Rafferty on that fateful July night. Jesse, in 1873, was only twenty-six years old, a man about five feet, seven inches tall, with "light hair, blue eyes, heavy sandy whiskers, broad-shouldered, short nose, a little turned up," and a high, broad forehead.

His companions were all young men like their leader. Among these were Cole and Jim Younger, tight-lipped brothers, familiar with crime since childhood. Thomas Younger, another brother, probably was present. Clell Miller, an unsavory character without the ability of either the James boys or the Younger brothers, and Bill Chadwell, completed the party.

Early in July the gang had learned, in that devious and cunning fashion so common to Jesse James, that $75,000 in gold from the Cheyenne region was coming through on the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad. About July 12th, the group, mounted upon excellent horses, rode quietly into Council Bluffs where they rested and awaited further reports from their Cheyenne spies. When the news came, Jesse James was ready. He sent Frank James and Cole Younger to Omaha to learn when the treasure shipment would start for Council Bluffs. Finally the two robbers reported the gold shipment was on its way, and the gang rode away to the fateful curve just west of Adair.

The outlaws hitched their mounts some distance from the track and then began to execute their carefully made plans to wreck the train supposed to be carrying the treasure. Breaking into a hand-car house, they stole a spike-bar and hammer.

Then they pried off a fish-plate connecting two rails and pulled out the spikes. A rope and strap, explained an eye-witness, was tied in the bolt hole at the west end of the disconnected rail. The rope, about the size of a common bed-cord, was passed under the south rail, across a little ditch, and up a bank behind which the robbers were hidden. Who held the rope, ready to jerk the rail from beneath the wheels of the approaching train, has never been determined.

But Engineer Rafferty, reducing his speed for the blind curve, saw the rail yanked out of place. He reversed his lever, but the distance was so short and the momentum of the train so great that he failed to stop. His engine plunged through the break, balanced an agonizing instant, plowed into the ditch, and then slowly toppled over on its side. The coaches piled on top of one another. Rafferty was killed instantly. Several passengers were seriously injured, and scores of others, said newspaper accounts, were thrown from their seats and bruised.

Jesse James all alone in the rain
Stopped an' stuck up the Eas'-boun' train;
Swayed through the coaches with horns an' a tail,
Lit out with the bullion an' the registered mail.

"The passengers on the train", said the Keokuk *Weekly Gate City*, "report that the scene was

terrible and baffles description. When the crash came, all were thrown forward — some entirely out of their seats. Then came the recoil, and immediately they heard firing, but supposed that it came from the wreck. Many of the men jumped from the cars and started to go forward, but were ordered back by the robbers, who continued firing, and enforced their demands by terrible oaths and threats. Back they went with a rush, and in the cars found women and children half-crazed with fright — shrieking, crying, and fainting, imploring the men to protect them, and exclaiming, 'My God! we shall be killed! We shall be killed!' "

> Jess made 'em all turn green with fright
> Quakin' in the aisles in the pitch-black night;
> An' he give all the bullion to a pore ole tramp
> Campin' nigh the cuttin' in the dirt an' damp.

No sooner had the engine turned over than the gang, with whoops and yells, was at the train. Their objective was the express car where they expected to find the $75,000 which they were confident was in the safe. When two of the troop — perhaps Jesse James and his brother — forced John Burgess, the guard, to open the safe, they found only two thousand dollars in currency. The silver bullion was too heavy for them to carry. Furious that their plans had miscarried and their information was false, the gang entered the

coaches to collect passengers' money and valuables. This loot, together with the stolen currency, they packed in a small valise. They then "waved their hats and shouted farewell to their victims, and gaining their horses, they rode away."

Conductor Smith, formerly an employee of the Western Stage Company in Iowa City, left one of the most descriptive accounts of the wreck and robbery. "I was in the smoking car near the front end; from the noise I thought the engine was in the ditch when one or two cars piled on it. I was thrown under the seat in front of me; don't remember which side of the car I got out on, but know that I reached the engine on the north side. I went forward to see who was hurt. The first person I met was one of the masked men, near the baggage car door, who pointed a revolver towards me and told me to get back, firing at me at the same time. I backed down as far as the sleeping coach before I felt I was out of his way.

"There I met Dennis Foley, the fireman. He said, 'Billy, Jack is dead!' The passengers were in a hubbub, and women and children crying. I told the passengers I thought the masked men were trying to rob the baggage car, and tried to borrow a revolver, but failed. I could still see a man from where I was; saw another passing up and down on the opposite side of the train; think

he was firing at me; also some of the passengers asked me to get into the train as these men were firing at me and I would be the cause of some of them getting killed. I then went into the sleeping car at the rear, still trying to get a revolver, and urging the passengers to keep quiet, as these men were robbing the baggage car.

