

A Territorial Centennial Number
Iowa in 1838

The **P**ALIMPSEST

APRIL 1938

CONTENTS

Sponsor of Iowa Territory 121

JACK T. JOHNSON

Business and Industry 133

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Government by Ordinance 146

J. A. SWISHER

A Commonplace Calendar 156

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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.

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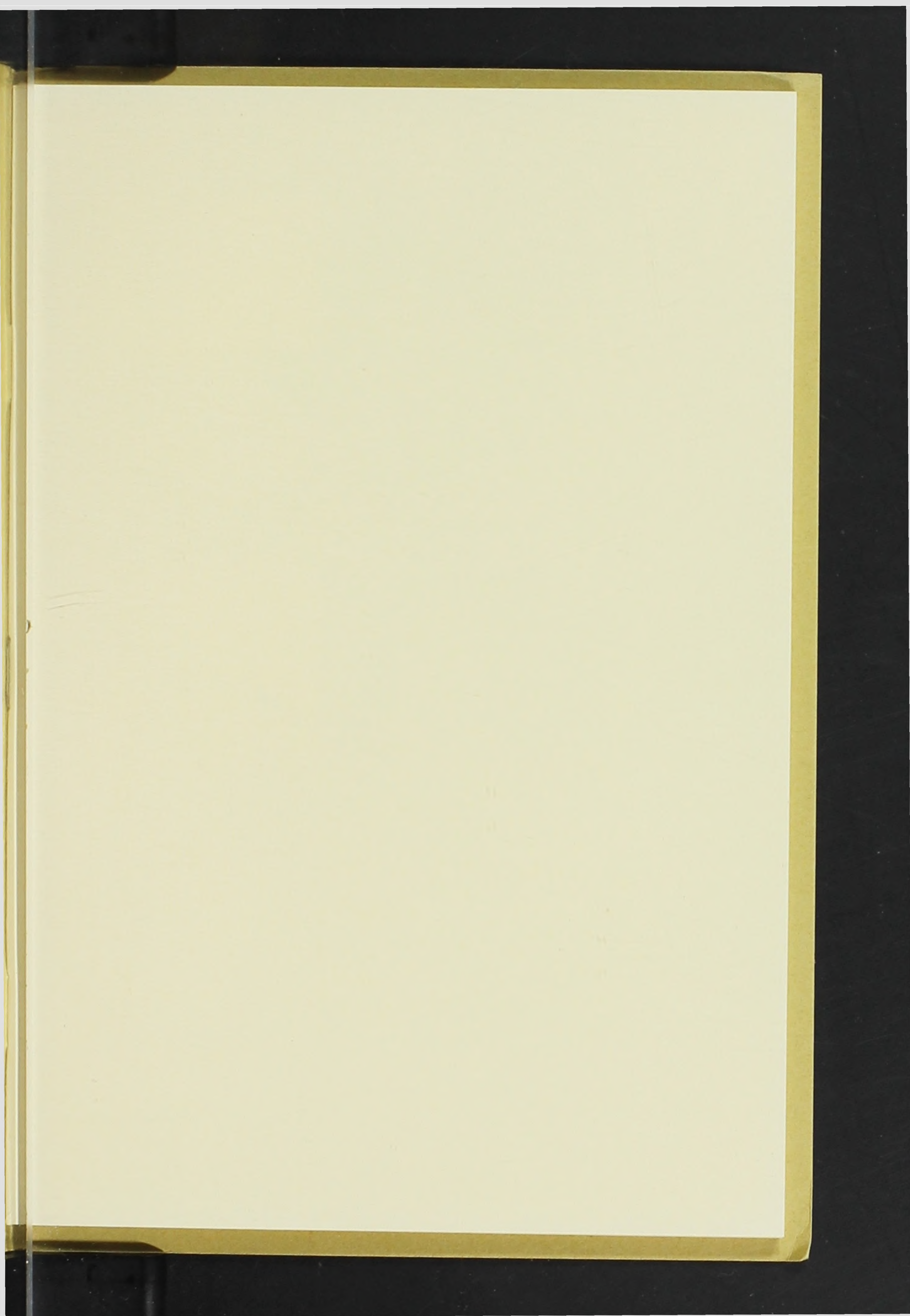
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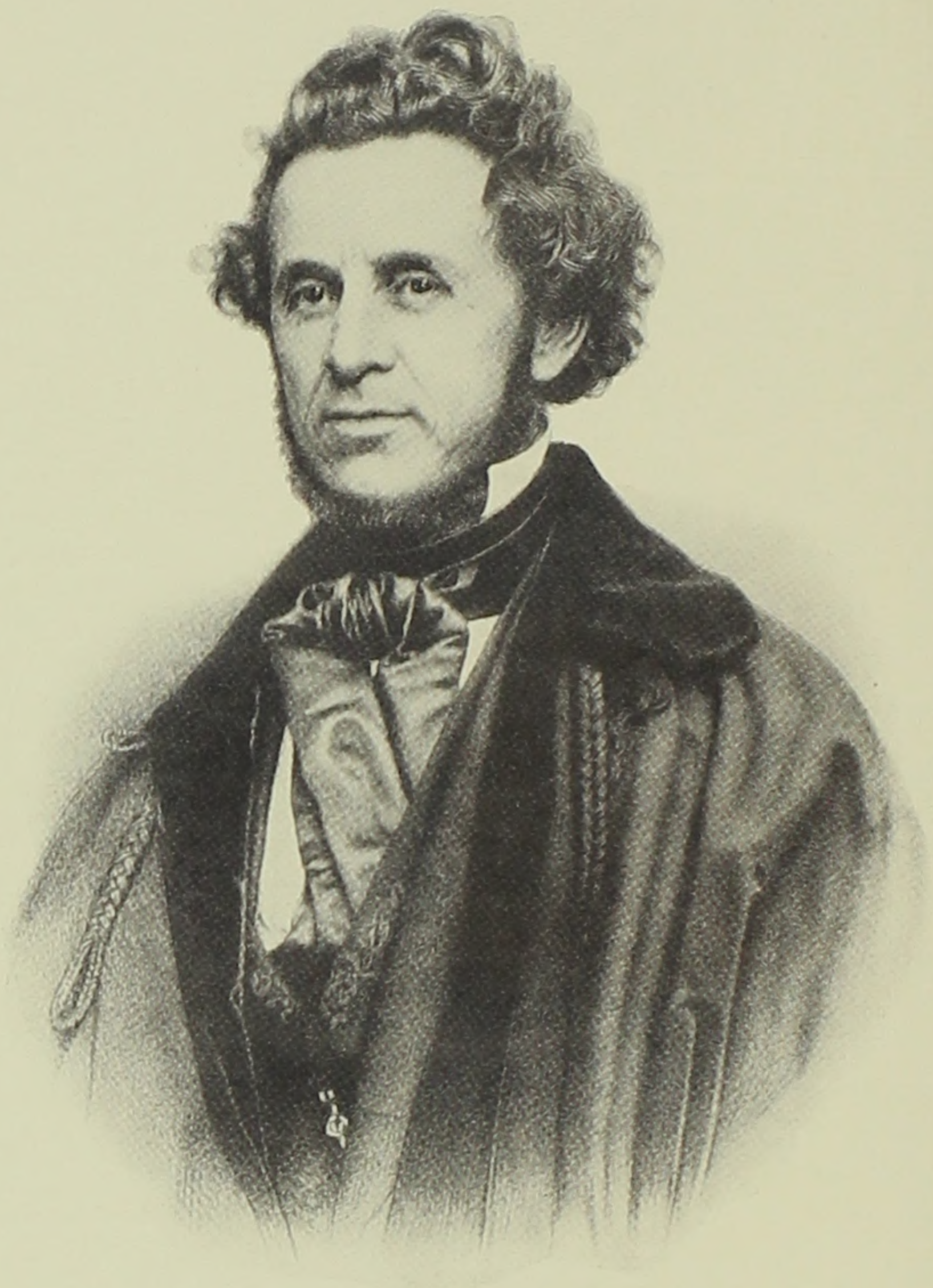
In early times palimpsests were parchments or other materials from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the 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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ADDRESS—The State Historical Society Iowa City Iowa





