

A Territorial Centennial Number 3
Iowa in 1838

The **P**ALIMPSEST

AUGUST, 1938

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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

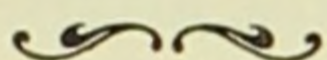
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The Governor's Tour

Three enterprising towns — Burlington, Davenport, and Dubuque — contended for the seat of government of the Territory of Iowa in 1838. Burlington had been the capital of the Territory of Wisconsin. More accessible to a majority of the legislators, this metropolis of southern Iowa was the choice of many of the politicians, who appreciated good food and lodging as well as traveling convenience. Although Davenport admitted that hotels and boarding houses and all the "pomp and circumstances" connected with "eating, drinking, and sleeping" should not be overlooked, the *Iowa Sun* urged the selection of that centrally located "lovely little town" by the Governor. Dubuque, the metropolis of northern Iowa, rejoiced in her manifest destiny but remembered that she had once missed becoming the capital of Wisconsin Territory by the collusion of Burlington with the proponents of Madison. The *Iowa News* hoped the Governor would "pay a visit to all the

prominent points in the Territory" before setting the wheels of government in motion. Informed of the jealous rivalry the moment he arrived, Governor Robert Lucas determined to make a tour of the Territory at once.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of August 18th, Robert Lucas boarded the steamboat *Knickerbocker* for Dubuque. He was accompanied by T. S. Parvin and Jesse Williams, the two young aides who had joined him at Cincinnati. Lucas found his quarters aboard the brand-new *Knickerbocker* very comfortable, for the boat had fifty "handsomely furnished" staterooms off the gentlemen's cabin. Captain Van Houton was described as a "fine chap" whose "energy and activity" matched his "urbanity and courteous deportment".

The *Knickerbocker* arrived at Muscatine at ten o'clock that evening, too late for Lucas to see much of the place. When the three tourists awakened the following morning the boat had left Davenport and was proceeding cautiously up the Rock Island Rapids, a "very difficult" stretch of river to navigate during low water. About noon Peter H. Engle, a candidate for Territorial Delegate to Congress, came aboard. Lucas and his companions formed a favorable opinion of Engle.

Puffing steadily upstream against the current, the *Knickerbocker* threaded her way through a

river pock-marked with sandbars. On the site of Clinton a few optimistic settlers were trying to start a town called New York. Bellevue was a flourishing village perched high on the river bank, well-protected from floods. Dusk was falling as they approached the grave of Julien Dubuque on a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi. The *Knickerbocker* reached Dubuque at night and Lucas took lodgings at the Washington Hotel, a temperance house operated by Richard Plumbe.

In the morning the three tourists walked about Dubuque. The town had been beautifully plotted but the "poor landing" did not escape their attention. After returning to the hotel, Lucas interviewed many citizens, including Judge Thomas S. Wilson of the Territorial Supreme Court. That afternoon one of the Langworthys drove Lucas and his companions through the country in his carriage. All were delighted with the view from the bluffs which Parvin noted were covered with grain on the outside and contained lead ore within. That night Parvin sorrowfully recorded: "The Gov. accepted (we refused) an invitation to take tea with Judge [John] King. Said he regretted his 'aids' did not accompany him as there were 3 very fine young ladies — one apiece, so did we!"

On Tuesday morning, August 21st, Lucas and Parvin accompanied R. Farwell to see some speci-

mens of "tiff" or crystalized quartz that had been obtained from the caves in the neighborhood of his diggings. In the afternoon they looked at T. C. Fassitt's fine collection of minerals, petrifications, and Indian curiosities. That evening they took tea with Judge Wilson and were delighted to learn that all present were from Ohio. "Hurrah for the Buckeye land", Parvin recorded in his journal.

Lucas spent two more days in Dubuque, meeting citizens, attending teas, studying the character, needs, and future prospects of the country. At seven o'clock on Friday morning, August 24th, he ferried across the Mississippi with his companions and took the stage for Galena. After the Governor's departure the editor of the *Iowa News* asserted that Dubuque citizens were "unanimously pleased" with Lucas and declared he was "just the man" for the new Territory.

The triumvirate had gone but a few miles when they met George W. Jones, Delegate to Congress from the Territory of Wisconsin, who was on his way to Dubuque to visit Lucas. After a short chat they continued on their way, having received a hearty invitation to call at the Jones residence on Mount Sinsinawa. All at once their stage broke down and they had to "foot it" till the driver caught up with a wagon. From Jones's home they

secured a fine view of the surrounding country. After a short visit they set out once more for Galena, stopping at Water Melon Hollow long enough to be hoaxed into buying a green melon. It was three o'clock in the afternoon before they reached Galena which Parvin described as "a place of great business and built in opposition to nature".

At 7:30 the next morning they left Galena on the steamboat *Irene*. As they proceeded cautiously down the Fever (Galena) River the pilot rope broke and the *Irene* swooshed into the soft bank. Fortunately no damage was done. Soon they reached the Mississippi and churned rapidly downstream, reaching Davenport that evening. They were met on the bank by Secretary Conway.

Early the following morning, which was Sunday, Lucas and his aides walked about the town and along the river. During the remainder of the forenoon they read religious books, the table of their landlord being well supplied with them. That afternoon they ferried across the Mississippi to Stephenson and heard a New School Presbyterian preach a "plain old sermon". They were accompanied by J. W. Parker and Dr. A. C. Donaldson. Since both Lucas and Parvin had been on the Ohio and Mississippi for three Sabbaths in a row it was a pleasure to once more get "within

the gospel sound". Sunday evening was spent at the home of D. C. Eldridge, an enterprising Davenport merchant.

On the following day Parvin and Williams paid a visit to Antoine Le Claire, who was described as "an intelligent & shrewd fellow" of immense size. Meanwhile, Governor Lucas was busy interviewing many Davenport citizens who received him with "polite attention". The *Iowa Sun* did not know whether Lucas was "pestered with any vexatious enquiries" concerning the place where the legislature would be convened but believed that "justice and propriety" would result in the selection of Davenport.

On Tuesday, August 28th, Lucas set out overland for Rockingham four miles down the river. The stage broke down before they reached their destination but they were soon on their way again. While Lucas conversed with the citizens of Rockingham, Parvin and Williams accompanied Dr. E. S. Barrows back to the hills surrounding the town and secured a fine view of Rock River, Stephenson, and Davenport. On their return they came upon a melon patch and "feasted" to their hearts' content. Meanwhile, the citizens of Rockingham gave a public dinner for Governor Lucas at which nothing stronger than cold water was served. After all had drunk to his health, the Gov-

ernor made a short speech. They spent the evening with John H. Sullivan of Zanesville, Ohio, who was a leading citizen in this community of forty-five buildings, including homes, stores, and workshops.

On the following morning the gubernatorial party set out for Bloomington in a rude conveyance, being accompanied a short distance by J. H. Sullivan, E. S. Barrows, and A. H. Davenport. At noon they stopped at the home of a Mr. Viele, a gentleman from Troy, New York. Their hospitable host had three "grown up" daughters who quickly caught the eye of young Parvin. No where in the Territory had the weary travelers found any one living in finer style. Leaving the pleasant surroundings of the Viele home, they hastened onward along the bank of the Mississippi, rumbling into Muscatine at night. Parvin again noted that they could not see much of the town. Apparently, however, Lucas had no intention of selecting Muscatine as the capital, for when a steamboat came along a few hours later they took passage for Burlington.

