

A Territorial Centennial Number
Iowa in 1838

The
PALIMPSEST

MAY 1938

CONTENTS

Cultural Aspirations 161

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Verse in the Newspapers 173

LUELLA M. WRIGHT

The Census of 1838 185

MARIE HAEFNER

Municipal Elections 193

J. A. SWISHER

A Commonplace Calendar 200

JOHN ELY BRIGGS

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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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Cultural Aspirations

"With very few exceptions," declared Lieutenant Albert Miller Lea who had talked with hundreds of squatters in his travels through the Black Hawk Purchase, "there is not a more orderly, industrious, active, pains-taking population west of the Alleghenies, than is this of the Iowa District. Those who have been accustomed to associate the name of *Squatter* with the idea of idleness and recklessness, would be quite surprised to see the systematic manner in which every thing is here conducted. For intelligence, I boldly assert that they are not surpassed, as a body, by an equal number of citizens of any country in the world." Nor was Lea alone in his opinion of the Iowa pioneers. Senator Thomas Hart Benton asserted "there was not a better population on the face of the earth."

The framers of the Ordinance of 1787 laid the groundwork of Iowa culture when they wrote: "Religion, morality and knowledge, being neces-

sary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." To implement the spirit of this declaration, Congress reserved one section of land in each township for the purpose of maintaining schools. With commendable foresight Governor Robert Lucas in his first message to the Iowa legislature declared: "There is no subject to which I wish to call your attention more emphatically, than the subject of establishing, at the commencement of our political existence, a well digested system of common schools".

The editor of the *Iowa News* was equally interested in universal education. If the pioneers failed to use the free land for school purposes, he argued, the effect "will long be felt among the people, and while our country is yet in its infancy we hope proper measures may be taken as soon as practicable, in order to secure to the first settlers the benefits which will otherwise fall to others when the country will amply support schools without aid from Government."

The log cabin school had become fairly common in the eight years since Berryman Jennings taught the first school in Iowa at Nashville in 1830. Despite the small and scattered population forty or more schools are known to have existed in Iowaland between the years 1834 and 1838.

All were private schools taught by men and women of various ages, married and single. A young Kentuckian, Alfred Rich, was teaching in Fort Madison in 1838. During the same year two "educated and capable" sisters from Boston, a Mrs. Williams and Miss Fanny Pond, gave instruction in their home at Fort Madison. At least a half dozen schools were opened in Burlington for short periods during 1838. Miss Mallard, a "highly educated lady" from New York State, taught at Bellevue. Another Bellevue teacher that year was George Cubbage, who had begun his pedagogical career at Dubuque as early as 1834. At least a dozen common schools were in operation in the various towns along the Mississippi River and probably as many more existed in the hinterland.

In response to the Governor's recommendation, the first Iowa Legislative Assembly passed a law in December, 1838, providing for the establishment of "a common school, or schools, in each of the counties of this Territory, which shall be open and free for every class of white citizens between the ages of four and twenty-one years." At the request of a majority of voters in a township the county commissioners were authorized to form a public school district. These schools were to be supported by taxing the property in the district,

but no one could be asked to pay more than ten dollars a year in cash or "good merchantable produce at cash price". Early in 1839 a few schools were established in accordance with the terms of this act.

Higher education was also available in Iowa in 1838. The Legislative Assembly provided for a number of seminaries throughout the Territory. On January 15, 1838, an act established a seminary of learning at Dubuque for the "instruction of young persons of both sexes in science and literature". Thomas S. Wilson, Lucius H. Langworthy, A. P. Lorimer, Ezekiel Lockwood, Joseph T. Fales, Benjamin Rupert, and Patrick Quigley were named as incorporators.

Four days later, on January 19, 1838, the Legislative Assembly passed an omnibus statute providing for the establishment of ten seminaries in the Territory of Wisconsin, seven of which were located west of the Mississippi: at Fort Madison and West Point in Lee County, at Mount Pleasant in Henry County, at Farmington in Van Buren County, and at Burlington and Augusta in Des Moines County. The seventh institution was to be established in "town sixty-nine, range three west in Des Moines county" and was to be called "the Union seminary of Des Moines county." The act named the incorporators of each seminary.

Two other institutions were established on January 19th. The Davenport Manual Labor College was created for "the promotion of the general interests of education, and to qualify young men to engage in the several employments and professions of society, and to discharge honorably and usefully the various duties of life." Clearly the pioneers were already becoming aware of the need of vocational training.

The second school was styled "the Philandrian college of the town of Denmark". Section seven of the act creating Philandrian College declared: "Persons of every religious denomination shall be capable of being elected trustees, nor shall any person as president, professor, instructor or pupil, be refused admittance for his conscientious persuasions in matters of religion: *provided* he demean himself in a proper manner, and conform to such rules as may be established." Although this particular school never took root, a similar institution, Denmark Academy, incorporated in 1843, was destined to continue into the second decade of the twentieth century.

The pioneers were men of action in educational matters. In September, 1838, Alonzo P. Phelps, "a young gentleman of superior education", spoke on the subject of "Popular Education" in the Methodist Church at Dubuque. The *Iowa News*

believed the town had long felt the need of a public school and hoped there would be a general attendance at the lecture. At the conclusion of Professor Phelps's talk a permanent school was established for scholars of all classes. Those present moved that the seven men appointed by the Wisconsin legislature as trustees of Dubuque Seminary should have "a superintendent care" over Mr. Phelps's seminary.