Grover Jones

THE PALIMPSEST

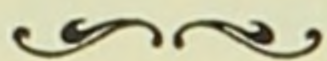
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Sponsor of Iowa Territory

A passer-by on the road to Marlborough in Maryland would have been startled on the afternoon of February 24, 1838, by random rifle fire. If such a person had investigated, he would have found a "field of honor". William J. Graves, United States Representative from Kentucky, stood partly sheltered by the woods, facing Representative Jonathan Cilley, ninety-two yards away on higher ground and in an open field. Nearby were seconds and doctors; and in the background were curious spectators among whom was John C. Calhoun. On the third exchange one of the duelists fell, and as soon as his second, George Wallace Jones, could reach him he whispered: "He is dead, sir." As Representative Graves rode away in his hack, the tall grass, shining in the sunlight, seemed to bow with the wind.

The bullet that inflicted Cilley's mortal wound also pierced the nation's conscience. The funeral was attended by high governmental dignitaries,

with the exception of the judges of the Supreme Court who had "resolved not to do so, as an evidence of their reprobation of a practice more characteristic of a barbaric age, than one in which all profess regard for humanity and the laws." On the next day, February 28th, the House of Representatives began to investigate the circumstances surrounding the duel. After a detailed examination, it was recommended on April 25th that Graves, for a breach of privilege, be expelled from the House, and that the seconds, Henry A. Wise and George Wallace Jones be censured for their participation. The session came to an end without the proposal being passed upon, but the action was not without effect. The public was willing to question the propriety of the participants' conduct. Would a moment's indiscretion ruin the promising career of George W. Jones?

Sociable by nature and charming in disposition, Jones early showed his susceptibility to the lure of politics. When the State of Michigan was organized, the government of what remained of the former Territory was left in the hands of citizens west of the lake. Although the State had not yet been admitted into the Union, an election was held in the western part of the Territory on the first Monday in October, 1835, to choose a new Delegate to Congress. As a result of a many-sided

contest, George W. Jones was elected without the aid of a party label. When the Twenty-fourth Congress assembled in December, 1835, Jones took his seat without objection or contest.

Delegate Jones at once directed his efforts toward the early creation of the Territory of Wisconsin with the seat of government at Cassville. Objections to the place designated as the capital were so numerous that Jones finally resolved to leave the location to the people or their representatives after the Territory was organized. A resolution of the Michigan Territorial Council was presented by Delegate Jones on January 7, 1836, and on January 21st John M. Clayton of Delaware introduced in the Senate a bill providing for the creation of Wisconsin Territory. The proposal passed the Senate on March 29, 1836; three weeks later it passed the House, and was signed by the President on April 20th.

The Territorial Delegate could debate but could not vote or propose legislation except by presenting memorials from his constituents. Personal influence was his most effective weapon. This Jones possessed in abundance. To the creation of Wisconsin Territory he devoted much of his political energy, which no doubt had considerable weight. The organic act went into effect on July 4, 1836, while Jones was in Washington.

Upon his recommendation President Jackson appointed Henry Dodge to the office of Governor.

"I drew my own bills and resolutions to secure the action of Congress", wrote Jones years later. "In those days, I was full of energy and tact, never tiring in my efforts to serve my constituents, and I did not ask for any of the eleven or twelve offices which were voluntarily conferred upon me."

As soon as the Territory of Wisconsin was organized the people began to discuss the election of a Territorial Delegate. A meeting of citizens in Belmont nominated George W. Jones, and he was generally accepted as the leading candidate elsewhere in the new Territory. The town of Mineral Point, however, being a rival of Belmont for the seat of government, nominated Moses Meeker. When the election results were tabulated, Jones won by a vote of 3522 to 696. Although he had served as Delegate of the residual Territory of Michigan only half of his two-year term, he took his seat as Delegate from Wisconsin in December, 1836. He claimed to represent Michigan Territory also until January 27, 1837, when the State of Michigan was admitted into the Union.

The session of Congress in the winter of 1836-1837 was not momentous, but the long session of the winter following, Delegate Jones never forgot.

He secured in 1838 an appropriation of \$2000 for John Plumbe's projected railroad between Milwaukee and Dubuque. And of greater importance was his success in bringing about the creation of the Territory of Iowa.

There were in 1838 forty-one thousand people in the Territory of Wisconsin and more than half that number resided on the western side of the Mississippi. These inhabitants made it clear to their Delegate, by memorials and petitions, that they favored a separate Territory. Jones set to work: he maneuvered representatives by calm persuasion; he attracted political leaders by vigorous assertion; and he deceived John C. Calhoun through the charms of his daughter, Anna Calhoun. Whether Jones worked with such vigor because of the possibility of his being appointed Governor is a matter of speculation. Whatever the influences may have been, the Territorial bill did pass on June 12th and Iowa became a Territory on the Fourth of July, 1838.

It was while the Iowa Territorial bill was before Congress that Jones became involved in the Cilley-Graves duel. Previously, he had been a party to seven affairs of honor, but years later he referred to this challenge as the "terrible duel, the most terrible in the world, not excepting that between Burr and Hamilton."

The *Iowa News* of Dubuque on March 31, 1838, commented: "We regret to see our highly esteemed Delegate, the friend of Mr. Cilley, censured for his conduct on that occasion. It was unfortunate enough for him to be selected by a friend to perform the duties, and yet more unfortunate, while maintaining the honor of his friend with a worthy zeal, to be subjected to such as has been cast upon him." Four days later, the Fort Madison *Patriot* was not so kind in its evaluation. "The late duel in Washington has deservedly received the condemnation of all the influential Editors throughout the country without regard to politics. Much censure rests on those who had the management of the affair, and strong recommendations have been published to have them arrested on the charge of being accessories to this cold-blooded murder." A Governor was soon to be selected. Was this "melancholy affair" to dash Jones's hopes?