At daybreak they arrived at "home sweet home" after a twelve-day tour of the Territory of Iowa. "Our object", Parvin recorded, "had been to view the country with the view of examining the claims of various parts for the seat of temporary

government and came to the conclusion that for the present that Burlington is the *place*."

Governor Lucas promptly rented an office and prepared for business. A few days later he attended a banquet given in his honor by the citizens of Burlington. In response to a toast the veteran statesman revealed that his tour had yielded much information about the Territory. When he received his commission, Lucas declared, he knew little about Iowa, "but supposed that her population was the same as is generally found in frontier settlements — hospitable, yet rude. In this, he was most agreeably disappointed. For intelligence and enterprise, he expressed his firm conviction, based on actual observation since his arrival, Iowa Territory would compare with any of the western, aye, and some of the eastern states, too. With a people of this character, it would be his greatest pleasure to co-operate, in the forming of laws calculated to secure them in the exercise of their political rights, to develop the resources of their country, and secure the prompt and easy administration of justice."

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Robert Lucas

A large crowd gathered on the Burlington levee early in the morning of August 15, 1838. News had spread that the steamboat *Brazil* was nearing port with Robert Lucas, the anxiously-awaited Governor of the Territory of Iowa, among her passengers. Mayor George Beeler, Cyrus S. Jacobs, William H. Starr, and William B. Conway, the Secretary of the Territory, were among the prominent citizens assembled on the river bank to welcome the new executive. Various reports had trickled westward concerning the character and personality of Robert Lucas. Every one knew that he was a man of action: his long career as a soldier and a politician was ample testimony of that. But what would his attitude be toward the new Territory of Iowa? Would he rule like a sergeant or be sympathetic with the needs of the people? Undoubtedly many who watched the *Brazil* dock hoped to read the destiny of the Territory in the countenance of the first Governor. The erstwhile "Acting Governor", Conway, gained little comfort from this encounter.

A brisk, erect, dignified figure strode down the gangplank of the *Brazil*. Although only about five

feet ten inches in height, Robert Lucas probably seemed taller because of his straight military bearing. His thick wavy hair, frosted by fifty-seven years of intense activity, was combed straight back from his high forehead. Blue eyes, deep-set beneath beetling eyebrows, a slightly aquiline nose, straight firm mouth, all combined to give a somewhat severe expression to his thin face. Middle age had not robbed him of his vigor and restless energy. Grim determination, resourcefulness, and pride were basic qualities in the character of the courageous soldier and ambitious politician that was Robert Lucas. His past in Ohio had revealed these traits: his life in Iowa was to demonstrate them more fully.

Governor Lucas swung into action as soon as he arrived at Burlington. That very afternoon he issued a proclamation apportioning members of the Territorial legislature and providing for their election. Scarcely had this been done when an invitation was tendered him by leading Burlington citizens to attend a public dinner in his honor. Lucas thanked the committee graciously, but asked that the dinner be postponed until after he returned from a tour of the Territory. During the next three days he attended to problems of state and then set out on August 18th to visit the various towns as far north as Dubuque.

From early morning until late at night Lucas conferred with the leading citizens in each community. All were impressed with his sincerity, his energy, and his sterling character. A Dubuque editor liked his "plain and easy address" and commanding appearance. He believed this "practical farmer", whose constitution had been "shattered by toil", would "appreciate honest industry, and guard well its interest".

A descendant of sturdy Quaker ancestors who settled in Pennsylvania in 1679, Robert Lucas actually was a product of two frontiers. His father, William Lucas, was born in the wilds of western Virginia. There, at Shepherdstown, Robert Lucas was born on April 1, 1781. His early schooling consisted largely of mathematics and surveying, a training which proved invaluable when he moved to the Northwest Territory in 1800.

Despite his Quaker ancestry, Robert Lucas was distinctly a military man. Perhaps he inherited his warlike spirit from his father who had fought in the Revolutionary War. At any rate Lucas himself began his military career in 1803 when he received a commission from the Governor to enlist volunteers for the Ohio militia. From that beginning he rose in rank until he became a major general in the militia and a colonel in the United States Army. When the War of 1812 broke out

Lucas helped organize a battalion of volunteers from his militia. During the early part of the conflict he served as a detached officer in General William Hull's disastrous campaign. The daily journal which he kept clearly reveals his courage and resourcefulness whether employed as a scout or in the heat of battle. It also demonstrates his habit of meticulous care. When Colonel Lewis Cass made his report on Hull's discreditable conduct, he embodied sentences and even paragraphs from the daily record of Robert Lucas.

The soldier was also schooled in the ways of government and politics. As early as 1803 he began his career as a surveyor. Two years later he was appointed justice of the peace for Union Township in Scioto County. In 1808 he was elected to the lower house of the Ohio legislature. Between 1814 and 1830 he served all but two years as State Senator. Nominated for Governor by the Democrats in 1830, he was defeated but, having served meanwhile in the House of Representatives, he was again nominated for Governor in 1832 and this time emerged triumphant. A more significant partisan honor was his selection as temporary and permanent chairman of the Democratic Convention at Baltimore. He was re-elected Governor of Ohio in 1834 — an unusual tribute in the Buckeye State. His most notable service to Ohio

during his four years as chief executive was his victory in the Ohio-Michigan boundary dispute.

On September 4, 1838, soon after his return to Burlington, the Governor attended a "most sumptuous" banquet at which C. S. Jacobs acted as president. The customary thirteen prepared toasts and twenty-five volunteer toasts were drunk by the hundred guests present. After pointing out the salient facts in the new Governor's career, Jacobs offered the following tribute: "Our distinguished guest — We honor him as the gallant soldier in war — we honor him as the enlightened legislator and magistrate in peace, and we honor him for his virtue as a private citizen." A tremendous cheer greeted the Governor as he modestly arose in response.

Robert Lucas was not thinking of his military career, Ohio politics, or boundary troubles as he stood before his Burlington audience. Hopes for good government and a peaceful administration were uppermost in his mind. He was thinking of the amazing resources of the Territory and the admirable character of the settlers. Closing his speech, he proposed a toast to "The citizens of Iowa — Hospitable, intelligent, and enterprising. May their energies be united in support of such measures as are best calculated to advance the interests of the Territory — promote virtue — in-

crease intelligence — and secure the lasting prosperity and happiness of the people.”

Unfortunately for Lucas his three years as Governor of Iowa were destined to be as stormy as his career in Ohio. The seed of discord had been planted even before he set foot in the Territory. President Van Buren first offered the Governorship to General Henry Atkinson who refused the office. The delay and uncertainty caused much dissatisfaction in the Territory. Robert Lucas was finally commissioned on July 7th but did not hear of his appointment until ten days later, whereupon he promptly accepted. Preparing at once to assume his new duties, he left Cincinnati for Iowa on August 1st. Low water delayed the progress of his trip and he did not reach Burlington until two months after Congress had created the Territory.