On March 24, 1838, Mrs. Sheldon informed readers of the *Wisconsin Territorial Gazette* at Burlington that she intended to open a school on April 1st. Since spelling, reading, and writing were the basis of education, Mrs. Sheldon expected to pay particular attention to these branches of learning. Courses would also be offered in grammar, geography, astronomy, geometry, botany, philosophy, and history. Prepared by three years' experience and a study of the "most recent and useful modes of instruction" in eastern schools, Mrs. Sheldon believed she would give satisfaction to those who attended her school. She had ordered fifty dollars worth of books and school apparatus for the use of her pupils. Tuition was only four dollars per quarter.

An Academy of Science and Literature in Burlington opened its portals to the youth of both sexes on the first Monday in June. Daily sessions

from nine in the morning to five in the afternoon were held in the spacious upper rooms of the store building formerly occupied by Charles Nealley. In this "convenient and beautiful atmosphere" Principal J. P. Stewart expected to deliver lectures on the natural sciences and such other subjects "as may be expedient for the advancement and encouragement of the pupils." The academy operated on a quarterly basis. Tuition was modest and typical of most schools: four dollars per quarter was charged for orthography, reading, and writing; five dollars for mental and written arithmetic, geography and the use of maps and globes; and six dollars for the Latin and Greek languages, English and Latin composition, algebra, surveying, natural philosophy, astronomy, chemistry, mental and moral philosophy, political economy, bookkeeping, declamation, music, and drawing.

Late in August the trustees of the Academy of Science and Literature notified readers of the *Iowa Territorial Gazette* that the school was operating under favorable auspices. They hoped the fine work of Principal Stewart would "dissipate objections" of many who were fearful of emigrating to the "fertile plains of Iowa" lest they "leave behind them the invaluable blessings of intellectual cultivation." Professor Stewart was de-

scribed as a "gentleman of liberal education, and of that logical and well disciplined mind so eminently adapted to the business of teaching". The purpose of the various departments was (1) to instruct youth in such English branches as will best fit them for the ordinary business of life, (2) to fit for college such as are designed for the learned professions, (3) to prepare young men for the employment of teaching, (4) to give to young ladies such an education as experience has shown to be "most valuable to this interesting portion of the community."

On October 15, 1838, another energetic pedagogue, Henry G. Stuart, opened the Mount Pleasant Male and Female Academy. Professor Stuart proposed to teach "the English Sciences, the Latin, Greek and French tongues, and every branch of science commonly taught in High Schools and Academies." These courses were intended to be "thoroughly taught, without that smattering of science, by which the mind of the pupil is made a lumber-room, without order or harmony". Professor Stuart agreed to give his "most assiduous attention" to everything "calculated to benefit those committed to his care, both in morals and mind".

Mrs. L. T. Clark opened the Fort Madison Female Academy at the residence of James G. Ed-

wards. The subjects and tuition were much the same as at other institutions, and Mrs. Clark asserted that no pains would be spared in promoting the "moral and intellectual improvement" of her pupils.

There were other evidences of cultural aspiration in the Black Hawk Purchase. Early in 1838 some young men of Dubuque formed the Iowa Thespian Association, the first organization of its kind in Iowa. Rehearsals and performances took place in a comfortable room over the Shakespeare House. The editor of the *Iowa News* believed the local players acted in an admirable manner and recommended their efforts to all "lovers of mirth" as "well calculated to drive dull care away in a long winter evening."

In November, 1838, Azor Richardson invited all "who are desirous of becoming acquainted with, or wish to cultivate the science of SACRED MUSIC, to meet at the Methodist Chapel" in Dubuque on the following Tuesday evening. He planned to conduct his singing school on liberal terms and expected to disclose his fee for teaching at the first meeting.

On December 27, 1837, a number of Dubuque citizens met at the home of James L. Langworthy and formed a "Literary Association" upon the lyceum principle. Dr. T. R. Lurton was elected

president, John Plumbe, Jr., was chosen secretary, and R. Farwell was named clerk. Regular weekly meetings open to the public were announced. On January 16th, the subject of banking was considered. "No real friend of Du Buque", the *Iowa News* declared, "can view the formation of this society with indifference." One thing at least was certain, the East would be deeply impressed by evidence of such cultural advance in literary matters.

The next meeting of the Dubuque Lyceum was held in the office of Joseph T. Fales. The subject for discussion was "The Admission of Texas into the Union". A contributor to the local newspaper expressed hope that the lyceum would "lay the foundation of a Library and a Philosophical apparatus, which would tend to elevate the standard of public intelligence, and exercise a very important influence upon our village — which is already growing into importance with magic rapidity." Meetings were suspended during the summer months but resumed in the following December when the public was invited to attend a discussion of the question, "Should any law of imprisonment for debt exist?"

"We cannot feel too much interest in the cause of the Lyceum", declared the editor of the *Iowa News*. "It is the field where mind meets mind,

where taste, views, and opinions are united, or rather amalgamated; and ambition strives for the mastery, and pride seeks for the prize. It is here the bashful first learn to appear before the world, . . . It is here that the first pulsation of talent throbs, creating a desire to be first and foremost in the rank. It is here where genius first unfolds and spreads her wings . . . Here, where there is so much to be learnt, at little expense, . . . It requires but little time: and situated as we are, shut out from the improvements, and the amusements of the world, let us meet . . . and enjoy a rational, an interesting, and useful hour in improving the little talent we possess, and thereby keep pace with other towns and cities of our country."