Wherever the principal candidates were discussed, the name of George W. Jones was prominently mentioned. A meeting of the citizens of Dubuque in April formally recommended him because of "his pre-eminent and peculiar qualifications, without any reference to his past services," and numerous petitions were signed by persons in the Territory. Members of the Senate and his

colleagues in the House presented similar appeals. James Buchanan wrote to President Van Buren for the same purpose and Henry Dodge may have interested himself in repaying his gubernatorial debt to the Delegate from Wisconsin. An opposing sentiment was expressed by the *Patriot* on May 2, 1838: "The President, who knows all about the circumstances of the Cilley duel, must also know that it would be insulting to the high minded people of this Territory to have placed over them such a man as Mr. Jones". The *Wisconsin Territorial Gazette*, however, was willing to wager "a glass of Funk's excellent mond" on Jones.

Whether because of political opposition or because of his interest in the Delegacy, Jones decided in May to announce his candidacy for reelection as Territorial Delegate from Wisconsin. Early in July, Robert Lucas was appointed the first Governor of the Territory of Iowa. As soon as Congress adjourned, Jones returned home and began a vigorous campaign for his seat in Congress.

The eastern portion of the original Territory of Wisconsin was populated by people from New England and the Atlantic States. They had not forgotten the duel. A contest among James D. Doty, Thomas P. Burnett, and George W. Jones resulted in the election of Doty.

Two months later when Congress convened, Jones took his seat, claiming that there was no vacancy for Doty. His argument was based upon the fact he had been elected as Delegate from Wisconsin while he had another year to serve as Delegate from Michigan. And his service for Wisconsin did not begin until he had completed his incumbency for Michigan. Furthermore, he contended that he had been elected for the full period of the Twenty-fifth Congress, ending on March 4, 1839. It was an ingenious argument but the Committee on Elections in the House reported on December 21st in favor of Doty's claim. On January 3, 1839, the House adopted the report by a vote of 165 to 25. Thus, the "field of honor" lay between Jones and two prominent positions, Governor of Iowa Territory and Delegate from Wisconsin.

Friends he had served, however, did not forget him. As Iowa matured into Statehood he held minor political posts such as Surveyor General and Clerk of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In 1848 he became a candidate for the United States Senate, contesting with his Dubuque townsman, Thomas S. Wilson, for that honor. The Democrats nominated Jones and his friend Augustus C. Dodge and, having at last a decisive majority in both branches of the General Assembly, elected

them on December 7, 1848. In drawing lots for classification, Jones won the longer term.

The first term for Senator Jones was full of debate on land and railroads. He made friends and enemies. It was charged that he was partial to certain sections of the State. He was reëlected in 1852 only after a bitter struggle and personal animosity had left their marks. This term witnessed the growing importance of the slavery issue and the internal strife within the Democratic party. As his party was eclipsed so was Jones: on January 26, 1858, James W. Grimes was chosen to succeed him as Senator from Iowa.

President Buchanan, aware of Jones's talents as a diplomat in Congress, offered him the post of Minister at Bogota, capital of the republic of New Granada — now Colombia. For more than two years he served in this position until the political wind changed and President Lincoln named his successor. On his return home he was suspected of treason and arrested late in 1861. The action was based upon a letter to Jefferson Davis in which he blamed the Abolitionists for precipitating the Civil War. Two months later he was released. His public life was over at fifty-seven.

The southern predilection of Jones becomes clear in the light of his early life. He was born at Vincennes in the Territory of Indiana on April 12,

1804. After preliminary study, he entered Transylvania University at Lexington, Kentucky. There he gained something from books, but more from the contacts he made. Among his fellow students were David R. Atchinson, Stevens T. Mason, and Jefferson Davis. Between the future President of the Confederacy and Jones a close friendship ensued.

In 1825 he took up the study of law in the office of his brother-in-law, John Scott, at Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. He held several minor court positions but the work seems to have undermined his health. Upon the recommendation of his physician he sought an outdoor life. He settled in the spring of 1827 at Sinsinawa Mound, located in the lead region of Wisconsin. During the same year, a friend from Ste. Genevieve, Henry Dodge, also migrated to the lead mines.

In his new surroundings Jones began mining operations. The summer of 1828 was enlivened by frequent visits from Lieutenant Jefferson Davis, then stationed at Fort Crawford. That winter Jones returned to Ste. Genevieve where he married Josephine Grégoire on January 7, 1829. The Grégoire family, long in America, had contributed much to the early culture of Missouri.

For a few years Jones lived quietly and prosperously at Sinsinawa. Then, in the summer of

1832, Black Hawk brought terror into the mineral region. Jones served with Henry Dodge in the campaign that led to the decisive conquest of the Indians. When military duties took Dodge to the Missouri frontier, George W. Jones was appointed to his post of chief justice of the county court of Iowa County. It was at this time that politics beckoned so strongly that Jones followed the siren of public office through some of the most dramatic moments in American history.

After his retirement, he grew gracefully old surrounded by friends who loved him, and enemies who hated him with respect. Through more than thirty years, sound in mind and body, he saw a country come to fruition. He related tales of his youth which had become history. In his last years, having outlived his generation, he became the patriarch of the State.

There seems to be little doubt that George W. Jones was a man of talent. Tall and erect, he made many friends with his charming manners, and his success made many enemies. The Fort Madison *Patriot*, which had condemned his participation in the Cilley duel, later retracted and complimented him. Speaking of Jones's reluctance to take part, the paper continued: "We mention these facts, for such we believe them to be, as due to the character of a man, whose de-

portment in private life has won for him many and lasting friends, and whose services as a public officer have ever been characterized by a sense of high and uncommon promising rectitude."

In 1892, an act passed by Congress gave Jones a pension for his services as a drummer boy in the War of 1812 and as an aid to Dodge in the Black Hawk War. As his ninetieth birthday approached, Governor Frank D. Jackson sent a special message to the General Assembly of Iowa asking that Jones be given recognition for his past activities. On April 4, 1892, the legislature received the venerable statesman. "I am deeply grateful to the people of Iowa for the distinguished honors that they have conferred upon me", said the pioneer of Pioneer Law-makers. "I am proud of the honor of having given the name of Iowa to this State, as I gave the name of Wisconsin to our sister State."

The organizer of the Territories of Wisconsin and Iowa participated in many important public affairs and associated with famous men. His public record is a lasting monument. At the age of ninety-two, on July 22, 1896, George Wallace Jones passed into the eternal void of night while the everlasting stars continued to sparkle upon the State he sponsored.

JACK T. JOHNSON

Business and Industry

Business showed an upward trend in the Iowa country. At Dubuque the firm of G. A. Shannon & Company advised readers of the *Iowa News* in June, 1838, that they had just received a heavy consignment of goods direct from New Orleans. Included in the cargo discharged at the Dubuque levee were ten bags of coffee, ten sacks of fine salt, fifteen baskets of champagne wine, and ten boxes of champagne cider. There were also fifteen boxes of codfish, two boxes of tobacco, ten boxes of raisins, five boxes of lemons, and seventeen of tea. Ragged roustabouts rolled down the gang-plank fifteen kegs of nails, twenty-five kegs of tar, two barrels of sugar, five barrels of molasses, six barrels of common brandy, a barrel of common gin, and some New Orleans rum. The remainder of the cargo included anything from rifle powder and hair powder to cinnamon and nutmegs, with a general assortment of dry goods, saddlery, hats, boots, and shoes chucked in for good measure.