Meanwhile, Secretary Conway had arrived and begun acting as Governor. Had he been less officious and attended only to emergencies, he would not have aroused the ire of Governor Lucas. But Conway, self-confident and ambitious, assumed more responsibilities than the circumstances warranted. On the very day Lucas arrived at Burlington he handed the Governor a copy of his proclamation apportioning members of the legislature and ordering an election. No one knows what Robert Lucas said, but it is significant that he issued

the proclamation himself and that Conway left for Davenport within an hour after the Governor's arrival. From that beginning William Conway was continually at odds with Robert Lucas. He opposed whatever the Governor proposed and stirred up dissension. In Lucas, however, he encountered a determined and resourceful antagonist.

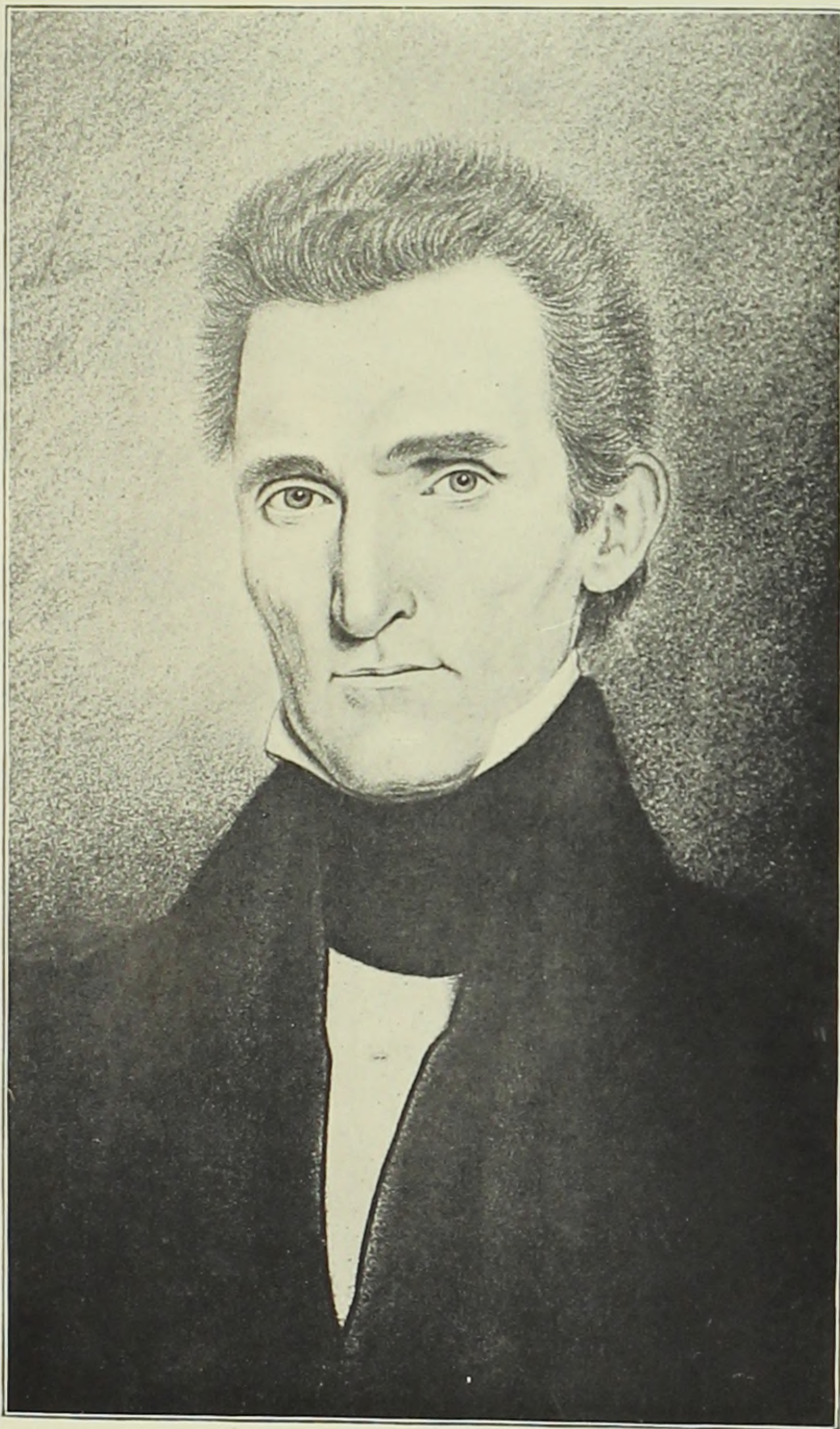
On November 12, 1838, the first Territorial legislature convened in the Methodist Church at Burlington. Most of the thirty-nine pioneer legislators were young men. They listened attentively as the Governor read his first message. It was a noteworthy document that clearly revealed the sagacity and long experience of Robert Lucas. Education, the compilation of a criminal code, the suppression of gambling and intemperance, the organization of an efficient militia, and strict economy in financial matters were but a few of the subjects upon which the Governor recommended legislation.

The Legislative Assembly set to work with enthusiasm and a grave sense of importance. The first month of the session was marked by a sharp clash between Secretary Conway and the law makers over the purchase of penknives, tin cups, and similar perquisites. The Secretary's flippant, sarcastic answer to the request deeply offended the Council which promptly informed him it would

not "tamely submit to the insults and derision of any officer of this Territory". This quarrel had scarcely abated when a more serious dispute arose between the Governor and the legislature over Territorial expenditures. When Lucas refused to approve bills involving the payment of salaries for twenty-three assistants to the Legislative Assembly, the legislators promptly questioned his right to veto such measures, a right which was clearly provided in the Organic Act.