"After the passengers had got quiet, I went forward to investigate the wreck. The west end of the rail when I saw it was only a few inches from the south rail. The hind trucks of the smoking-car were still on the tracks."

No sooner had the robbers left, than an emergency telegraph set was rigged to the nearest pole and soon the news of the first American train robbery accomplished by means of wrecking the train went flashing over the nation. Had Jesse James not neglected to cut the wires, the news would have been delayed several hours.

Pursuit was almost immediate. All railroad agents west of Des Moines were instructed to organize posses and to patrol the country. Special trains, filled with armed men, left Council Bluffs on both the North Western and the Rock Island railroads. These trains left small detachments of men along the route where saddled horses awaited them. Hundreds of vigilantes volunteered their services. Men stood guard at farm-

house doors, and children were forbidden to play out of sight of the house. Search for the bandits was further increased when the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad offered a reward of $5000. The State of Iowa offered $600 for the arrest of each person engaged in the robbery.

The whole U. S. is after Jess;
  (*Roll on, Missouri!*)
The son-of-a-gun, if he ain't gone Wes';
  (*Missouri to the sea!*)
He could chaw cold iron an' spit blue flame;
  (*Cataracks down the Missouri!*)
He rode on a catamount he'd larned to tame.
  (*Hear that Missouri roll!*)

The trail left by the moon riders was not difficult to find. Railroad detectives, deputy sheriffs, posses, and vigilantes — all of these followed it straight to Missouri. On July 26th the bandits, riding easily, crossed the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad. Expert trailers, some of whom had followed Indian signs in western territories, showed where the outlaws had entered Jackson and Clay counties, Missouri. There, however, the gang split, and no trace was found of a single member. Missouri friends and neighbors sheltered the men quietly and efficiently.

Sometime later private detectives, heavily armed, moved into Monegaw Springs where they

found Jesse James and two of the Younger boys living with no attempt at concealment. When questioned by the officers, they denied any part in the robbery and brazenly defied the detectives to arrest them. The police, candidly confesses one commentator, "made no effort to bring them away and were glad to escape themselves alive!"

They're creepin', they're crawlin', they're stalkin' Jess;
(*Roll on, Missouri!*)
They's a rumor he's gone much further Wes';
(*Roll, Missouri, roll!*)
They's word of a cayuse hitched to the bars
(*Ruddy clouds on Missouri!*)
Of a golden sunset that busts into stars.
(*Missouri, roll down!*)

Although Jesse James, as might be expected, denied participation in the Adair robbery, there never was any doubt on the part of peace officers and railroad officials that his gang was responsible. The Iowa City *Daily Press* openly said that the Adair robbery was the work of the same men who robbed the bank at Saint Genevieve, Missouri, and the Russellville vaults in Iowa. And eastern newspapers, thoroughly excited by this new type of western terrorism, also gave the James outfit credit for the deed.

Meanwhile, in Des Moines, a coroner's jury, composed of J. G. Morgan, F. W. Burtch, and

Jos. Garretty, found that "the said John Rafferty refused to abandon his train when appraised of the danger and died manfully at his post." From coast to coast, newspapers made the engineer a hero. "There is not in the history of railroads", editorially commented the Saint Louis *Democrat,* "a more heroic deed than his. He belonged to a class to whose faithfulness and courage the public are greatly debtors." The New York *Daily Graphic,* not to be outdone, said, "Wife and little one, as well as personal safety, he laid on the altar of duty and died a hero."

To the editor of the Avoca *Delta,* the robbers represented everything that was vile, while Rafferty symbolized all nobility. "As it was no one but the engineer, John Rafferty, was killed; and he, like many a noble-hearted, unselfish hero before him, died at his post, regardless of self in the vain effort to save the precious freight of human lives committed to his charge. Let it be written upon the hero's monument:

> Whether on the gallows high,
> Or in the battle's van;
> The fittest place for a man to die,
> Is where he dies for man.

God help the fatherless children and widow. She, who roused from her slumbers at midnight's quiet hour, to have her heart grieved with anguish at

the intelligence that its best stay and comfort was gone. — 'Died at his post!' and the angels stoop low to greet the soul that faithfully performed its duty to the last."

The Ottumwa *Democrat,* while sharing the sympathy for the engineer, did not forget to mention the Chinese aboard the train. "All the Chinese," reported the *Democrat* with what was perhaps poetic license, "went back to Anita at one o'clock, saying this was 'hellee country'."

Despite the activities of officers, the coast to coast publicity, and the substantial rewards offered, not a single arrest was made in connection with the wreck and robbery. Gradually the affair faded from the public mind, and Adair returned to its sleepy existence. Yet the deed was not insignificant.