The Territory of Iowa was not self-sufficient. Southern and eastern manufacturers generally found a ready market for their products among

the 22,859 inhabitants of Iowaland. Though most of the pioneers were farmers they were unable to satisfy their own needs, and so large quantities of seed, grain, and livestock were imported. A flotilla of steamboats plied the upper Mississippi between Saint Louis and the mineral region to leave their tribute of freight and passengers at the rapidly sprouting towns along the way. On April 18, 1838, the Fort Madison *Patriot* declared that nearly 300,000 tons of merchandise had been transported over the Des Moines Rapids in 1837 and estimated that the amount to be carried in 1838 would be very much more.

Not all the merchandise transported over the Des Moines Rapids was destined for the west bank of the Mississippi. A considerable amount was discharged at the various towns in Illinois. Galena, the metropolis of the mineral region, received the lion's share carried above the rapids while Quincy was the leading market between Alton and the rapids. Ambrose Kimball, a Galena merchant, advertised in the Dubuque newspaper throughout the year 1838 that the steamboat *North Star* had delivered a cargo of sofas, bureaus, dining tables, center tables, the latest ladies' work tables, high post bedsteads, common bedsteads, and 1200 chairs that sold from \$14 to \$150 per dozen. Iowa pioneers often traded in

Galena, Quincy, and Saint Louis. Merchants stocked their counters with goods from Louisville, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh. The stationery and supplies for the Territorial legislature were purchased at Saint Louis.

Although a large amount of food, dry goods, hardware, household supplies, and implements were imported, industries were being established in the Black Hawk Purchase. Charles W. Pierce and James Prine established a shop above the land office in Burlington where they were kept busy making "all kinds of cabinet furniture and chairs cheap for cash." An advertisement in the *Iowa Territorial Gazette* called attention to the "Coachmaking, Carriagemaking, and Blacksmithing" business which was carried on at the shop of Sterling & Withington at Burlington. These two enterprising manufacturers promised to repair all wagons and carriages at the lowest charges and on the shortest notice. They were also prepared to make sleighs to order in a "very superior style". The village blacksmith was an integral part of the flourishing pioneer community in 1838.

At Dubuque a wheelright and plough maker named Adam J. Anderson informed readers of the *Iowa News* that he had taken a home immediately adjoining Mr. Young's blacksmith shop. Anderson planned to carry on the wheelright business

in all its branches, including plough and sleigh making. In his well-equipped shop he was prepared to repair carriages of all sorts on the shortest notice and lowest terms for cash and cash only.

D. C. Eldridge erected a large shop near his residence in Davenport and respectfully informed the readers of the *Iowa Sun* that he intended to engage in the business of carriage making and blacksmithing in all their various branches. Eldridge made or repaired steel springs in good style and constructed all kinds of sleighs. His business was in such a flourishing condition that he employed a number of first-rate journeymen, and hoped to merit the patronage of a generous public.

L. W. Babbitt established himself as Burlington's leading gunsmith in July, 1838. He was prepared to manufacture "Plain or *Fancy Rifles* and Fowling guns, Patent Percussion Pistols, warranted to shoot, as well as rifles of the same calibre, *Repeating Rifles*, Prison and common door locks, Printer's chases, Friskets and Sticks, State and County Seals, Blacksmith's and Joiner's stamps for marking tools, Hand screw Plates, &c, &c." This versatile gunsmith could alter flintlock rifles so as to fire with "cap or pill percussion powder". He was also expert at "re-stocking, cutting, sighting, drawboring" and other kinds of

repairing. Old rifles and fowling pieces, Babbitt pointed out, could be browned, plain or in imitation of stub and twist guns. The latter type of guns could be browned and warranted to look as good as new. Mr. Babbitt always kept a good supply of rifle and percussion powder on hand.

During the summer of 1838 William Dolan and William H. Ladd established a tin, sheet iron, and stove factory in Burlington. In contrast to the economic theory of apostles of scarcity, these two enterprising artisans wrote "Industry the Means and Plenty the Result" over their advertisement in the *Iowa Territorial Gazette*. Modestly they declared: "Both of us being practical workmen, and having had considerable experience in the business, the public may at all times, rely on getting good articles, on good terms, as we intend selling at the St. Louis prices, wholesale and retail. We have now and intend keeping constantly on hand, Stoves of every description, viz. Franklin box, ten and seven plates, also the premium cooking which gives general satisfaction; some are now in operation in this place, which we will refer to on application. P. S. Sheet Iron Stoves and Stove pipe, House guttering and spouting, made to order on the shortest notice."

Some of the more skillful craftsmen had made their way to the Iowa country. By 1838 A. W.

Carpenter, an experienced jeweler, had established his jewelry and watchmaker's shop in Fort Madison. His store was located "on Water Street at the sign of the Golden Watch". Carpenter invited the attention of the public to his general assortment of clocks, watches, and jewelry, as well as to the great variety of articles usually kept in his line. He believed his experience as a jeweler, together with the superior quality of his stock, would give general satisfaction to all his patrons.

To have a local jeweler was no small advantage for the straggling frontier towns. Citizens of Davenport had to cross the Mississippi to Stephenson where R. H. Kinney, a watchmaker and jeweler, had opened a store. Kinney used the columns of the *Iowa Sun* to inform residents of Davenport that he kept "constantly on hand an assortment of Watches, Jewelry, and Fancy Ware, consisting in part of the following articles. Patent Lever, plain, English, French and Swiss Watches; Steel plated and Ribband Watch Chains, Watch Keys and Seals, Ear ornaments, Finger Rings, Breastpins, Tea and Table spoons, Silver Pencil Leads, Pen and Pocket Knives, Pocket Compasses, Percussion Caps, Caps, Wallets, Visiting Cards, Scissors, Silver and Steel Spectacles, Silver Thimbles, Silver Tweezers, Violin Strings,

Belt Buckles, &c &c." The versatile Mr. Kinney repaired all clocks and watches and guaranteed that they would perform well.

Fort Madison could point with pride to its two tailor shops. E. A. Dickey was ready to execute all orders as a merchant tailor "in the most Fashionable Style". According to the *Fort Madison Patriot*, Matthews and Husted "have made arrangements to obtain the latest fashions from Philadelphia, and are prepared to cut and make garments of every description which they will warrant to *fit* with ease and neatness. They may at all times be found at their stand on Water Street, in the building recently occupied as Bul-lard's Grocery, where they will be pleased to see their Customers."

Few women were employed in any other than household duties. Even the schools were usually taught by men, though Mrs. Louisa King's school for young ladies in Dubuque, established in 1836, was still flourishing in 1838.

Women were so scarce on the mining frontier that the wages of domestic servants ran from eight to ten dollars a month. A Dubuque editor pointed out that women received five times as much for sewing as was paid female workers in Philadelphia. Miss R. M. Pearce informed the Davenport ladies that she was prepared to clean and

dress bonnets, in the neatest and most fashionable manner. "She is furnished with the latest fashions from the eastern cities", the *Iowa Sun* reported, "and from a thorough knowledge of her business, and a disposition to accommodate she hopes to receive a portion of public patronage."

