

A Commonplace Calendar

The daily lives of Iowa pioneers a hundred years ago in September were filled with worry about pre-emption rights, results of the election, malaria, lawsuits, drought, and the resumption of school.

Saturday, September 1. Alonzo P. Phelps lectured at the Methodist Church in Dubuque on "Popular Education". § John S. Abbott, aged twenty-seven, died in Bloomington. § The last issue of the Fort Madison *Patriot* was published. § Governor Lucas informed the Secretary of the Treasury that he had ordered \$5000 worth of books for the Territorial library from Edward Lucas and Company in Cincinnati. § James Davis of Burlington was appointed commissioner for Iowa to locate the Missouri boundary.

Sunday, September 2. Citizens of Dubuque noticed the stench from bones thrown into the street near the post office by butchers. § It seemed likely that the Methodist Church in Burlington would be finished in time to accommodate the legislature.

Monday, September 3. Settlers in township 69 in Lee County met at the home of Thomas Clarke and organized a club to protect their claims at the

land sale. § Alonzo P. Phelps opened his "permanent school" at the Methodist Church for "scholars of all classes", and promised strict attention to "morals as well as manners of pupils".

§ The Temperance Society of Dubuque met at the Methodist Church to discuss whether its object could be best attained by adhering to the pledge of total abstinence or by prohibiting the use of spirituous liquors.

Tuesday, September 4. Political fervor ran high at the sumptuous banquet at the Burlington House in honor of Governor Lucas. § Citizens of Bellevue were entertained by the Arena circus.

Wednesday, September 5. Governor Lucas advised Secretary Conway to locate his office at Burlington so that the business of the Territory could be conducted more conveniently. § The circus arrived at Dubuque.

Thursday, September 6. Bayless & Cooper began their Thursday evening auctions of new dry goods and clothing.

Friday, September 7. With no news in the mail, no editorial written, the "devil" sick, and many election tickets to print, the editor of the *Iowa News* found the music from the circus distracting and the "bills of the mosquitoes" more annoying than the landlord's. § J. Lamson's steam ferry at Burlington was "in complete order".

Saturday, September 8. The Mississippi was falling rapidly. § A meeting of settlers was called at Augusta to agree upon "rules to be observed at the approaching land sales". § The Dubuque commissioners threw out enough illegal votes for Rockingham so that Davenport won the county-seat election by a narrow margin. § John H. McKenny joined James Clarke in the publication of the *Burlington Gazette* and the shop was moved to Ralston's new building opposite Funk's bakery. § A. W. Carpenter opened a new jewelry store in Burlington. § A house with two front rooms and a hall between could be rented for \$350 a year. § The "choicest Liquors" were available at the bar of S. Barkley's hotel in Burlington and his table was spread with "the best the country affords. His stabling is spacious, and well supplied with oats and hay."

Sunday, September 9. Settlers were busy studying the regulations for proving their land claims and adjusting boundaries to the survey.

Monday, September 10. Township plats were received at the Burlington land office. § Voting was light at the first Territorial election. § Van Buren won the county-seat contest in Van Buren County.

Tuesday, September 11. James T. Campbell, on his way home to get a press to start a news-

paper at Bloomington, died at Covington, Kentucky. § At Mrs. Parrott's hotel William M. Poyntz died of bilious fever. § District court opened at Prairie La Porte, T. S. Wilson presiding.

Wednesday, September 12. The Dubuque fish market was well supplied with large pike.

Thursday, September 13. Justice Mason opened district court at Dubuque, but procedure was delayed by the "glorious confusion" of legal papers.

Friday, September 14. The trustees of Dubuque Seminary, well impressed with Phelps's school, resolved to hire him as principal. § Joseph M. Street at the new agency on the Des Moines River wrote to Governor Lucas that he could not keep liquor and unscrupulous traders away from the Sauk and Fox Indians without force.

Saturday, September 15. William Jaynes, "generally considered a *good man*", died of apoplexy. His daughter and son-in-law had died in August. § Sappington's anti-bilious pills were recommended as a cure for "ague, typhus fever, etc." § Settlers near Round Prairie organized a club to protect their claims at the land sale. § Richard F. Barrett planned to attend the land sales with plenty of money to buy claims and "sell them to the settlers, at a reasonable advance on a credit of from one to five years." § The *Iowa*

News looked "monkish" because the year-old rollers were worn out.

Sunday, September 16. No steamboat had reached Burlington from below for a week due to low water. Two or three were stranded on the Des Moines Rapids. § Oscar Mattox, infant son of E. Mattox, died at Dubuque.

Monday, September 17. The rates at Richard Plumbe's Washington Hotel in Dubuque were \$1.75 a day for board and lodging.

Tuesday, September 18. Brick buildings were going up in Burlington — stores by Rorer, Lamson, and Ladd, the Methodist Church, and the market house. But the square where the capitol had burned was still unimproved.

Wednesday, September 19. The editor of the *Gazette* thought the trustees of Burlington would buy a fire engine, hose, hooks, and ladders if the citizens would contribute the money.

Thursday, September 20. "Rockingham" addressed a long argument to the Dubuque commissioners proving they were wrong in making Davenport the county seat.

Friday, September 21. Justice Joseph Williams arrived at Burlington.

Saturday, September 22. Election results were still unknown, but Engle seemed to have defeated Chapman. § Captain Asa Whitney died at Ca-

manche. § James Clarke proposed forming a "Historical Society of Iowa" to preserve the knowledge of the pioneers.

Sunday, September 23. Jack Frost whitened the fences and house tops as far south as Davenport, but too lightly to injure tomatoes and beans.

Monday, September 24. The Dubuque land office opened. § Justice Mason convened the Jackson County district court at Bellevue. § United States Commissioner J. Fleming began adjudicating claims against the Sauk and Fox Indians at Rock Island.

Tuesday, September 25. After a perilous trip of fourteen weeks "across an uninhabited country, without roads, and in small carts drawn by oxen", several "hardy and industrious" Scotch families from Selkirk's colony on the Red River settled on the Big Maquoketa in Jones County.

Wednesday, September 26. Daniel Kelly, infant son of James and Mary Kelly, died at Davenport. § Consumption killed Abigail Smith, aged seventeen, near Dubuque.

Thursday, September 27. Two brothers named Comstock drowned in a pond near Shook's Ferry on the Wapsipinicon River while duck hunting. § William Remey, baby son of W. B. Remey, and William Hendershott, aged ten, son of David Hendershott, died in Burlington.

Friday, September 28. Silas Lamson, an exemplary Christian, died in Burlington "of a distressing illness" and left a wife and two small children. § A light shower at Dubuque ended the long dry hot season and promised relief from bilious fever and malaria. § The river started to rise, but the *Palmyra* continued to ply between the head of the rapids and Galena. § The hotel at Davenport was "filled with strangers, who have come to select a future home in this delightful region."

Saturday, September 29. Editor Clarke defended patronage, for "how else can an administration sustain itself"; Editor Logan warned his readers that the "people have much more to fear from the encroachments of congressional acts than they have from any other source" and might "shortly expect to see our state rights sink before the powerful arm of a central or consolidated government"; and Editor Russell favored temperance but was opposed to invading the right of men to sell and drink liquor. When temperance societies engage in political campaigns, he thought "the lovers of liberty should discountenance them." § Engle's election seemed certain.

Sunday, September 30. Corn was ripe and buckwheat ready for cutting.

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