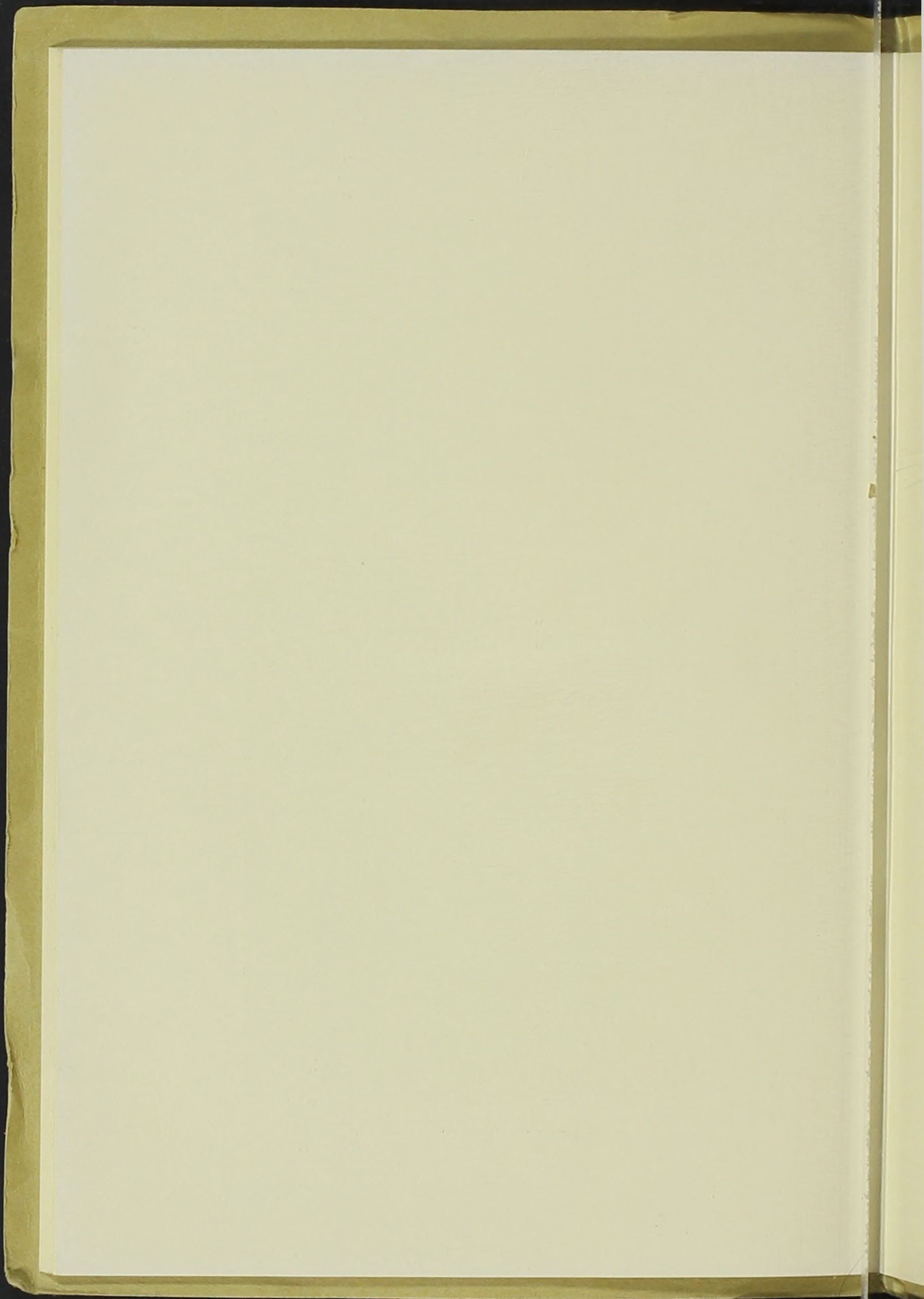
With characteristic determination Lucas stood firm throughout the controversy, displaying remarkable calmness for a man of such an impetuous nature. Although Conway and a small majority of the legislators sought his removal from office, many others saw the wisdom and legality of the Governor's position. When the session closed, Parvin recorded in his diary, "Legislature adjourned in confusion. All drunk with few exceptions."

The firm stand of Governor Lucas against the excesses of the Territorial legislature was supported by President Van Buren. At the same time the United States Treasury refused to pay the bills authorized by the legislature. Moreover, a letter from the Comptroller's office, on June 7, 1839, showed serious discrepancies in the Secretary's accounts. The death of William B. Conway at Bur-



FROM A CRAYON PORTRAIT

ROBERT LUCAS



lington during the opening days of the second Legislative Assembly probably saved him from many unpleasant situations at the same time that it removed a thorn from the side of Robert Lucas.

The first year of Governor Lucas's administration had been marred by bitter internal controversy. The second year was destined to produce a stormy battle with Missouri over the southern boundary of the Territory of Iowa. As early as 1816 John C. Sullivan had surveyed an Indian cession which later was ambiguously identified with the northern boundary of the State of Missouri. The influx of settlers into the area north of this line after the Black Hawk Purchase caused Missouri to cast covetous glances in that direction. In 1836, the Governor was authorized by the State of Missouri to survey the northern boundary and J. C. Brown ran the line in the following year. This line would have deprived Iowa of a generous slice of the southern tier of Iowa counties. When Missouri ordered its officers to collect taxes in this area, Governor Lucas advised Van Buren County citizens to refuse. Not long afterward a Missouri sheriff was arrested and brought to Burlington. Thereupon, the Missouri militia was called to enforce the law while Lucas issued a proclamation calling out the Territorial troops. After such a display of force the question was adjudicated.

Here was just the kind of a battle that delighted the stern, unyielding Governor. His vigorous action preserved the original boundary of Iowa and won a lot of popularity for the old veteran.

Though the remainder of his administration was comparatively calm, the election of a Whig President led to the removal of Lucas in 1841. Many Iowans expressed genuine regret that his strong hand had been removed from the pilot wheel.

Robert Lucas was inordinately fond of politics. In 1843, five years after coming to Iowa, he returned to Ohio temporarily. His old friends prevailed upon him to run for Congress, but he was defeated and returned to Iowa City the following year. Straightway he was nominated by the Democrats as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1844. Although opponents accused him of being a "confirmed office-seeker", he won the election. His work on the committees on State Boundaries, State Revenue, and the Executive was statesmanlike.

When James K. Polk was elected President, Lucas hoped to be reappointed Governor of the Territory of Iowa but James Clarke was chosen. Two years later, when Iowa was about to be admitted into the Union, Lucas again fixed his eyes upon the Governorship. He was then sixty-five years old, however, and his uncompromising nature had

made many enemies. Younger men entered the field and Ansel Briggs, who in 1839 had carried a letter of introduction to Lucas from the Governor of Ohio, was nominated by the Democrats and elected first Governor of the State.

Robert Lucas retained his keen interest in public affairs to the very end. When he retired to the friendly atmosphere of Plum Grove he still found time to engage actively in the temperance movement, to advocate the development of the public school system, and to promote railroad building. At Burlington in 1839 he was chosen president of the Iowa Territorial Temperance Society. Thirteen years later his name was included in a select list of prominent temperance leaders in the United States. On December 14, 1848, in the Old Stone Capitol at Iowa City, Lucas was chosen president of a State convention of teachers and friends of education in Iowa. In the following year he became a member of the Board of Trustees of the State University of Iowa. Always a firm believer in the development of the West, Lucas in his later years transferred his support from canals to railroads. During 1850 he took a prominent part in two railroad conventions — one attended by the friends of the Dubuque and Keokuk Railroad, the other by proponents of the line from Davenport to Council Bluffs.

Despite the fact that he had been a Democrat for over half a century, Lucas revealed a remarkable ability to break with the past. It required a great principle — the slavery issue — to cause him to forsake the Democratic party when Franklin Pierce was nominated and cast his vote for Winfield Scott, the Whig candidate. He even presided at a Scott meeting in Iowa City and gave an address which was "loudly and frequently cheered by the delighted audience, among which were a number of ladies." It was his last recorded political speech, made with conviction in the camp of his former opponents. He died at Plum Grove on February 7, 1853, and was buried at Iowa City.