Only four newspapers were published in Iowa in 1838. These establishments were also equipped to do all kinds of job printing. The *Iowa News* was well supplied with job type and the proprietors were prepared to "execute on the shortest notice, all kinds of plain and fancy job printing such as blanks of all kinds, bills of lading, business and visiting cards, ball tickets, labels, etc."

The amount of capital invested and the number of men employed in the printing and publishing industry were small in 1838 — probably not more than in 1840 when fifteen printers and an investment of \$5700 were recorded by the federal census. If this seems like a small beginning for what has become one of the major industries in Iowa, it should be remembered that the total population in the Black Hawk Purchase was only about half the present population of the city of Dubuque.

Most of the communities of Iowa Territory were supplied with a grist mill and sawmill in 1838. A number of these had been in operation

since 1834, but most of them had been running less than a year. The steamboat *Rolla* brought a \$3500 steam sawmill to Dubuque from Pittsburgh in 1837. In Muscatine County alone Weare Long operated a sawmill on Sweetland Creek; Benjamin Nye had a grist mill at the mouth of Pine Creek; and Eli Reynolds and John Lawson ran a steam sawmill in Geneva at the mouth of Lime Creek. An important flouring mill in Des Moines County was owned by Levi Moffit at Augusta on the Skunk River. By 1840 there were six flouring mills, thirty-seven grist mills, and seventy-five sawmills operating in Iowa Territory. The capital invested in these mills was \$166,650, the number of men employed totalled 154, and the value of the manufacturers was set at \$95,425 yearly. In 1838 the figures were probably not less than half these totals.

Meat packing had not assumed the dignity of an industry in 1838, although a number of butchers plied their trade. At Dubuque their habit of throwing bones in the street caused the enactment of an ordinance to halt such practices. J. B. Lawson of Burlington agreed to call on farmers at their residences or meet them at the land sales with cash to buy their livestock and other produce. Patterson & Mitchell, butchers, offered to pay top prices for "all kinds of fatted stock — cattle, hogs,

sheep, and for hides". They promised to "steadily and extensively pursue" the business of butchering in a satisfactory manner. A Fort Madison butcher kept fresh beef on hand to supply steamboat larders.

Wood was the chief fuel on the frontier. Although most of the pioneers doubtless cut their own supply, many, particularly in the towns, were unable to do so. For this reason some of the pioneers found employment as professional woodchoppers. In addition to winter supplies, the steamboats consumed large quantities of fuel. H. H. Gear advertised all winter in the *Iowa News* for woodchoppers to cut four or five hundred cords of wood on the Mississippi near the Tetes des Morts River. Located half way between Dubuque and Bellevue, such an immense supply must have been intended for steamboats which either turned up the Fever River to Galena at this point or continued up the Mississippi to Dubuque. Some of the men at Bellevue who were associated with William Brown's gang of horse thieves and counterfeiters found profitable employment as woodchoppers for steamboats.

Although most of the Iowa pioneers lived in log cabins, frame, brick, and stone houses were being erected throughout the Territory. The larger towns already had well-stocked lumber yards. At

Burlington, for example, E. Evans advertised 150,000 feet of white pine lumber for sale at from twenty to forty dollars per thousand feet at his Board Yard. J. Lamson had 30,000 feet of white pine lumber from New York State. J. Prime & Company had 3000 window sash for sale at his yard in Burlington. Some of this lumber was brought from distant Pittsburgh, but most of it was floated down the Mississippi from the Wisconsin pineries. "So soon as lumber can be brought down the river, building will commence," declared the *Iowa News* on March 31, 1838. By fall the editor expected lumber would be brought down the Wisconsin from mills built in the extensive pineries ceded by the Chippewas in 1837. The Fort Madison *Patriot* chided Dubuque for its lethargy, pointing out that steamboats had already arrived at that port from Pittsburgh and Saint Louis with lumber for building. Dubuque ignored this rivalry. She quickly demonstrated her interest in the huge rafts of lumber already coming downstream by allowing them free wharfage at the Dubuque dock whenever the raft was intended for the local sawmill.

Brick and stone were less commonly used for building, although Davenport could already boast of a brick-yard opened by Harvey Leonard. David Rorer occupied a brick house at Burlington,

said to be the first of its kind. James and Edward Langworthy added two brick houses to a number already constructed at Dubuque. J. N. Osborn informed citizens of Dubuque that he was prepared to execute promptly all orders as a stone cutter and mason. Stone masons were active in other parts of the Territory.

During the summer of 1838 three men set out across the Mississippi from Appanoose to Fort Madison in a flatboat loaded with stone and lime. Suddenly a squall struck them and the boat filled and sank. One of the men, Samuel Oliver, was drowned but the others managed to swim ashore.

Wages in the Territory of Iowa were high in 1838. Farm laborers received from twenty to twenty-five dollars a month, miners got anywhere from twenty to fifty dollars, depending upon their experience. Mechanics received from two to three dollars per day. A driver who furnished a yoke of oxen or a two-horse team could expect to be paid from four to five dollars a day. The *Iowa News* felt that such wages "must be to the advantage of the laboring and poor of the eastern States" who planned to migrate to the Iowa country.

Industry, however, was still in an embryonic stage a century ago. Most of the pioneers erected their own homes, made their own candles and

soap, raised much of their own food, and made most of their own clothes. The simplicity of industrial development is attested by the minute directions for the preparation of shoe blacking which found their way into the pages of the *Iowa Sun*. "Perhaps the best in the world is made from elder berries. Mash the berries in your hand in a large kettle of water, set them in the shade a few days, filling it with water. After it is cool, strain and wring them through a coarse cloth, and then boil it down to the thickness of molasses. Put a small quantity with a feather on the brush, rub the shoe until there is a fine gloss. The same will make good writing ink."

But if industry was undeveloped it was nevertheless important. Population was growing steadily each year. Skilled artisans were making their way slowly westward, attracted by the high wages and the opportunity for a better life on the frontier. Lack of regular transportation and communication doubtless delayed the establishment of trade and industry during the long winter months. A century later the returns from industry in Iowa were destined to rival those derived from agriculture. A number of the giant industries of the twentieth century trace their beginnings to the year when the Territory of Iowa was created.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Government by Ordinance

Though ardent partisanship is aroused by national politics and major candidates attract the most attention, the daily welfare of the common people is more directly affected by local government. In Territorial times the Iowa pioneers exercised their autonomy by managing the affairs of their neighborhood as they pleased. Rules of conduct were adopted by local officials for the benefit of the community. A few of the larger towns obtained special charters for their government. The ordinances in those cities now include a multitude of subjects — the whole range of the alphabet from airports to zoning — but a hundred years ago municipal functions were not so complex. Transportation facilities, health, morals, orderly conduct, the observance of the Sabbath, and taxes were the matters of chief concern. In one respect, however, conditions do not seem to have changed. Municipal officers were criticized in 1838 for their laxity in the performance of their simple duties.