Another manifestation of the cultural growth of the people is found in the plea of the *Iowa Territorial Gazette* at Burlington for the formation of the "Historical Society of Iowa". After describing the services of such societies the editor declared: "Almost every state of the union can now boast of its Historical Society, each of which is diligently and successfully striving to make the people better acquainted with the history and resources of the state in which they reside. Why, then, we have often asked ourselves, is Iowa without one? Surely her citizens cannot be indifferent to the subject. Our territory, it is true, is yet in

its swaddling clothes, and cannot be expected to emulate her grown up sisters in fostering and encouraging the culture of the sciences or the arts; but we are, on this very account, the better qualified to snatch from the 'stagnant oblivious pool' which must otherwise necessarily soon engulf it, the history of the settlement, cultivation and resources, of this region of forests, and lakes, and prairies, as well as the expulsions of those 'stoics of the wood,' the red men, from it."

The editor believed it was particularly important for such a society to secure the reminiscences of the pioneers in order to preserve the history of Iowa. "What is fact to-day", he pointed out, "will be tradition tomorrow, and the next day it will be entirely forgot." Nineteen years later, in 1857, the hope of Editor James Clarke was realized with the creation of the State Historical Society of Iowa. And exactly a century later, in 1938, this same historical society is gleaning the story of 1838 from the meager records that remain.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Verse in the Newspapers

When the Territory of Wisconsin was divided in 1838, three newspapers west of the Mississippi River were supplying their pioneer subscribers in the new Territory of Iowa with information about political affairs, publishing new laws, advertising local business, and printing anecdotes, short stories, and poetry.

At Dubuque the *Iowa News*, founded and partly owned by John King until June, 1838, was edited by John B. Russell. The *Territorial Gazette and Burlington Advertiser* was owned and managed by James Clarke, who was also the Territorial Librarian. While he was absent on business his former partner, C. S. Jacobs, edited the paper. James G. Edwards, a staunch Presbyterian, Whig, and temperance advocate, gave a moral tone to his Fort Madison *Patriot*. In August, about the time the *Patriot* suspended publication, Andrew Logan started the *Iowa Sun* at Davenport.

Not content to fill their four pages with current news and official records, the editors tried to provide a modicum of cultural reading. From week to week with considerable uniformity they devoted

three or more columns to glimpses into the world of letters. Following the practice of Eastern papers, the editors made their selections mainly from journalistic sources, and from current periodicals such as *The Knickerbocker* and the *United States Magazine*. During 1838 they included some of the early tales of Whittier, of Harriet Beecher Stowe, and selections from Dickens and Bulwer Lytton. Occasionally a local contribution was printed.

Verse was seldom crowded out by advertising or the publication of the statutes. As a rule one, two, or three poems headed the weekly literary departments. A century ago Editors Russell, Clarke, Edwards, and Logan included proportionately much more poetry than is now customary. Even though the new Territorial acts constituted a heavy lien on print space, the editors published over 125 poems in 1838. In choosing verse, they apparently employed the clipping shears, utilized their own library shelves, accepted contributions, or turned to miscellanies or anthologies such as the *English Annuals* or the elaborately bound *Gift Books*, then at the height of their popularity.

To approximately half the poems selected, the name of the author was affixed, or that of the newspaper or magazine from which the verses were retrieved. After a century, very few of these

poets still hold their places in English and American anthologies. The *Iowa News* reprinted William Cullen Bryant's "The Lapse of Time", Harriet Beecher Stowe's "To My Brother", and Samuel Woodworth's "The Old Oaken Bucket". The *Gazette* included "The Sky Lark" by James Hogg and "To a Blank Sheet of Paper" by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

In filling the literary columns the editors leaned heavily upon ephemeral versifiers, who, though popular in their day, now seem to have been strangely over-rated, such as Caroline Lee Hentz, the novelist-poet from Alabama; Joanna Baillie, poetaster and dramatist; Epes Sargent of Boston; Nathaniel Parker Willis, first editor of the *National Magazine*; Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney, editor of religious Gift Books and frequently eulogized as "the American Felicia Hemans"; and Amelia Opie who, like Mrs. Sigourney, facile in many literary fields, produced more voluminously than artistically.

The resources of the editors are, however, more easily discernible than the motives for their choices. Judging by the amount of space regularly devoted to verse, it was not used as mere filler, but as a leavening and humanizing influence among the necessary hardships and unstable conditions of life on the frontier. The four editors,

working independently, supplied their patrons with much the same literary pabulum: prairie and agricultural songs, and poems which treated nature romantically; poems dealing with the problems of life; some on local themes; and a few idealizing the Indians.

Poems of sentiment predominated. These stressed motherhood, and the ways of a man with a maid. Parodies were favored, such as "To a Mink" which, with its short lines and rhythm both in stanzaic form and in the sermonic ending, imitated Burns's "To a Mouse".

Humor received its full share of space. Early in 1838 Editor Russell at Dubuque reprinted Oliver Wendell Holmes's "The Height of the Ridiculous", and in a later issue he published some verses which had been sung a few months before at a Democratic dinner in New Orleans to the rollicking tune of "Yankee Doodle".

Shall corporations rule the soil
 That WASHINGTON defended?
 Shall honest people sweat and toil,
 And have their rights suspended?
 Shall we be slaves, to pampered Knaves?
 Shall Banks be still our masters?
 Whilst all they pay, from day to day,
 Is nothing but shimplasters.