Robert Lucas brought to the young Territory of Iowa the strong arm of the soldier and the steady influence of a practical politician. A crusading idealist, he accepted the Methodist faith at an early date. He detested gamblers and drinkers and would not appoint such men to office. He gave freely of his time and energy to all causes that embraced the common good. A man of intense convictions and genuine patriotism, Lucas never wavered in the cause of duty. His frank and rugged honesty must have left a deep imprint upon all who knew him. The history of Iowa was enriched by his political services.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

The Iowa Sun

Hot and tired, Andrew Logan, Pennsylvania printer, drove into the sprawling village of Davenport on July 7, 1838, atop a wagon with his two small sons and an antiquated printing press. He found himself in the midst of a heated controversy. In the political fight between Davenport and Rockingham over the location of the seat of justice in Scott County, there was no little strife as to which town should get Logan's services as a champion of its cause.

He chose Davenport, however, as the site for his printing office and, locating "on Water Street upstairs in Mr. Davenport's new building", he printed the first number of *The Iowa Sun and Davenport and Rock Island News* on Saturday, August 4th. Logan announced that the paper would be published every Saturday morning. From the first he was an ardent booster of the town he had selected for his home, beseeching his readers to be governed by the principles influencing independent voting and feeling confident that their votes would be cast for Davenport as the logical seat of justice. Although prejudiced himself, Logan promised in his prospectus to maintain po-

litical freedom of expression and to "freely keep the columns of the *Iowa Sun* open to all temperate and well written communications from all parties." Careful to avoid religious discussions, the editor stated that "our columns will be closed against all sectarian principles on the subject of religion."

Logan admitted "having been born and educated a democrat, forming our opinions and political principles in accordance with the doctrines of Jefferson, Clay and other eminent statesmen", and he stated that "we issued our prospectus with the view of giving our paper a party character." He soon discovered, however, that "party politics can be of no consequence to us while we retain a territorial character, consequently this paper shall be conducted on principles calculated to promote the interests of the territory without regard to national politics."

The prospectus pledged the paper's support to the administration of the Territorial government and declared that the *Iowa Sun* would print abstracts of Congressional and Territorial legislation. All the latest items of foreign and domestic news were promised while the *Sun* "cast its rays over the moral and political landscape, regardless of those petty interests and local considerations which might contract its beams." The editor planned to furnish subscribers with factual mate-

rial concerning the country along the Mississippi River, and lastly provide readers with literary pabulum in the form of "original and selected tales, poetry, etc."

This ambitious prospectus established a difficult goal to attain, considering the old press and well-worn type the editor had to work with and the limited facilities for gathering news. Moreover, during the first two years, he had no regular assistants save his two small boys, the elder of whom was but twelve years old.

And so on the first Saturday in August, 1838, the *Iowa Sun* appeared as a six-column, four-page paper measuring about fifteen and a half by nineteen and a quarter inches. This format corresponded approximately to the Dubuque and Burlington papers. The pages were printed practically solid, and the typography was remarkably readable considering the poor equipment used. Most of the type was set in sizes approximating the Brevier and Bourgeois type now in use. Headlines were unknown at the time, and stories were merely labeled. For instance, "Rare Sport" was followed by an account of a fight among four alligators.

Logan's paper was to cost three dollars a year in advance or four dollars at the end of the year. This rate corresponded to subscription prices of

the other Territorial papers. Later in the fall, however, the editor found that advance subscriptions were not being paid and, faced with the necessity of making a living, he announced, "As money is scarce, the editor proposes to take all kinds of country produce in payment in advance or within one month of the time of subscribing." Seeking to increase his circulation, Logan asked for wider patronage and promised to "use all diligence to render the *Iowa Sun* worthy of such support."

The first issue of the *Sun* brought favorable comments. "The sheet is near the size of ours," observed the editor of the *Iowa News*, "and considering the circumstances in which it is put forth, bids fair to take a respectable stand among others in the territory, although behind them in mechanical execution. The editor of the *Burlington Gazette* dramatically expressed a hope that the *Iowa Sun* may "shine steadily and brightly, and after each weekly setting rise again with renewed brightness." He later referred to the *Sun* as a "clever and respectable" paper.

Editor Logan might well be called a one man chamber of commerce, for he devoted much space in nearly every issue to glorifying the "Queen city of the far west" and the surrounding countryside. In the first issue he maintained, "We are for Iowa; for all Iowa, from beginning to end; from north to

south, from east to west," but, more specifically, "of all the places in this territory or in this world for the loveliest of all cities, the spot on which we write (Davenport) is beyond all comparison, the most beautiful." After Davenport was named the county seat, Logan crusaded to have the Territorial capital located there.

Burlington, championed by the *Gazette*, seemed the most likely site, and the editors in the rival towns carried on vituperative debates through their columns. In one instance after the *Gazette* had spoken disparagingly of Davenport as a place for the legislature to meet, Logan retorted that "we would not allow that editor or any other editor to pounce on our lovely little town" in such a manner without answering the "unexpected and unmerited insult." Then in words ringing with city pride he prophesied that "Here, with or without a Legislative Assembly, the Queen city of the far west, must be built."

"It is, indeed, a great honor," wrote Logan in a sarcastic vein, "to be permitted to live in any part of a territory which contains such a wonderful town as Burlington, particularly if its greatness should not become so imposing and inconvenient as to disturb, or destroy, the peace and harmony of the lesser planets, which may wish to revolve around so mighty a centre." And in carrying on

the fight, the editor observed, "Our village is improving with rapid strides. Almost every day witnesses a new building springing up, as if by magic." Logan urged people to move to Davenport for health's sake, and pointed out that whereas surrounding towns were being harassed by epidemics, "this highly favored spot has alone remained healthy."

The *Iowa Sun* was an interesting and informative paper, and Logan strove for variety in the news content, believing, "variety the very spice of life, that gives it all its flavor." Important legislative acts, messages to Congress and Presidential decrees were published. Poetry was to be found in the *Sun's* columns and occasionally short fiction and essays. There were few editorials in the modern sense though Logan frequently editorialized his news. His comment was often tempered with humor. "We suppose John will land a force on Nantucket ere long and issue a similar order," he wrote, following an account of Britain's acquisition of the Falkland Islands and a subsequent hands-off decree.

Logan was highly cognizant of the fact that he was publishing a paper in an agricultural community to be read by farmers and those interested in farming. Hence much space was devoted to discussion of crop conditions, farming techniques,

and timber cultivation. Concerning animal husbandry, the editor wrote that "a good cow is one of the greatest benefactions, which divine Providence ever bestowed upon the human family in the form of a quadruped" — in perfect harmony, no doubt, with the opinion of his subscribers in the rural community. Logan himself was chiefly interested in farming, and, ever a community booster, ran many articles eulogizing the vegetables and produce of the surrounding country. "We Yesterday saw a water melon," he observed, "raised about one and a half miles west of the village, which measured four feet one way and three and a half feet the other."

On another occasion Logan described a trip around the farms near Davenport when he "saw many beets that would have measured from 20 to 30 inches long and from 14 to 18 inches in circumference." His enthusiasm for Scott County produce led him to be badly "sold" once by a practical joker. This fellow stuck half a dozen potatoes together with pegs. Logan viewed the "phenomenal" vegetable "defying any other soil under the sun to produce its equal." Later, upon discovering the hoax, the editor was greatly chagrined, and, it is said, "did not puff mammoth vegetables for three whole weeks."