One of the first responsibilities of a new town is to determine the geographical limits of its authority. In this regard an early Dubuque ordi-

nance is unique in its reference to landmarks which were not permanent. The northern boundary of the town was described as a line running parallel to a fence "which is near the grave yard and about 150 yards north of a house occupied by Mr. Plumb". From the east end of this fence the boundary extended "in a direct line therewith to low water mark on the slough of the Mississippi river". From the west end of the fence the boundary projected through the grave yard "to the foot of the bluff, at which point is placed a stake". The south and west town limits were described in a similar manner. The east boundary of the town was designated as "the line of low water mark of the Mississippi river."

Realizing the stern necessity of funds with which to carry on municipal functions, the town aldermen of Burlington passed an ordinance which provided that all lots or parcels of land within the corporate limits should be taxed at the rate of twenty cents on each hundred dollars of taxable value, and that each building should be taxed at the rate of fifteen cents per hundred dollars of valuation.

For the purpose of opening and keeping in repair the streets, alleys, and roads in Fort Madison, a poll tax payable in labor was adopted. This statute required every male inhabitant of the

town, between the ages of twenty-one and fifty years, to render two days' labor each year, but any one could substitute the payment of two dollars for each day of labor. In Dubuque a similar requisition was made applicable to all male residents under the age of sixty years. If any one were not able to work, however, he might be excused by the town marshal.

Various license fees formed another source of revenue. In Dubuque any person who intended to exhibit for money "any wax-figures, rope or wire dancers, cups and balls, thimble playing, sleight of hand, circus riding" — or any other exhibition had to obtain a license from the town trustees. The license fee was not less than five dollars nor more than one hundred dollars. Burlington charged twenty-five dollars a day for exhibiting "any show of wax figures, wire-dancing, circus riding, or any exhibition of any wild animals".

In the regulation of river transportation, Dubuque in 1838 adopted an ordinance which provided that all steamboats arriving at "any of the wharves, shores or landing within the corporate limits of the town", at each trip from the port below, should pay to the marshal of the town for the use of the corporation the sum of five dollars. Moreover, "the owner of each and every raft"

had to pay two dollars for landing and two dollars for every twenty-four hours that it remained at the wharves.

Local interest was protected, however, by the exception that "rafts of logs intended to be sawed at the steam mill of O'Ferrall, Booth and Co.", should not be subject to this tax. Neither did the regular landing fees apply to persons who had a yearly license for the use of the wharves.

Another significant regulation pertaining to transportation and health in Dubuque provided for the appointment "of some person well skilled in the science of medicine, to be styled the Port Physician", whose duty it was to visit vessels coming into port to ascertain if they carried any infected or diseased persons. If persons so afflicted were found on board, the physician of the port was directed to report this fact to the president of the trustees. He, in turn, was obliged to "order the Boat or vessel to be immediately removed, and anchored in the middle of the main channel of the Mississippi river", there to remain for such time as the port physician should think necessary, or as the public good should require. The president was further authorized to issue a proclamation "prohibiting all intercourse between the town and any boats or vessels" thus anchored in midstream.

In regard to street traffic no person in Dubuque could receive "hire or pay for the hauling or transportation of any articles whatever, in or upon any wagon, cart, dray or sled", within the limits of the corporation, unless the carrier was licensed by the president and trustees of the town. Such a license for the transportation of goods could be obtained from the town clerk upon the payment of a fee of five dollars a year. Every "wagon, cart, dray or sled" thus licensed was required to bear a registration number plainly painted "on the near side of the carriage".

A health and safety regulation adopted in Dubuque a hundred years ago is significant for its modern attitude toward public welfare. For a "better supply of good and wholesome water, and in order to guard against the destruction of property by fire", the president was authorized to contract for the construction, "in a good and substantial manner", of three public wells, to be situated in the town at points most convenient to the public. The "faith of the corporation" was pledged to pay for digging these wells. Nevertheless, "any monies raised by voluntary subscription of the citizens" to aid in this worthy cause were to be "faithfully applied to that purpose".

In Fort Madison the president and trustees authorized the appointment of two health officers,

whose duty it should be to visit "every house and lot" within the corporation, "once every month if necessary, and oftener if required." If any nuisance were found on any property the officers were directed to notify the owner or his agent, and report the matter to the trustees. No one was allowed to put "dirt, rubbish, trash or chips" in the streets.

In the interest of public safety in Burlington, any person who placed, caused to be placed, or allowed to remain upon the public streets, sidewalks, or alleys, "any lumber or any species of property whatsoever", or who threw or caused to be thrown on the streets, sidewalks, or alleys, "any filth, trash or nuisance of any description", was subject to a penalty for each offense. Furthermore, any person or persons who should "unnecessarily and furiously, run, gallop, ride or drive any horse, mule or other animal", within the limits of the town, was liable for the payment of a fine.

Another ordinance provided that if any one should "maliciously or wilfully disturb the peace or quiet of any person or family, or any congregation assembled for religious worship" within the town, either in the day time or in the hours of the night, "by loud or unusual noises, or by tumultuous and offensive behavior", he should be fined a

sum not to exceed ten dollars. If any person should, "except in defense of his person or property", shoot, discharge, or cause to be discharged "any fire arms, of any description whatsoever", or if he should cause to be discharged or set off "any squibs, crackers, or any other composition of gun powder", within the limits of the town, he should be subjected to a similar fine.

Concerning games of chance and the protection of morals the Burlington council passed an ordinance that was at once explicit and inclusive. A fine of from eight to ten dollars was imposed upon the gambler who, by playing any game within the town, should "bet, win or lose, any sum or sums of money, or goods, wares, merchandise, or other valuable thing or things, or property of any description". Moreover, any one proven to be "guilty of any gross public indecency, tending to corrupt the morals and manners of the people", was liable to be fined as much as ten dollars.

Peace and quiet within the corporate limits of Fort Madison were highly prized and zealously guarded. Conviction upon a charge of assault and battery carried with it a possible fine of fifty dollars. Moreover, any person who disturbed the peace of the inhabitants by "making any loud and unusual noises, or by threatening, traducing, quarreling" or challenging to fight, might be subjected

to the same penalty. Such activities as "blowing horns, trumpets, or bugles, ringing bells, beating drums, hollooming and shouting" were also made offenses under this ordinance. In like manner, any person who should "in the night time set fire to a tar barrel", or to "any thing or substance which will produce a blazing light" might thereby become subject to a fine ranging from three to thirty dollars.

Characteristic of pioneer piety, the desecration of the Sabbath was rigorously prohibited. To "engage in any ordinary labor, or keep open the houses of trade or business, except in cases of extreme necessity," was a serious misdemeanor. An exception to the rule was that provisions might be sold to incoming boat passengers, and that freight might be unloaded at the wharves on Sunday.

A "Sunday" ordinance in Dubuque, however, provided that "no steam boat, vessel or craft" should land or discharge any freight within the corporate limits of the town "on the Lord's day, or Sabbath, commonly called Sunday." If any freight were "handled or discharged" contrary to the provisions of this ordinance, the owner, clerk or proper officer of the boat was liable to a fine of ten dollars "for each and every cask, barrel, box or package so landed or discharged."

In Fort Madison it was illegal to "play at any

game of ball" or "any game of quoits", "pitch dollars or any other coin", "discharge any fire arms or pistols", "run a foot race on a wager", or "keep open or admit any person into any shop, grocery or store for the purpose of trade within the limits of this corporation on the Sabbath day".