So far as verse form is concerned the Iowa edi-

tors selected as eclectically as they had their subject-matter. Most popular was the four-line stanza, sometimes the ballad meter but just as often the quatrain with longer lines. Rarest of all was blank verse. The backwash of English Romanticism, with its emphasis upon individuality and freedom, had inspired experimentation with verse forms among American imitators. One versifier, signing himself "Agricola", justified his free verse — or polyphonic prose — by maintaining that truth can be expressed in any medium. He thought his message, "Farmers, Preserve the Feathered Tribe", was of far greater importance than his handling of meters. Incidentally he seems to be right.

Though you may think my verse runs queerly;
A very singular sort;—
Long pulls and short,—
Somewhat like plowing new ground, 'midst the stumps,
Now steady moving,—now by jerks and jumps,
Perhaps they'll say my muse
Wears tight shoes,
Or has great "corns upon her toes,"
And so she limping goes.

In literary quality the poems show wide variety, ranging from absolute bathos through sentiment to basic emotions. Though occasionally the editorial shears may have clipped at random, most

of the poems were lyrical. They ranked higher in singing quality than in either emotion or thought.

A number of the poems idealized the "smoky silent red man". With Indians almost in the backyards of the settlers, with bloody massacres in the recent memory of many villagers, with Indians unceremoniously entering log cabins to demand food, it seems strange that frontier editors should select only poems that exalted or extolled the Indian. All but one of the Indian poems, however, were written by poets who had never peered into an Indian wickiup and smelt its rancid odors or lived through a night of terror when drunken Sauks or Sioux threatened isolated settlers.

Several poems in the Iowa newspapers of 1838 represented the Indian with an aura of sadness and pathos about him. In "The Suicide Chief", an erstwhile leader sits "silent and lone on the cliff" as he muses over the fate of his vanquished warriors and the loss of his wife Orella. At the end of his reverie he decides to do and die nobly. As he poises, ready to make the fatal plunge into the dark chasm yawning below, he cries:

And why should I live! All my kindred are slain;
And the white man ploughs rudely o'er Orella's tomb—
No! I am a *chief*, and my life I disdain!
Ye shades of my lost ones! I come, yes I come!

Less tragically but fully as dramatically the warrior chief in "The Indian's Farewell" scorns the civilization which inconsiderately forces him to abandon the land of his youth. Standing in high relief against the sky, he too grieves over the devastation of his villages and sacred burial grounds through which the white man, paying no heed to disinterred bones, ruthlessly drives the plowshare. This brave has no thought of ending all by suicide. Indomitably setting his face westward "to wilds untamed", he shouts:

The white man's home is for the slave,
The red man's for the free.

More numerous than the poems idealizing the Indian were those whose dominant note was nostalgic, expressive of a yearning for former friends or past experiences. Even the hope of cheap lands or the optimistic desire of ultimately building a better economic and social commonwealth could never fully compensate for such a loss. A young man, for instance, recalled the fields and rocks and trees which had witnessed his "boyhood's thoughtless glee". One young woman yearned for "the shining stream" near "Susquehanna's tide" in place of the "unvaried plain" even though her neighbors assured her that the prairies teemed with promises of filling "Ceres' cornucopias" with

wealth. Others pensively longed to revisit family graves, or homesteads, or churches.

So impressed was James Clarke with a poem entitled "Home" that, in an editorial note, he called especial attention to its underlying theme, that of the oriental benediction "May you die among your kindred". The poem, he wrote, should strike a responsive note in all those who fear "the awful hour" when they come "to die among strangers, in a strange land, with no fond familiar voice to soothe the dull ear of death".

Still—still with memory oft beguile
From each, from all, a thought of *home*.
'Twas there our sun of being rose,
And there we fain would have it set.

Another type of poem reflected a phase of editorial interest in the life of the pioneer Mississippi River towns. Among the most thriving businesses was the traffic in liquor. Steamboats delivered big cargoes of whisky, wine, rum, gin, and other spirituous beverages. Numerous taverns and "groceries" sold their intoxicating wares without restriction.

Editor James G. Edwards, who was convinced that saloons were a detrimental influence in the new Territory, gave a prominent place in one issue of the *Patriot* to "The Wine and Spirit Drinker". He ascribed its authorship to Christopher Caustic,

a physician, and author of *The Terrible Tract-
orum and Other Poems*. In this poem the cynic,
employing the mocking octosyllabic couplets of
Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, assumed the rôle of a
doctor viewing human foibles. Satirically he be-
gan:

We hold in utter execration
What's styled the *Temperance Reformation*,
To live without good alcohol
Is tantamount to fol-de-rol:
For nine-tenths of our doctor's fees
Come from Bacchanalian devotees
And votaries of Sir Richard Rum
Have ever, and will ever come.

With ironical overpraise he shows that alcoholism

Is indispensable now-a-days
To make our patriotism blaze.

contending that without it "stump oratory" would
fail, and that the lower orders

Might rise to riches and renown,
And turn society upside down.

And perhaps

The mounting mobocratic masses
May over-top US UPPER CLASSES.

He adds

There's nothing like intoxication
To thin off extra population,

and closes with a hypothetical interrogation:

By your good leave, I question whether,
 War, famine, pestilence, together,
 Could fill, of alcohol the place;
 In doctoring off the human race.

The new Territory of Iowa possessed a few local poets. In versifying power their contributions varied about as much as those selected from journalistic sources. A few were execrably bad, written in uncertain meter, with confused thought or an excess of sentimentality, but others possessed some poetic merit. One of the better ones commemorated the passing of old Fort Armstrong on Rock Island. The Indians revered this spot, especially the cave that sheltered a good spirit, and Americans cherished it as an early outpost of civilization. In the last lines the poet, regretfully mindful that the Fort had compelled the Indian to move westward, bade farewell to the cave and its sacred spirit, and to the soldier graves!

