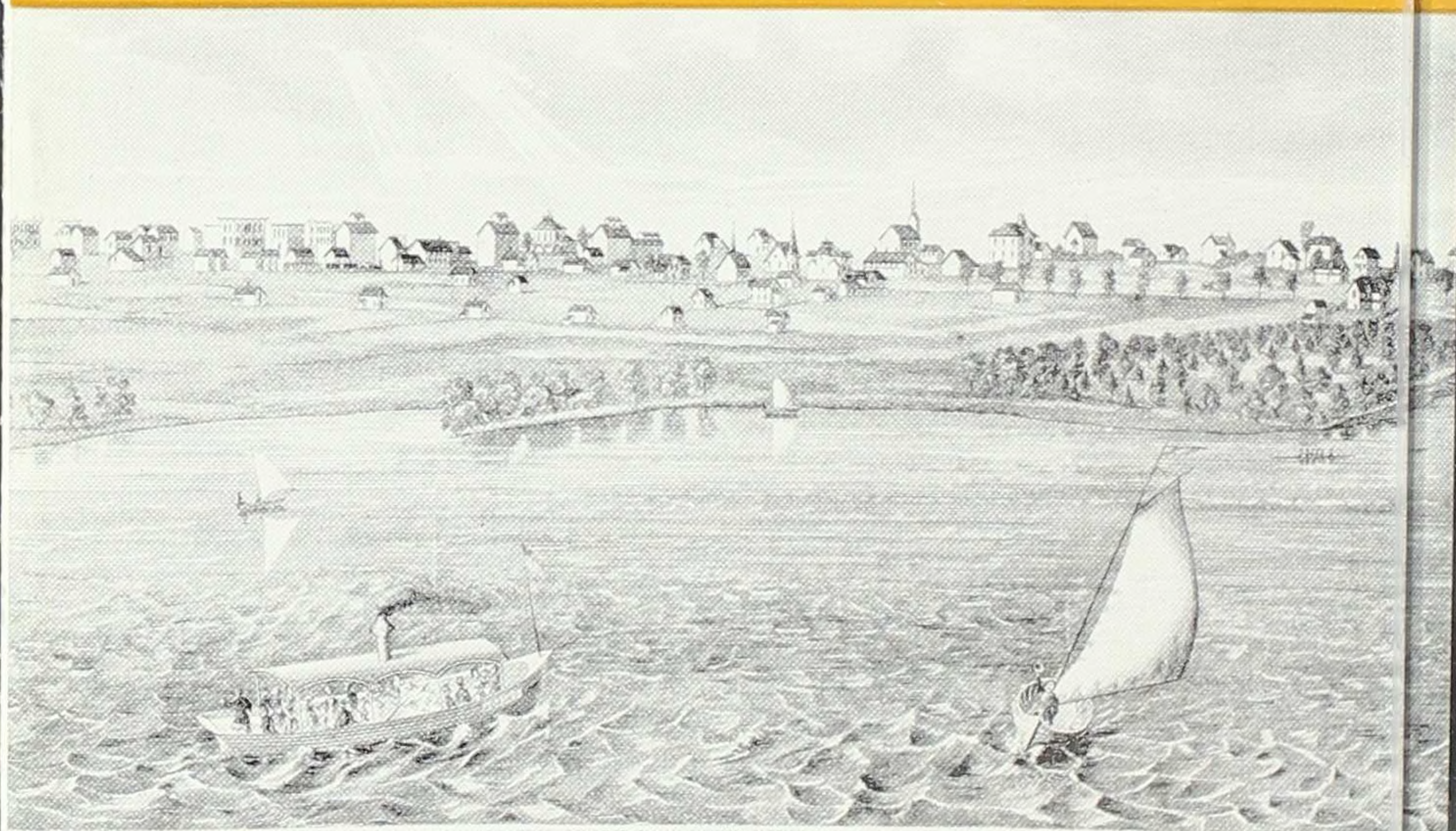


*The*  
**PALIMPSEST**



STEAMER J. D. EDDY READY AT ALL TIMES FOR PLEASURE PARTIES CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BAPTIST CHURCH M. C. CHURCH SCHOOL HOUSE CATH. CHURCH