Such, briefly and in part, were the typical ordinances of Iowa towns a hundred years ago. Yet it is well to recall that "governments, like clocks, go from the motion men give them". Laws must be effectively administered as well as carefully written. Enforcement, even in pioneer days, was not always easy, and occasionally harsh criticisms were heard.

In the autumn of 1838 a citizen of Dubuque decried local officials in no uncertain terms. "If our town Trustees", he said, "are not a little more attentive to their duties hereafter we'll expose them by publishing their names as such! Why are persons permitted to haul sand from the middle of Locust street at the crossing of Third? thereby endangering the lives of persons riding in the night. And why are the butchers permitted to throw the heads of animals in our streets? at which half a dozen dogs are frequently to be seen growling round and fighting for. Many other growing evils might be pointed out — but it seems altogether useless, at least unless they do some-

thing in order to show that there is a board of Trustees. Most of our citizens have paid their tax, and the law is sufficient for their collection from those who have not, leaving no excuse for this neglect of duty. We hope it will be attended to."

In the century that has passed since these words were written, municipal functions have multiplied and expanded a hundred fold. The simple, explicit statutes of the pioneer towns — not always faithfully observed — constitute a valuable index to the character of the people and their manner of living. These relics of local self-government are, to us, a challenge to carry on the tradition of democracy toward the ideal of general welfare.

J. A. SWISHER

A Commonplace Calendar

During the month of showers a hundred years ago the pioneers of Iowa planted their crops, built new houses, welcomed the immigrants, held temperance meetings, talked politics, and faced the future with the sunlight of hope in their eyes.

Sunday, April 1. Let it be recorded "for future reference, and to show to those at a distance that we are not quite so near sun-down as to be entirely destitute of the genial influences of the bright luminary of day, even in this early part of the season." § Trailing along a road in Illinois at least 150 families "were counted on their way to the Black Hawk Purchase".

Monday, April 2. Mrs. Sheldon opened a school in Burlington. Grammar, geography, astronomy, geometry, botany, philosophy, and history were taught and spelling, reading, and writing emphasized. § Rev. P. B. Russell, agent of the American Temperance Society, lectured at early candlelighting at the Methodist meeting room in the house of W. W. Chapman in Burlington. § Alex. Butterworth, John McKenzie, Benjamin Rupert, John Plumbe, and Philip C. Mor-

hizer were elected trustees of Dubuque. § Judge David Irvin opened district court at Fort Madison with unsurpassed "order and decorum".

Tuesday, April 3. Sauk and Fox warriors were reported to be assembling, "dressed out in all their paraphernalia of warlike preparation" to make "a belligerent excursion into the country of the Sioux."

Wednesday, April 4. A fire in Edgar's drug store on Front Street in Burlington was soon extinguished.

Thursday, April 5. Lot Thornton and Miss Abigail M. Wright were married.

Friday, April 6. "Philo" hoped the citizens of Dubuque would support the Literary Association which would "ere long, 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 on our village". § Ann Judson, the baby daughter of J. T. Fales, died.

Saturday, April 7. L. N. English, who lived ten miles west of Burlington, boasted that "BLUE BUCK can beat any horse of his age, (12 years,) in the western country for one quarter of a mile."

Monday, April 9. Sixteen steers and other articles "too tedious to mention" from the estate of Ira William were sold at auction. § William

Allison and Ann Frost were married "near the Little Maquoketa". § A negro fell from the *Adventure* near Burlington and was drowned.

Tuesday, April 10. A "slight fall of snow" caused some injury to vegetation. § The *Burlington*, Captain Joseph Throckmorton commanding, stopped at Fort Madison on her first trip up the river.

Wednesday, April 11. Black Hawk visited Burlington. "He attracted some notice, and seemed gratified at it."

Thursday, April 12. William Morgan and Elizabeth Sexton were married.

Friday, April 13. The river was "in a fine stage for navigation".

Saturday, April 14. A petition was circulated to move the county seat from Burlington to the geographical center of Des Moines County. § No "less than a dozen good houses" were in process of construction at Burlington. § Timothy Turner, agent for the Illinois State Temperance Society, lectured at the Methodist Church in Dubuque.

Monday, April 16. Judge Irvin opened district court at Farmington. Isaac Hendershott of Burlington, indicted for the murder of Nathaniel Knapp of Fort Madison, escaped.

Tuesday, April 17. Six brass eight-day clocks,

twenty-four wooden thirty-hour clocks, and a lot of tuck combs were sold at auction in Burlington.

Friday, April 20. A meeting of gentlemen from the Iowa District of Wisconsin Territory at Dubuque adopted a resolution asking President Van Buren to appoint George W. Jones Governor if the Territory of Iowa should be established.

Saturday, April 21. James G. Edwards was nominated for the office of president of Fort Madison by a meeting of citizens. He hoped the election would be non-partisan. § A committee advertised for bids on a contract to deliver at the public square in Mount Pleasant by August 10th "100,000 good merchantable brick" for the Henry County court house. § Jacob Pate offered to sell his claim three and a half miles below the falls of the big Maquoketa. He had 160 acres "under fence", of which "34 are broke, and 15 sowed in oats".

Sunday, April 22. So many immigrant wagons were across the river from Fort Madison that the village of Appanoose looked like a large town. § Timothy Turner, the "well-known apostle of temperance", lectured twice in Fort Madison. The evening meeting in the "spacious dining hall of Mr. Cope's Hotel" was the largest assembly that had ever gathered in that town.

Monday, April 23. Considerable damage was

done to streets and gardens in Dubuque by a severe thunder storm. "The rain poured down in torrents for the principal part of the night."

Tuesday, April 24. The discussion at the regular meeting of the Dubuque Lyceum was on the question: "*Resolved*, That early marriages are conducive to the happiness of the community."