Just so, gallant Fort, has thy bright glory pass'd,
 Thy beauty departed, thy vigor is o'er,
 The first on thy wild shore now leaves thee the last,
 And the war chief who rais'd thee, shall guard thee no
 more.

Then farewell to Fort Armstrong, a tear for the dead,
 A smile for the living, a hope towards the Sioux;
 A sigh for the plum'd chief, in mantle of red,
 And a blush for my country—and a deep blush for you.

The longest of the local contributions, printed in the *Burlington Gazette*, was signed with the sobriquet "Deacon Kurtz". Editor Clarke did not reveal the poet's identity beyond saying that he had written considerable unpublished verse, and that in 1837 he had delivered a dedicatory address at the opening of the Saint Louis Theatre. Perhaps the "Deacon" was Clarke himself. Whoever he was, he had learned his diction from the classics. One poem, built on the theme of the transitoriness of life, was called "Fuit Ilium". In another, he translated rather freely the famous song of Catullus extolling the love of Lesbia for her sparrow; and in imitation of Anacreontic style he retold the story of the desertion of Hebe by the fickle Adonis. In the last stanza the disappointed Hebe thus warns unwary virgins:

"O'er me," cried the desolate fair,
"The storm with its gloomy wing hovers,
"Ah! ever let maidens beware,
"Aye, beware of these *sun-shiney* lovers."

A Burlington citizen who called himself "Hawkeye" submitted to Clarke's literary columns a "Prairie Song", set to the music of "Bonnets O' Blue". While its theme suggests local color, its diction followed closely that of the contemporary poets of the English countryside. In spite of its imitative qualities it possessed

melody and tried to interpret the beauty of the native scene.

Oh! come to the prairie with me,
And list to the lark's early lay;
Where the elk and the deer wander free—
Oh! come to the prairie, away.

There's health in the ruby deck'd rill,
And pure is the breeze we inhale,
The bee sweetly sips at its will,
Whilst odors expand on the gale.

Though the verse chosen by these frontier editors was often commonplace and never rose to high poetic levels, it was about on a par with the magazine and newspaper contributions which were then finding their way into English Annuals and into the popular Gift Books of the day. Wholly decorous, often moralistic, and occasionally didactic in tone, the verse and prose selected for the first Iowa papers by Clarke, Russell, Edwards, and Logan indicates that in their opinion editorial responsibilities extended to the broadening of the mental and moral horizons of their readers.

LUELLA M. WRIGHT

The Census of 1838

The immigration that flowed into the territory west of the Mississippi in 1838 was a subject of enthusiastic comment in the newspapers of that time. One editor observed that the number of immigrants was "almost incredible". An estimated count was occasionally attempted. The Fort Madison *Patriot* reported on March 26th, that at the first of the week 150 families were counted on their way to the Black Hawk Purchase, "between this place and Rushville", Illinois. The ferry service at Fort Madison was inadequate.

With the population increasing so rapidly, the apportionment of representatives in the Territorial legislature was a perpetual problem. For this reason the Wisconsin Legislative Assembly in December, 1837, ordered the "second census or enumeration of the inhabitants of the Territory of Wisconsin" to be taken in May, 1838. This count, completed just at the time Congress was creating the Territory of Iowa, afforded as accurate a measure of the rapidly changing population as was possible.

The sheriff, with the assistance of deputies if required, was the designated census taker in each

county. He was instructed to prepare his report in the form of a "schedule" consisting of columns captioned in order "Names of master, mistress, steward, overseer, or other principal person", "Names of townships or divisions", "Heads of families", "White males", "White females", "Free males of color", "Free females of color", "Total amount", and "Remarks". The count of negroes was apparently designed to exclude persons in bondage, perhaps because slavery was not legal in the Iowa country. Indians "not taxed and who do not live as civilized white men", as well as officers and soldiers of the regular army who were not actual residents of the Territory, were omitted from the enumeration.

The sheriffs began their census duties on the first Monday in May, except in Crawford and Clayton counties where the work was started earlier. Within thirty days, according to the law, they were to complete the count and, after posting copies of the returns in two conspicuous places in each county, to send the original report to the Secretary of the Territory.

The report of the census here summarized concerns only the twenty-one counties of the Territory of Wisconsin which presently comprised the Territory of Iowa. Not all the schedules in their complete form have been preserved, but from such

reports as exist in the office of the Wisconsin Secretary of State at Madison the following table has been compiled.

<i>Counties</i>	<i>White males</i>	<i>White females</i>	<i>Males of color</i>	<i>Females of color</i>	<i>Total</i>
Benton	0	0	0	0	0
Buchanan			no report		
Cedar	320	237	0	0	557
Clayton	447	241	4	5	697
Clinton	281	157	4	3	445
Delaware			no report		
Des Moines					4605
Dubuque	1381	928	35	37	2381
Fayette			no report		
Henry	1679	1379	2	0	3060
Jackson			3	2	881
Johnson	157	80	0	0	237
Jones					241
Keokuk	0	0	0	0	0
Lee	1591	1235	0	0	2826
Linn					205
Louisa	686	491	0	3	1180
Muscatine	700	515	2	1	1218
Scott	751	499	2	0	1252
Slaughter	156	125	1	1	283
Van Buren	1812	1355	4	3	3174
Total poulation					23,242

The above totals do not agree entirely with those submitted by the sheriffs and published in

the *Journal* of the Wisconsin Territorial Council. The discrepancies occur in the schedules of several counties which have been preserved in complete form and are therefore verifiable. The total for Lee County was found to be 2826 rather than 2839 as printed; for Muscatine County, the count totaled 1218, which is twenty-nine less than the number submitted by the census taker; and Henry County's total was increased by two to include the colored population, making 3060.