Editor Logan included entertaining items —

to-day's human-interest stories — in the *Sun*. For the most part these stories, like the general news, were taken from other papers. An account of a "mermaid" captured off the coast of northern Ireland, and of an explorer's struggle with a lion are two examples. Occasionally running short of news, Logan resorted to fillers to round out his sheet. In one issue appeared this item: a woman "was so large when she died, that her friends had to go twice to her funeral." There was apparently no systematic scheme for gathering the news. Correspondents were sporadic in their contributions, leaving the editor the alternative of depending upon gleanings from other papers.

"A liberal discount made to those who advertise by the year," wrote the editor in announcing that advertising rates for one square or less would be one dollar for the first insertion and fifty cents for each continuance. Whether or not this offer influenced the amount of advertising is uncertain, but the fact remains that advertising space jumped from less than two columns in the first issue to nearly five columns by the end of December. All advertisements were one column in width and were measured in terms of squares. There were no cuts, and the advertisements usually appeared in the same type as the news material.

All newspapers in that day printed advertise-

ments of quack medicines, and the longest insertion the *Sun* carried in 1838 was a dissertation over a column long proclaiming that Miles Compound Extract of Tomato exceeded "all former discoveries in medicine, either from the vegetable or mineral kingdom." There were many "For Rent" advertisements similar to those appearing in to-day's papers. Professional cards were, perhaps, more numerous. If a lawyer was just opening a practice, he might supplement his name and profession with the assurance that "all business entrusted to his care will receive prompt and vigilant attention". Often was found the appeal of a man with accounts receivable requesting his debtors "to make immediate payment".

Evidently some advertisers were in the habit of letting their insertions run indefinitely and then complaining when presented with the bill, for "advertising customers" were asked "to mark the number of insertions on their advertisements otherwise they may be continued and charged accordingly."

In spite of a constant financial struggle with subscribers and advertisers, not to mention mechanical difficulties with the ancient press, *The Iowa Sun* and *Davenport and Rock Island News* seemed to flourish for a while. However, when a more modern press, the *Davenport Weekly Ga-*

zette, was introduced in 1841, the *Sun* was allowed to set and in 1842 the paper was discontinued. The press and materials were sold to some Mormons who moved the equipment to Buffalo in Scott County. Andrew Logan, carrying out his paper's watchword, "And Man Went Forth to Till the Ground", began farming six miles west of Davenport on the Iowa City road.

Editor Logan's strenuous efforts to "develop the boundless resources of this territory and to invite to our soil, moral, industrious and intelligent cultivators" did not go unappreciated by the citizens of rapidly growing Davenport, for it was written that "He has always been a good friend to the interests of Scott county, ever carrying with him the goodwill, respect and esteem of all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance."

LUTHER F. BOWERS

The Years Parvin Remembered

Jumping from a creek bank to the sand below, a boy accepted the consequences of a childhood dare. "That jump crippled me for life", said Theodore Sutton Parvin, "and I was henceforth destined to plod among the books, for which I soon developed a surprising taste." No longer could he fulfill the hope of his sea-captain father and become a navigator. Instead, the influence of his devoted Christian mother became dominant.

"As a child," Parvin later reminisced, "and as so many boys before me have done, I commenced with *Robinson Crusoe*, that never-failing delight of youth thirsting for adventure. Then I worked my way through *Aesop's Fables* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, until at last I took up the grand old English of the King James Bible, and upon this I was thoroughly grounded in my home."

The eldest of Josiah and Lydia Harris Parvin's thirteen children, Theodore Sutton was born at Cedarville, Cumberland County, New Jersey, on January 15, 1817. When he was twelve years old his family moved to Ohio. Entering a Cincinnati public school upon his arrival, he soon acquitted himself so well that he attracted the attention of

William Woodward. This pioneer among educators awarded young Parvin a scholarship in order that he might pursue his studies further. Between 1832 and 1835, Parvin attended Woodward College where he excelled in mathematics. There he heard the President of Cincinnati College, William H. McGuffey, who was then preparing his First and Second Readers, lecture on "the atheistical controversy".

Upon graduation from Woodward College, Parvin accepted a position in the Cincinnati public schools and later became an assistant in the office of the State Superintendent of Schools. But he was not without other ambition; he began the study of law under Timothy Walker, a noted Ohio judge and legal educator. In 1837, after graduating from the Cincinnati Law School, he was admitted to the bar. On the first of January that year, just before he was twenty years old, Parvin began a journal in which he was to record the daily happenings for over sixty years. During that time his diary illustrates his studious inclinations and it constitutes a social history. For example, his entry of March 4, 1837, noted the inauguration of President Martin Van Buren and on June 1st, he mentioned an address by Daniel Webster, "a more than good speaker".

About this time, the Iowa country interested this



THEODORE S. PARVIN



lawyer-educator. His longing became more acute upon hearing the romantic tales of his father who had just returned from the "new west". Consequently, Parvin sought out the newly appointed Governor of Iowa Territory. Through a mutual friend, J. C. Avery, he was introduced to Robert Lucas. His reasons for wanting to go to Iowa were, he wrote in his journal, "in part, those common to emigrants, but a part will for the present remain a mystery to all but one". Theodore Parvin was in love.

Possibly impressed by the young man's attainments and perhaps desirous of having a protégé, Lucas decided to take Parvin to Iowa. On August 1, 1838, Parvin wrote in his diary: "At 2 p. m. I took aboard the steamboat 'Tempest', Captain Burt, my books — law, political and miscellaneous — to the number of nearly three hundred volumes." And that afternoon Robert Lucas, accompanied by T. S. Parvin and Jesse Williams left Cincinnati for Iowa Territory.

While the boat moved down the Ohio River, the Governor and his companions spent their time reading and in conversation. On one occasion Parvin recorded: "My friend Williams and myself entered into a conversation on the usual amusements and recreations of young people. He advocates them, while I most heartily disapprove

of the whole." Grounded on sandbars and delayed by storms, the *Tempest* arrived in Saint Louis on August 13th. Two days later the Governor's party aboard the *Brazil* landed at Burlington.

While Governor Lucas was busy with the duties of his new office, protégé Parvin became the Governor's "private secretary". Investigating the possible sites for the Territorial capital, Theodore Parvin and Jesse Williams went with the Governor on his tour of inspection. At Dubuque they met the leading citizens and were hospitably entertained. On August 22nd Parvin was admitted to the practice of law by Judge T. S. Wilson. Toward the end of the week the Governor and his aides visited George W. Jones at Sinsinawa. Thence they took a boat downstream from Galena, spent two days at Davenport, proceeded to Bloomington by stage, and thence returned to Burlington by boat on August 30th. They had seen the principal towns in the Territory and talked with most of the prominent men.

Homesick for family and friends, Parvin was commissioned by Governor Lucas to go to Cincinnati and purchase supplies for the new government. After a journey across Illinois by stage, he arrived at his old home on September 27th. There he renewed old friendships and bought \$5000

worth of stationery and office supplies. He also shipped the books Governor Lucas had selected for the Territorial Library.