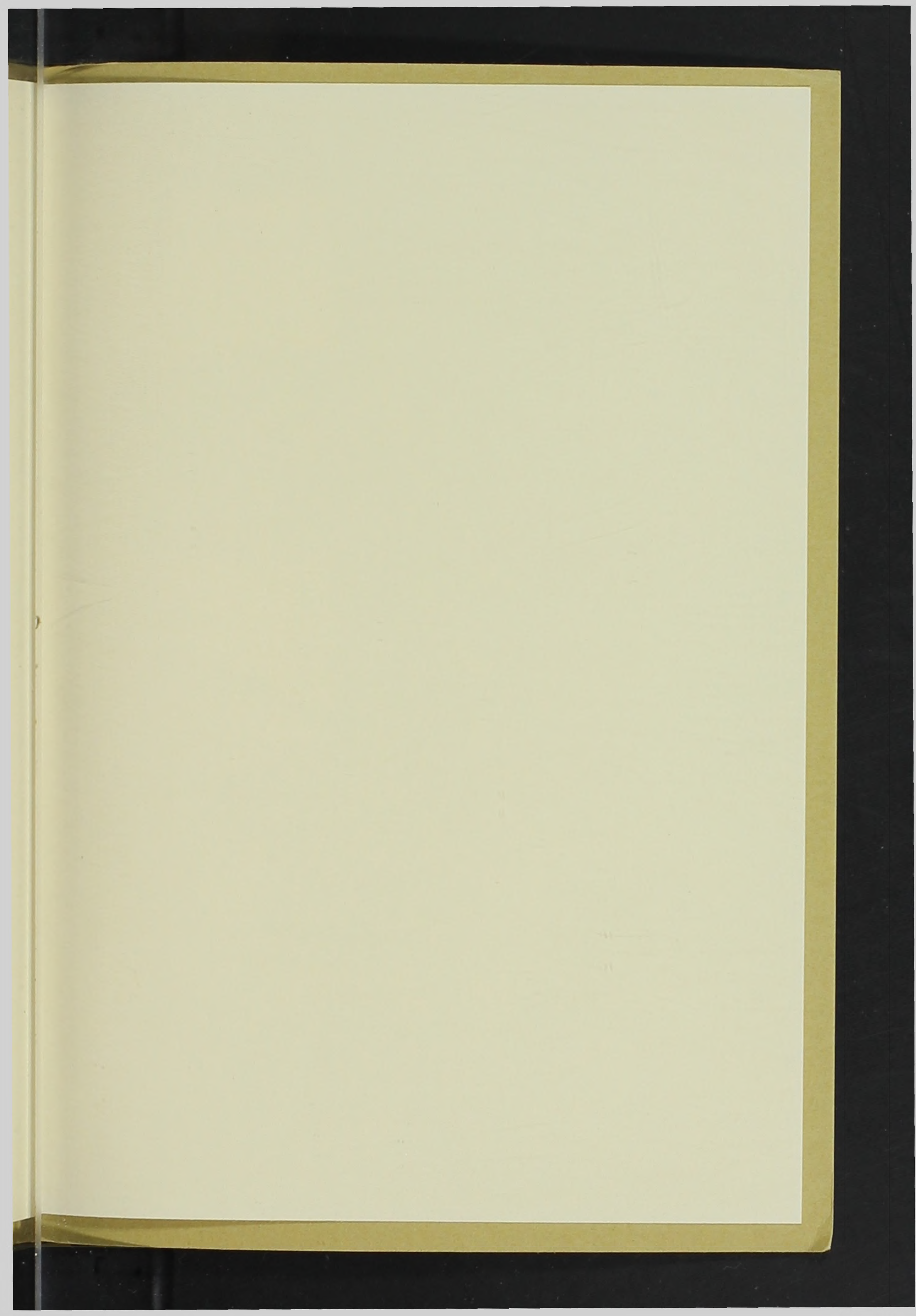
Thursday, April 26. Governor Henry Dodge, on his way to Washington, arrived at Burlington aboard the *Cygnet*.

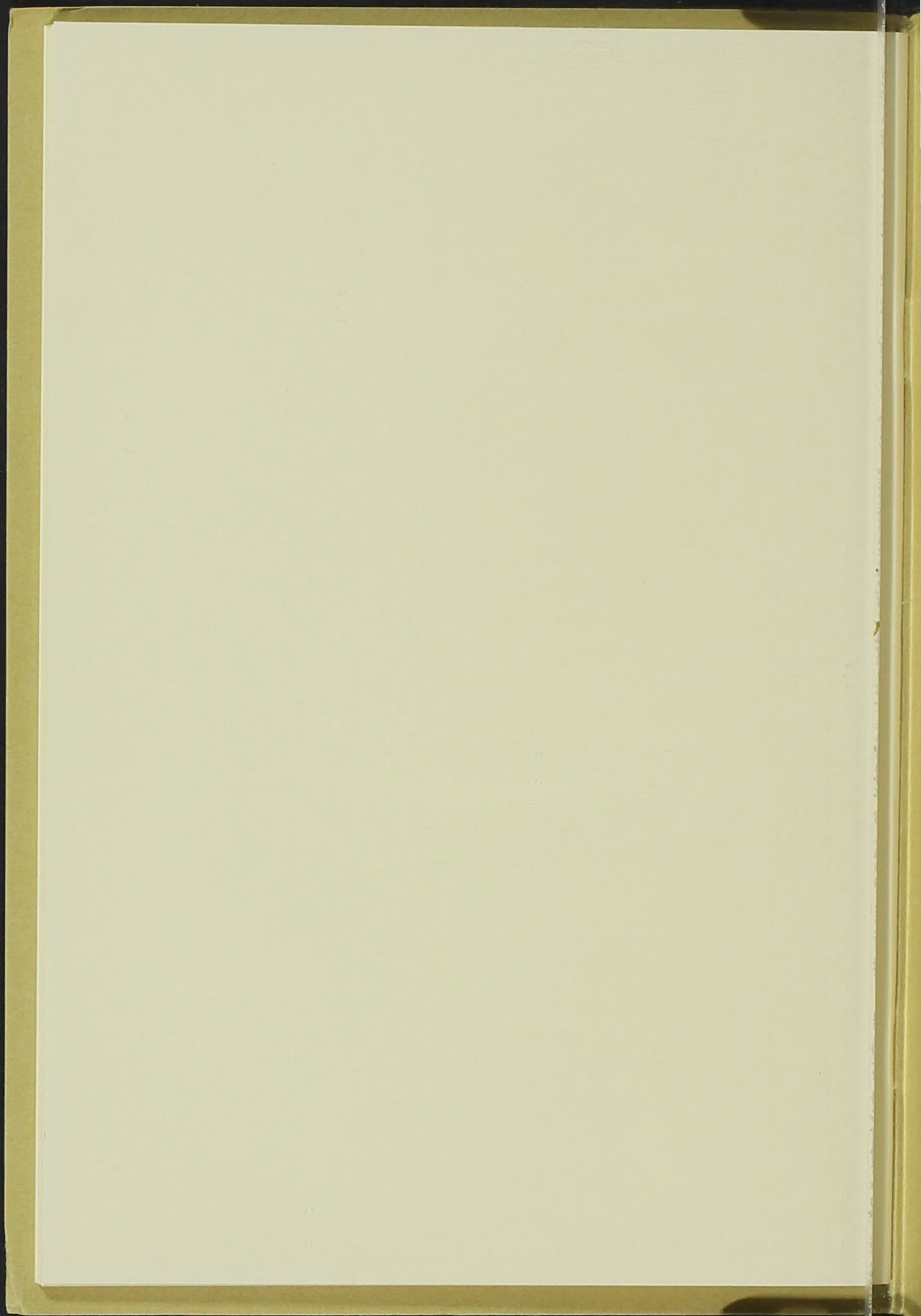
Friday, April 27. At the home of James G. Edwards, the "circuit preacher", Mr. Cartwright, organized the Fort Madison Temperance Society with nearly fifty members. § By prompt action the fire in the house of George B. Edwards was extinguished before much damage was done. § Ground was broken for St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Davenport.

Saturday, April 28. At Burlington the river was higher than "the oldest residents" had ever seen it. Waves blown up by a strong wind at Fort Madison washed away seventy-five cords of wood belonging to Peter Miller.

Monday, April 30. A public meeting at the court house in Dubuque asked the General Land Office to appoint a separate commission to grant preëmption certificates in Dubuque.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS





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