The figures for Clayton County as here given include the census for that part of the county north of Root River (taking in the Fort Snelling community) which was outside the Black Hawk Purchase and not open to settlement, and include also sixty-two men and eight women at the fort, who were possibly not permanent residents, for the census taker noted that these seventy might be added "if required". The published census report in 1838 does not include the 423 inhabitants above the Root River, but gave only the 274 living south of the Neutral Ground in Clayton County proper.

The census for Jackson, Jones, and Linn counties was placed in one schedule. Unlike the reports of other counties, the heads of families, 224 in all, were added, whether intentionally or by error, to the number of white male (609) and

white female (489) inhabitants, and 5 colored persons, to make the total for the three counties 1327.

The total population of Iowa Territory at the time of establishment appears to have been 23,242 instead of 22,859 as published. In the counties comprising the Territory of Iowa in 1838 the population is 653,832 according to the census of 1930.

Most of the inhabitants of the new Territory of Iowa were in the southern counties. Des Moines County, containing the capital city of Burlington, was largest. Van Buren County, through which flowed diagonally the Des Moines River giving easy access to the rich land, was second in size. A resident of that county reported in June that immigrants were settling there on the average of fifty to a hundred and fifty per day. Henry and Lee counties were next in order, while Dubuque was fifth. The town of Dubuque had 832 inhabitants, and Fort Madison had 429. The census of Burlington is not available, but it was the largest town in Iowa. In two counties, Keokuk and Benton, the sheriffs declared that no inhabitants could be found. If an enumeration was made in Buchanan, Delaware, and Fayette counties, there is no record of it.

In the fifteen counties for which the information

is preserved, there were 112 free negroes, of which fifty-seven were male and fifty-five female. Seventy-two of them lived in Dubuque County.

The average number of members per household seems to have been between five and six. Judging by the twelve counties having records on the point, the proportion of male and female inhabitants was approximately four to three. The ratio of men to women, however, was probably higher because the census included boys and girls who must have been about equal in number. Women were much in demand. They married young, and female immigrants seldom remained single very long.

The term "Remarks" on the report form was variously interpreted by the census takers. In the majority of instances no remarks were made. The sheriffs in several counties inserted the item "boarders included" after some names. Another enumerator put in the occupation, but was not consistent about it, for in the same column the names of towns appear. The Johnson County reporter made a point to insert under the heading "Remarks" the number of male inhabitants over twenty-one years of age. It showed that of the 237 inhabitants, eighty-four were men. In nearly all schedules, the census taker counted both man and wife as heads of family.

Upon the completion of his work, the sheriff declared before the justice of the peace that he had obtained a correct enumeration to the best of his ability, and had posted two copies in conspicuous places. In various instances the reports were displayed at the post office, the courthouse, the sawmill, and at the ferry house.

The normal rate of compensation for the census taking was set at \$3 per hundred persons counted, except in towns of more than 800 inhabitants, where the pay was only \$1.50 for every 300 persons, and in sparsely settled areas where the rate might be as high as \$3 for every fifty persons. Due to the "dispersed situation of the inhabitants", the sheriff of Dubuque County collected the maximum fee for some of his work. Apparently the census takers who toured Keokuk and Benton counties but found no one to count received nothing for their search.

According to the census of 1838 most persons in Iowa were attached to some family. Few isolated individuals were listed. Immigrants came in groups. The family unit was particularly noticeable in the overland migration. "So far as I could learn," one observer wrote, "no person in all that multitude traveled alone, or unattached to a family; and of the very few unmarried men among them each was usually, if not in every case,

a member or a near relative of the family to which he was attached."

Because the main purpose of the census in 1838 was to reapportion representation in the Legislative Assembly, it revealed little information about the settlers except their number and the names of "principal persons". Their nationality, occupation, and economic condition were not divulged. Indeed, the lists present more questions than they answer. The enumeration was, nevertheless, valuable. Prospective settlers, reading the summary in the newspapers, decided which counties seemed most attractive. Moreover, representation in the first Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Iowa was based upon the census of 1838.

MARIE HAEFNER

Municipal Elections

Municipal government in the Black Hawk Purchase was authorized by the Wisconsin Territorial Assembly on December 6, 1836. Sometime in March, 1837, a meeting was held at the Methodist Church in Dubuque. The citizens thus assembled, having decided to incorporate as a town, designated April 1st as election day. At the appointed time Thomas S. Wilson, T. C. Fassitt, William Myers, Charles Miller, and Timothy Fanning were elected trustees of the town, and Thomas S. Wilson was chosen president of the board of trustees. Other officers elected at that time included Charles Corkery, clerk; Patrick Quigley, treasurer; Philip C. Morheiser, marshal and collector; and Ezekiel C. Dougherty, assessor. In August, 1837, Wilson resigned his office. As a result John Plumbe was named as a member of the board of trustees, and T. C. Fassitt became president of the board. With this change the official family was established for the year. Thus Dubuque was transformed from a mining camp to a municipality.

Meanwhile, Burlington, too, had incorporated according to the general plan authorized by the

Territorial legislature. The trustees of the town consisted of Amos Ladd, president, and David Rorer, George H. Beeler, Enoch Wade, and George W. Kelley forming the board of trustees. Thornton Bayless was the clerk. The first meeting of the board, it is recorded, was held at the office of David Rorer on April 29, 1837.