Jesse James, when he staged the killing of Rafferty and the robbery of the express safe, inaugurated a new chapter in the history of American crime. Never before had bandits wrecked a train in order to rob it. This was Jesse James's unique contribution to lawlessness. Robertus Love, in *The Rise and Fall of Jesse James,* one of the more creditable accounts, merely says that the James gang "invented train robbery" on July 21, 1873. Even Buel's readable book, *The Border Outlaws,* barely pays attention to the novelty of the crime.

The James gang itself probably understood the significance of their work, for they led peaceful lives for about six months after the robbery. Then, on January 15, 1874, a group of masked riders surrounded and stopped the Hot Springs stagecoach. A year or so later, Jesse James led the attack upon the bank at Northfield, Minnesota, one of the most spectacular incidents in his biography of violence. In January, 1875, the law took vengeance upon the James family while Jesse was away from home. A party of detectives, at midnight, tossed a bomb into the family home. Exploding, the bomb killed Jesse's half-brother and tore off his mother's right arm between the wrist and elbow. From that time on, Jesse James no longer talked of surrender to the law. It was either kill or be killed with him.

Governor Crittenden of Missouri offered a reward of ten thousand dollars for the arrest or killing of the James brothers. That sum was too great a temptation for Bob Ford who made plans to kill the outlaw. After months of effort he succeeded in having Jesse accept him as a friend. On April 3, 1882, an unusually warm day, Jesse "took off his coat and vest, unbuckled the belt which held his two pistols, mounted a chair, and began to dust a picture which, together with the ubiquitous mural decoration, 'God Bless Our

Home,' constituted the sole ornaments in the room." That was Bob Ford's long-awaited opportunity. His heavy revolver sent a bullet through the outlaw's brain. Thus was the Adair train wreck and robbery avenged.

Perhaps this was a fitting end for America's romantic terrorist. He was not shot down by a party of hunters as was John Sontag, the renowned bandit of the Southern Pacific Railroad; nor was he hanged by a group of vigilantes as was Henry Plummer, famous thief and robber of Montana and Idaho. James's slayer did not long enjoy the reward which he sought so long to collect. He was presently killed in a drunken quarrel — a brawl which some say was not as accidental as circumstances indicated.

Jesse James's death provided front page news for the newspapers of the country who glorified him as a desperado of a rapidly disappearing type. He was less dangerous, said one country weekly, than the "city slicker". The bandit's body, encased in a metallic coffin, was taken to Kearney, Missouri, where it was buried under a large coffee-bean tree not far from the house where Jesse had been born. Relatives, fearful that the corpse might be stolen by showmen for public exhibition, ordered the grave to be filled with heavy stones and placed an armed guard over it.

Tributes, in prose and poetry, increased. Roared one Southern attorney, "Farewell, Jesse James, prince of robbers! Missouri cries a long, a glad farewell! Cruelest horseman that ever wore a spur or held a rein, seeming oftener than Death himself on his pale horse charging through the land, than feeling man, farewell! farewell! Foulest blot that ever marred the bright escutcheon of a glorious state, farewell! farewell! Yes, thou bloody star of murder, hanging for years like a thing of horror in our very zenith, frightening science and civilization from our borders — I condemned the manner of thy taking off, yet I could but join the general acclaim, when, seized with the shock of death, we saw thee reel in thy orbit, and then plunge forever into old chaos and eternal night."

And those survivors of the wreck at death's curve, just outside of Adair nine years earlier, doubtless echoed this flamboyant farewell.

PHILIP D. JORDAN

Comment by the Editor

THE DIRECTION OF LEADERSHIP

Two men.

Both lived at the same time. Both were hardy, bold, and persistent. Both were trained in the rigorous school of experience. Both adapted themselves to the conditions of the frontier. Both won distinction. Both were leaders of men.

But what a contrast! Comparison is odious.

The one was a bandit — embittered toward society, ruthless, violent, unscrupulous, counterfeit. Jesse James was hated, feared, and despised. He was a menace to the country he raided. He wrecked a train, robbed banks, and murdered men. A paragon of iniquity, he went about doing evil.

The other was a minister — friendly toward all, kind, gentle, conscientious, genuine. George B. Bowman was loved, trusted, and respected. He was a benefactor to the communities he served. He built churches, founded a college, and saved the souls of men. A champion of righteousness, he went about doing good.

If fame is the measure of worth, then our standards of value must be sadly confused. The gangster and his crimes are widely known; but the

name of the clergyman is almost forgotten. Cowboys might be expected to fabricate ballads about the exploits of a desperado, but why William Benet should glorify James is beyond comprehension. No one sings of the church builder's triumphs. Perhaps the daily news of crime has warped our social judgment. Education, especially by the emphasis of current events, is a powerful instrument for good or evil, for civilization or degradation.

The test of culture is in the direction of leadership. Cornell College is after all a more substantial and enduring monument than dime novels and fugitive verses.

J. E. B.

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