Upon his return he found the members of the first Territorial legislature gathering at Burlington. Governor Lucas was busy writing his first message to the Legislative Assembly and Parvin, thinking of his public school experience, suggested some executive recommendations on education. The legislative session soon produced a snarl of controversies. Throughout Governor Lucas's quarrels with Secretary Conway and the legislature, Parvin in speech and in action remained loyal to his superior.

The "private secretary" was rewarded. On April 10, 1839, Lucas appointed Parvin the Territorial Librarian. Fourteen days later he was named prosecutor for the Second Judicial District of the Territory. And on October 7th, he accepted the appointment of United States District Attorney. Through these months of court activity, Parvin's journal records men and events: a first glimpse of Iowa City; the growth of the Territory; the Iowa-Missouri border war; the death of Secretary Conway; and the humor of Judge Joseph Williams.

Vitally interested in politics, Parvin supported the Democratic party until it floundered on the

rocks of the slavery issue. In 1840 he was a delegate to the Territorial Convention of his party and in October of the same year he was chosen Assistant Secretary of the Council. A year later, having lived in Bloomington after his appointment as district prosecutor, he was elected judge of probate for Muscatine County, a position which he held until 1850.

In 1844, when the proposed State Constitution of that year was a partisan issue, Parvin, acting independently, campaigned against it. Though he favored statehood, he could not accept some of the provisions in the organic law, particularly the Nicollet boundaries proposed by Congress. Finally, the Constitution of 1844 was defeated by less than a thousand votes. The influence of Parvin contributed much to that decision.

Although his opposition to the first constitution was contrary to the policy of his party, he seems not to have lost popularity among the Democrats. From 1847 for a period of ten years he was Clerk of the United States District Court. He resigned to become Register of the State Land Office, a position he left in 1858 to become the Democratic candidate for State Auditor. Defeated by J. W. Cattell, he quit politics and turned his attention in other directions.

Parvin the man was in some respects more inter-

esting than Parvin the politician. Adding later to a journal entry of December 19, 1837, Parvin wrote: "To-day first saw Miss O. W. Mowry." Henceforth, however, the historian finds pages of a romance carefully erased. To go west and to find a home, may have been one of the reasons Parvin sought the acquaintance of Robert Lucas. At least he had discussed his decision with Miss Mowry because, previous to his departure, he wrote that with her he "walked out, talking of sundry matters and things." His desire to return so soon to Cincinnati may have been heightened by his budding romance. Letters that traveled between Olive Mowry and Theodore Parvin might have had the scent of lavender: a home hoped for; the faith to live in the new country; and a love that made them close though they were far apart. In April, 1841, just when pioneer Parvin has established a secure foothold, he heard of the dangerous illness of his sweetheart. His political success seemed insignificant when he learned in October, 1841, that Miss Mowry had died. The concluding lines of his entry for that day can be seen through the erasure.

O, trifle not with that strange thing,
The heart —

Romance revived again on November 27, 1842. "At church today", he wrote, "I saw a Miss Mc-

Cully, a very attractive and intelligent looking young lady." After a brief courtship, Agnes McCully and Theodore Parvin were married on May 17, 1843, at the Presbyterian Church in Iowa City. To them six children were born.

On March 14, 1838, before coming to Iowa, Parvin had become a Freemason in Cincinnati. It was not until November 5, 1840, however, that the following Masonic notice appeared in the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*: "The regular members of the Masonic Fraternity of the Territory of Iowa are requested to meet at the room over the store of Ralston & Patterson, near the National Hotel in the city of Burlington, on Wednesday evening next, 11th November, A. D. 1840 A. L. 5840, at 6 o'clock P. M."

According to Parvin's journal about a dozen men attended the meeting from Burlington, Bloomington, Mount Pleasant, and Iowa City. Requesting a charter from the Grand Lodge of Missouri, the Iowa Masons received their dispensation on November 30th. On this date Parvin recorded in his diary: "Lodge in the evening. *First Lodge in the Territory of Iowa*. Elected Junior Deacon." The chief officers elected were: Hiram Bennett, Master; William Thompson, Senior Warden; and Evan Evans, Junior Warden. A few years later, on January 8, 1844, the Grand Lodge of Iowa was

organized and Parvin was named Grand Secretary. He served in this capacity until his death. Later in 1844, the Grand Secretary proposed the founding of a Grand Lodge Library. From a small beginning and under the careful direction of Parvin, the Masonic Library in Cedar Rapids grew to be one of the most important of its kind.

After leaving the field of politics, Theodore S. Parvin became professor of natural sciences at the University of Iowa. From 1860 to 1870 he served on the University faculty. At the same time he was secretary of the newly established State Historical Society. In this capacity he was one of the founders of the *Annals of Iowa*. From 1847 to 1885 during his years in Iowa City, Professor Parvin welcomed lecturers and other distinguished visitors with charming hospitality. While associated with the University, he lived in the historic South Hall.

Following 1870, Professor Parvin attended to his duties as Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Iowa Masons and Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States. Building a library and reminiscing of days past, he spent his last years (after 1885) in Cedar Rapids.

Lecturing on the Iowa of his youth and writing of men who brought Iowa to maturity, Theodore

S. Parvin left a score of invaluable documents on the history of the years he remembered. Particularly fitted for his many contributions, he laid the corner-stone of Iowa history. Alert and keen of perception, he was usually accurate in his judgments; well educated and historically minded, he contributed articles of importance to the learned magazines of Iowa. Living beyond an ordinary span of life, he reckoned among his contemporaries both pioneers and pensioners, Whigs and Populists, Robert Lucas and Albert B. Cummins. Theodore Sutton Parvin was one of the strongest links between Iowa of the past and Iowa of the present.

At last, on June 28, 1901, his voice was silent and his hand still. Parvin died amidst public respect and regret. During his last illness when he was certain of his immediate fate, the old man remarked, "The men who made Iowa, and those of them who made Masonry in Iowa — all that band of valiant and great-hearted men — they are with me, and I cannot lack for good company."

Theodore Sutton Parvin wrote his own tribute. Inscribed in his diary was this aphorism: "Every reasonable being should be able to give some rational account of the manner in which he has spent his time."

JACK T. JOHNSON

A Commonplace Calendar

Through the dog days of August a hundred years ago Territorial politics grew hotter. Neighborhood talk was accented by the Governor's tour, rivalry was intensified by seat-of-government contests, and attention was diverted by a traveling circus.

Wednesday, August 1. G. P. Stiles and S. M. Reno opened a high school in Burlington for "ladies and gentlemen of all ages".

Thursday, August 2. Anticipating building needs at Davenport, Antoine Le Claire and George Davenport had a supply of pine lumber, shingles, window sash, nails, glass, and white lead for sale.

Friday, August 3. G. W. Cook wanted to rent his four-room house on Court Street in Burlington to a "genteel family". § Secretary Conway was in Dubuque. He had no news that Governor Lucas was on his way to Iowa.