James W. Grimes was appointed the first solicitor of Burlington. He appeared before the board and thanked the members for the honor conferred, but admitted that he was not qualified for the position as he was less than twenty-one years of age. The trustees, recognizing his ability, however, waived the objection, and he accepted the office, notwithstanding his youth.

Early in 1838 a new system of municipal government appeared in the Iowa country when, on January 19th, special charters were granted to the towns of Burlington and Fort Madison. Each of these charters provided for an annual election of officers by the qualified voters, though the time and manner of holding elections varied somewhat. The Burlington charter provided that "for the preservation of peace and good order, and the promoting of the prosperity and quiet" of the town "the free white citizens" twenty-one years of age, should on the first Monday in February of each year, elect "a mayor and eight

aldermen, a recorder, treasurer, and engineer". The Fort Madison charter, following the general plan more closely, provided that, on the first Monday of May each year "the free male inhabitants" of the city should elect "a president, recorder and five trustees", any five of whom should constitute a board for the transaction of business.

Partisanship was deplored in local elections. "On Monday next," wrote the editor of the *Wisconsin Territorial Gazette* on February 3rd, "let it be remembered, the election of officers, under the charter will take place. We trust that honest, capable and faithful men may be selected for the several offices. Men, who will do their duty, whole duty, and nothing but their duty, without fear, favor or faction."

In another connection, in the same issue of his paper, Editor Clarke said: "In all questions touching the interests of our town—(pardon us, we mean city)—if we cannot agree, let us kindly agree to differ. We certainly have all the same object in view, the benefit of the town, (city,) and if we differ merely as to the best means of accomplishing one common purpose, though it may be a matter of regret, yet it is not a matter that ought to beget ill-feeling." If the election should arouse personal animosities, he observed, "it requires no prophet to foretell that the administration of our

authorities will be a stormy one, and it may be rendered a useless one; but if we go to the polls and honestly exercise our best judgments, vote in good temper for the best men, and finally submit to and support the decision of the majority, much real good may be expected."

The Burlington election was held at the Wisconsin Hotel on Monday, February 5th. George H. Beeler who had served as a trustee, was elected mayor. Amos Ladd, the former president, and George Temple, James McKell, David Hendershott, William B. Remey, John B. Newhall, Joseph L. Kimball, and Jeremiah Lamson were elected aldermen. Thornton Bayless, the former clerk, was elected recorder; Thomas Cooper, engineer; Jesse B. Webber, treasurer; and John M. Garrigus, marshal.

In accordance with the original act under which the town of Dubuque was still operating the board of trustees issued a notice that an election would be held on April 2nd for the selection of trustees for the ensuing year. The place designated for the election was "at Mr. James Fanning's house, next door to Scott & Taylor". The polls, the notice read, "will be open at 9 o'clock, A. M. and close at 6 o'clock, P. M."

A few days later the *Iowa News* issued the significant statement that "the highest number of

votes" had been cast for Alex. Butterworth, John McKenzie, Benjamin Rupert, John Plumbe, and Philip C. Morhizer. Thus it appears that in Dubuque as in Burlington there was a considerable "turnover" of officials. Among the members of the first board of trustees in Dubuque, John Plumbe alone was a successful candidate in the second election. Philip C. Morhizer, however, had been advanced from the office of marshal and collector to membership on the board of trustees. Presently, it appears, he became president of the board and Edward Langworthy was added to the trustees.

The special charter of Fort Madison designated the "first Monday of May" as election day. Preparatory to this election the Fort Madison *Patriot*, on April 18th, published a proposed ticket consisting of William Paull, candidate for president, and Johnston J. Phares, Benjamin Brattain, Thos. Fitzpatrick, Peter Miller, and Isaac Johnson, candidates for trustees. At the same time James G. Edwards, editor of the *Patriot*, expressed the hope that "all our citizens may unite on such persons as will be likely to promote the present and future prosperity of this rising community".

A week later Edwards, in an editorial, called attention to the fact that the previously announced ticket had, "by request, been withdrawn". Mean-

while, two other tickets—one led by Henry Eno, and another headed by Edwards, himself— had been announced. Apparently, however, the contest was friendly, and not marred by the political strife that sometimes accompanies municipal elections.

Edwards, commenting upon the situation, said: "This will be the first election of Town Officers ever held in Fort Madison. The character of this election—the manner in which the canvass is conducted, we mean—may enstamp itself on all future elections of a similar kind. It is on this account that we have deprecated all collision of feeling—all party spirit—all dictation—in the bringing out of candidates. There are interests to be promoted, in which all should feel alike identified, and at the shrine of which ambition and every other improper feeling should be sacrificed."

Regarding his own candidacy, he explained that the nomination was made by the town meeting "without our having been apprised of it, and it is the more gratifying on this account. But gratifying as it is, we candidly confess that the gentleman whose name stands at the head of the other ticket, which was handed in for publication late last evening, has, in our opinion, decidedly the preference to priority of claim on the suffrage of our fellow-citizens. If he will stand, we shall

most cheerfully relinquish all claim in his favor and do all we can to promote the election of Henry Eno, Esq., by a unanimous vote."

Such words of commendation, coming as they did from the pen of an ardent Whig and a political opponent, must have been gratifying, indeed, to Eno. It seems probable, however, that this cordial editorial may have, in fact, attracted votes to Edwards. At all events, he was duly elected and had the honor of serving as the first president of Fort Madison. The board of trustees which accompanied him consisted of John A. Drake, Joseph Morrison, William Wilson, Lorenzo Bullard, and Charles Macdill. W. R. Crawford was elected recorder.