**CITY OF STORM LAKE.**  
BUENA VISTA COUNTY, IOWA

VIEW FROM LAKE LOOKING NORTH EAST

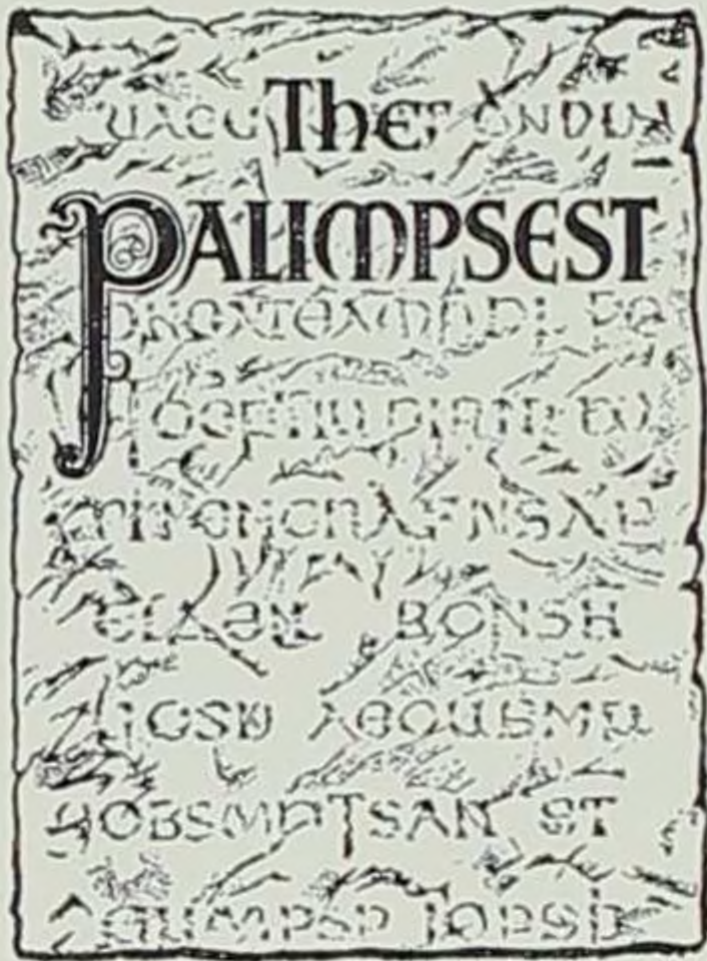
**LETTERS TO IOWA EDITORS**

Published Monthly by

**The State Historical Society of Iowa**

Iowa City, Iowa

MARCH, 1959



## The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material 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 record 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.

## Contents

### LETTERS TO IOWA EDITORS

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

Letters to the Editor	81
Jesse Clement — Gleaner	83
Where Two of Us Went	95
A Visit to Pella	100
When Fonda Was Young	105
A Trip to Sioux City	113
A Gallup Poll in 1872	119
An Early Iowa Wagon Train	124

## Illustrations

All steel engravings are from A. T. Andreas' *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa* (1875). The paintings are from volume one of Benj. F. Gue's *History of Iowa*.

## Author

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# THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

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## Letters to the Editor

One of the most valuable sources of information on early Iowa are the countless letters written to editors describing the various communities in the Hawkeye State. Some of these letters were by skilled observers, like Jesse Clement and his "Gleanings from the Note-Book of the Itinerant Editor." Others were written by local travelers commissioned by a busy editor to report on conditions existing in the surrounding country. All played an important part in acquainting readers, be they local or way back East, with the spectacular growth of the mushrooming settlements on the Iowa frontier.

The significance of such letters was noted by the editor of the Dubuque *Weekly Times* on January 13, 1857:

Few works are read with greater avidity and interest than those on travel. In this country it is peculiarly the case, and has resulted in a mania for traveling and adventures and their record. In many instances, personal experiences first find their way to the public mind in the rough

draft for the newspaper; after which they are polished up and presented in a durable form, and find a permanent location on book shelves. To some extent newspapers [Eastern] have made traveling narratives of less consequence, by the employment of correspondents in different sections of the world, who herald passing events rather than passenger events.

News is now the demand of the age, and we are more concerned to know what is transpiring among men, than know what man is. The latter is of more consequence, but "dollars and cents" are involved in the former. Philanthropy, chiefly, is interested in the one, Commerce in the other, and as the efforts of commerce transcend those of philanthropy, so is the desire for news greater than that for personage.

The sampling of letters culled from various Iowa newspapers between 1859 and 1872 are illustrative of those written about various Iowa frontier communities. In most instances these letters represent an untapped reservoir of information that could not be found elsewhere. They are but another evidence of the value of old newspaper files in recounting the story of Iowa's colorful past.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

## Jesse Clement—Gleaner

[One of the most prolific letter writers was Jesse Clement, co-founder and editor of the daily and weekly *Dubuque Times* in 1857. Jesse Clement was born in Dracut, Massachusetts, on June 12, 1815, the eighth in line from Robert Clements, the first American ancestor. He worked hard on his father's farm but early showed an interest in books and literature. He studied English in the "Academical and Theological Institution" at New Hampton, New Hampshire, gaining a good education while teaching in various New England one-room schools. He was married in 1841, moved to Buffalo, New York, in 1842, and arrived at Dubuque, Iowa, in 1857.