Saturday, August 4. The Mississippi was slowly receding after being at its highest stage for several days. § "Like the *Sun*, which distributes its light and heat over the beautiful prairies of Iowa, on a broad, liberal and impartial scale", Andrew Logan published the first issue of the *Iowa*

Sun at Davenport. He hoped his paper, "observing this instructive economy of Nature", would "cast its rays over the moral and political landscape, regardless of those petty interests and local considerations which might contract its beams." § L. Longuemare & Brother started a new grocery and provision store in Dubuque. § Simeon Clark attached the goods of Thomas Hinton for debt.

Sunday, August 5. The Methodists of Burlington were pleased to see the progress being made on their new brick church.

Monday, August 6. Rockingham and Davenport engaged in a spirited election for the county seat of Scott County. Davenport won. § Meanwhile, Bentonsport and Van Buren led several rival places for the seat of justice in Van Buren County.

Tuesday, August 7. Benjamin F. Wallace made a short speech in Burlington. § Mrs. Catharine M. Bronson, aged twenty-three and distinguished for her amiable disposition and "reverence for the principles and duties of revealed religion", died at the home of her father, William Janes, in Burlington. § Mrs. Amelia A. Barton, aged twenty-five, died after a distressing illness of three weeks. She left two small children.

Wednesday, August 8. James T. Campbell announced his intention of publishing the *Iowa Ban-*

ner at Bloomington. He promised to abstain from "partizan vulgarity" and follow "broad and independent principles of free discussion".

Thursday, August 9. A deputation from the Mississippi Emigration Company in Upper Canada was reported to be "now in our country" seeking a location for a colony in the vicinity of Rock Island. § Rainy weather was spoiling grain in the shock. § Chapman and Rorer spoke for three hours to "a large concourse" in Burlington.

Friday, August 10. A "Taxpayer" was concerned about the rumor that two Dubuque County commissioners were aliens. His fears were unfounded. § Protracted meetings of the Rock Creek church began at the Rock Spring school-house.

Saturday, August 11. The acceptance of Miners' Bank notes at par by two Saint Louis brokers was good news. § John Wilson announced that his new steam ferry boat would soon be ready. § Recent rains caused the rivers to rise again. The Mississippi was "in excellent navigable order". § A rumor that Conway might convene the Legislative Assembly at Davenport worried the Burlington editor. § Davis Gillilan attached "the goods and chattels, rights and credits" of Thomas Hinton.

Sunday, August 12. Martin A. Britton, a

Farmington merchant, married Miss Louisa A. Rollins. § James M. Hendricks lost "a large red deerskin pocket book" in Burlington.

Monday, August 13. Resumption of specie payments by Missouri banks was hailed as a sign of better times. § Corn was selling for a dollar a bushel, flour for ten dollars a barrel, and wages ranged from twenty dollars a month for farm laborers to three dollars a day for mechanics. § Wheat and oats were reported to be "unusually fine this season, and corn promises to be equally so."

Tuesday, August 14. Secretary Conway went to Burlington prepared to issue an election order. He wrote to Albert M. Lea at Saint Louis asking him to delay his survey of the Missouri-Iowa boundary until an Iowa commissioner could be appointed.

Wednesday, August 15. Governor Lucas arrived at Burlington. Secretary Conway left for Davenport. § The Governor's proclamation apportioning members of the legislature fixed September 10th as election day. § Ann Maria Langton notified Daniel Langton to appear in the September term of court and show cause why her divorce petition for "extreme cruelty, and willful desertion" should not be granted.

Thursday, August 16. Settlers formed an as-

sociation at Rock Springs to protect their claims against speculators at the land sale. § The opening of the Burlington land office was delayed because the plats had not been received.

Friday, August 17. A caucus at the house of J. A. Burchard five miles east of Davenport nominated candidates for local offices.

Saturday, August 18. The Mississippi was falling rapidly. § J. A. Hedges had clean new wheat seed for sale at his mill on Crow Creek. § An old bay mare strayed into the yard of Elihu Alvord at Long Grove. § John King declined to run for the first legislature because he did not feel able to discharge such important work. § The Dubuque trustees pledged the credit of the town for the digging of three wells. § John H. Garrigues was "heartily tired" of dunning the citizens of Burlington "for the last two or three months, for their Taxes". § Governor Lucas started on his tour of the Territory.

Sunday, August 19. The Iowa Temperance Society met at the Methodist Church in Dubuque.

Monday, August 20. Governor Lucas talked politics with many citizens of Dubuque. § Scott & Taylor still advertised "30 KEGS fresh BUTTER" received March 31st on the *Cygnet*.

Tuesday, August 21. The Arena circus with the "most beautiful horses", the best riders, "Jack

May, the humorous and facetious Clown", and a military band performed at Farmington.

Wednesday, August 22. A convention in the Dubuque district was proposed to nominate "our most *able, intelligent, efficient, and honest men*" for the legislature. § The circus showed at West Point.

Thursday, August 23. A caucus at Bellevue expressed "unbounded confidence" in John H. Rose for the legislature. § Taking advantage of the crowd attracted by the circus, Wallace, Rorer, and Chapman electioneered in Fort Madison.

Friday, August 24. John S. David auctioned lot 316 in Burlington. § The Iowa Thespian Association met at the Shakespeare House for important business. § Residents of Augusta saw the circus.

Saturday, August 25. The trustees of the Burlington Academy & Teacher's Seminary rented a "commodious and comfortable house" and hired J. P. Stewart to teach two terms of five months each. § Levi Whittle offered to bet \$500 that Boanerges could beat old Blue Buck running 300 yards any day at Dehague's. § Andrew Logan printed the Constitution of the United States in his *Iowa Sun* because public officers were often ignorant of its provisions and put "vexatious and wild constructions" on this "Palladium of our lib-

erties". § Governor Lucas arrived in Davenport "accompanied by two respectable and intelligent young gentlemen from Cincinnati. § The circus clown made the children of Burlington laugh.

Sunday, August 26. The Reverend Mr. Leonard preached at the Academy in Burlington. § Peter H. Engle was ill due to nearly drowning recently in the Wapsipinicon River.

Monday, August 27. After a long illness, Joseph Jennings died of "pulmonary consumption" at the age of twenty-two. § Candidate Van Rensselaer Tompkins of Montpelier, Muscatine County, favored county proprietorship of county seat towns. § The circus riders performed at Wapello.

Tuesday, August 28. The Mississippi was falling about a foot a day. § Governor Lucas spent the day at Rockingham.

Wednesday, August 29. A "Ladies' travelling basket containing various articles of clothing" was lost between Danville and Burlington. § Though compelled to withdraw from the campaign for Congress because of "unexpected and unavoidable changes" in business and health, Milo H. Prentice hoped his friends would vote for a candidate who "loves Democracy and hates monopolies of all kinds, and particularly Banking." § Bloomington saw the circus.

Thursday, August 30. The Governor's tour of the Territory ended at Burlington early in the morning. § At the Wisconsin Hotel, 121 citizens voted to support Amos Ladd instead of W. M. Devoe for county commissioner. § The circus performed at Rockingham.

Friday, August 31. Samuel Bronson, aged thirty, survived his wife, Catharine, less than a month. § The upper tier of seats at the circus was well filled with Davenport ladies.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS

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