As evidence of good faith and a desire to conduct official business in an aggressive and efficient manner, Edwards promptly gave notice that the trustees would meet at his residence on Friday, May 11th, at four in the afternoon. "A punctual attendance is desired."

J. A. SWISHER

A Commonplace Calendar

While politicians anxiously awaited good news from Washington a hundred years ago in May, pioneer Iowa farmers hoped for warmer weather and merchants wished that trade would soon improve.

Tuesday, May 1. The Dubuque county commissioners met at the courthouse. The fee for a tavern license to sell wines, beer, ale, and cider "by the drink, and in no larger quantities" was fixed at \$20. A grocery (saloon) license cost \$100.

Wednesday, May 2. William Richards rented a building opposite the Madison Hotel in Fort Madison and opened a shop to make saddles, bridles, martingales, collars, trunks, and all kinds of harness.

Thursday, May 3. Samuel Smith and Miss Eliza Burkaloo were married in Lee County.

Friday, May 4. The *Irene*, bound from Saint Louis to Dubuque, docked at Fort Madison.

Saturday, May 5. Charter members of the Iowa Mutual Fire Insurance Company met at the office of W. W. Chapman and James W. Grimes in Burlington to organize for business. J Morgan

Evans died. He was only thirty-two, but his staunch Presbyterian faith "disarmed death of all its terrors." § Serrilda Hume petitioned for a divorce from Milton Hume.

Monday, May 7. Patrick Quigley was re-elected to the legislature from which he had resigned in January, and L. H. Langworthy was chosen to take the place of A. W. McGregor who had also resigned. § James G. Edwards was elected first president of Fort Madison.

Tuesday, May 8. A miner named Hildreth was killed when a rock fell on him "at the diggings on the Coleman lot, about two miles west" of Dubuque.

Wednesday, May 9. H. W. Sample had 15,000 feet of well-seasoned pine lumber for sale in Fort Madison.

Thursday, May 10. A sorrel mare and a roan colt strayed from John Freeman's pasture at West Point.

Friday, May 11. The trustees of Fort Madison held their first meeting at the residence of James G. Edwards.

Saturday, May 12. Signs of spring were not yet visible because the buds had been nipped by frost. § Though the river was still high, few steamboats were running. Little freight was being shipped and rates were low. Money was scarce.

Times were hard. § James W. Grimes announced his hope of being elected in August to the position of Representative of Des Moines County in the legislature of Wisconsin Territory.

Sunday, May 13. Ann Anderson, the wife of William Anderson, died at the age of thirty-three. A Cumberland Presbyterian Church member, she was "much esteemed by all who knew her."

Monday, May 14. Directors of the "Rochester and Des Moines Hydraulic and Manufacturing Company" met at Rochester. § John Plumbe of Dubuque, representing the proprietor of a large tract of pine land on the Chippewa River, invited enterprising men to invest in sawmills.

Tuesday, May 15. The *Irene*, on her way to Saint Louis, called at the port of Fort Madison.

Wednesday, May 16. At Fort Madison, Edward White had his steam ferry running; Jesse Dickey opened a new store to sell hardware, queensware, groceries, and clothing for cash or country produce; Clark and Shackelford, forwarding and commission merchants, started a drayage service.

Thursday, May 17. Flour was selling for \$10 a barrel, corn for \$1.25 a bushel, potatoes for \$1.00 a bushel, beef and pork at 12½ cents a pound, butter at 35 cents a pound, and eggs at 37½ cents a dozen.

Friday, May 18. Mary L. Scott, the wife of John P. Scott at Peru, died at the age of seventeen.

Saturday, May 19. Charles Nealley moved his store from the corner of Court and Main streets in Burlington to Water Street.

Monday, May 21. Enos Lowe was appointed postmaster at Burlington.

Tuesday, May 22. The *Irene* stopped at Fort Madison on her way from Saint Louis to Dubuque.

Wednesday, May 23. Residents of Fort Madison missed the weekly issue of the *Patriot*. Important business, demanding personal attention, had taken the editor out of town.

Thursday, May 24. Sheriff Henry Hiffleman married Miss Malinda King, daughter of Major H. King, at Farmington.

Friday, May 25. Any horse, mare, or gelding in the Territory was eligible to enter the races at Mount Pleasant.

Saturday, May 26. The cold, unseasonable weather continued.

Sunday, May 27. Several drunken men who visited the camp of Winnebago Indians on the island below Dubuque tried to seduce some of the girls. In the fight that ensued an old squaw was killed and several persons were hurt. Singleton, the murderer, escaped.

Monday, May 28. The trustees of Fort Madison adopted a long ordinance regulating taxation.

Tuesday, May 29. Mark M. Jeffreys, a former clerk in Lockwood's store in Dubuque, confessed to have stolen about a hundred dollars worth of merchandise. He was not prosecuted.

Wednesday, May 30. Any one who had not been vaccinated could have that opportunity by calling at the office of Dr. Joel C. Walker, a health officer of Fort Madison. § Arthur Johnson's new bakery could supply ginger bread, rusks, crackers, light bread, and pies to families on short notice. § Hawkins Taylor announced his desire to represent Lee County in the Territorial legislature to be elected in August.

Thursday, May 31. A severe frost destroyed the corn and many garden vegetables. § "Nearly 2,000 savages, in their finest rigs and carefully painted in all sorts of patterns" met Father Pierre De Smet when he landed from a Missouri River steamboat to establish a mission among the Pottawattamie Indians where Council Bluffs is now located.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS

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