Jesse Clement became a popular lecturer in many Iowa communities. He traveled widely throughout the northern half of Iowa, visiting scores of communities and writing in great detail about them. His articles appeared in successive issues of the *Dubuque Weekly Times*, chiefly during 1859, under the caption "Gleanings From The Note-Book of the Itinerant Editor." The following excerpts from his articles on Iowa Falls, Fort Dodge, and Decorah appeared in the *Weekly Times* for January 20, 27, and March 10, 1859. THE EDITOR.]

Iowa Falls, Sunday, January 9th, 1859

Iowa Falls has two religious societies, Methodist and Presbyterian, but there being no meeting here this forenoon we went to Georgetown, a miniature village, a mile and a half west, where the

Methodists are holding their Quarterly Meeting. The Presiding Elder of the Iowa Falls District, Rev. D. N. Holmes, who resides here, preached an excellent sermon from the text "Quench not the Spirit." The meeting was held in a log school house, about twenty feet square, and there were something like eighty persons in it, one tenth babies! These little creatures, by sitting in their parent's laps, did not take up much room; nevertheless the house was decidedly crowded. With two or three exceptions, all found a seat of some kind. One man took off his overcoat, folded it up and sat down upon it near the huge stove. Still further to exhibit his inventive genius, he took a small round stick of wood, put one end of it under the stove, and letting it rest upon a very large stick, as a fulcrum, he hung his hat on the other end. He seemed to be as careful of his hat as every man *should* be of his heart; he would not soil it. His overcoat was of less consequence. His inner raiment — the clothing of the soul — he may be more careful of. From the fact that he took notes of the discourse in phonographic style, we conclude he is a man of education — very likely the schoolmaster of Georgetown. He acted as though he was at home in *that* school house.

In the early part of the meeting, we began to think that some of the mothers of the ten babies, were idolaters, and were about to make an offering of their tender ones to Moloch, as they held them

very near the red-hot stove! Finally we concluded that those affectionate mothers had come a long way to church and were roasting the little folk for dinner! They had probably been reading Dean Smith, who, with unbounded sincerity and true clerical gravity, speaks of roasted or fricassed babies as very choice living. Perhaps he is correct, but at present *we* shall stick to fat prairie chickens instead of an oleaginous infant.

In spite of the contortions and agonizing groans of the half roasted infants, the meeting was really impressive. We left the house with an exalted opinion of Mr. Holmes, who is laboring hard in his Father's vineyard — a portion of that vineyard over which the waves of Saxon civilization have but recently flowed.

Rev. Dr. Williams, of the Amity Street Baptist Church, New York, calls the Methodists "the Janizaries of the Protestant Church." They are found in all new settlements, scouting for souls as well as prospecting for farms. The bold, rough, hardy soldiers, scarcely excelled in endurance and self-denying devotion to their Divine Captain's service by the members of the Society of Jesus.

Although but one church edifice has yet been erected in Iowa Falls, the people are a temperate and moral class, and other houses of worship, will, no doubt, be erected another season. As we stated last June, there are no liquor shops in this place, and every man seems to be industrious as well as

sober. The refinements of older, more eastern places are seen here. The first sound we heard last evening, as the coach halted in front of the Western house to let us out, was the thrilling strains of a piano. The proprietor of the house, Mr. H. P. Jones, came from the "City of Elms," and he has brought with him his accomplished sons and daughters, and all the refined agencies of his New England home — the musical instruments, the library and the pictures which graced the "best room" in the old homestead. He has also brought with him the piety which sweetened his eastern home, and its fragrance is witnessed in his wilderness lodge — for Iowa Falls is literally in the woods. A Congregationalist minister, Mr. Bartell, of Chicago, is to settle here in the spring, and four members of Mr. Jones' family will unite with his church by letter. More kind and obliging people we have never met in a public house west of the Mississippi. Mr. J. kept a hotel nineteen years in New Haven.

Fort Dodge, January 12th, 1859

Have ridden fifty miles by stage to-day, from Alden, Hardin county, over gophers' nests and through prairie fires; have been excited, and are decidedly dizzy to-night, and may not write very luminously.

The road from Alden to Webster City leads all the way through an open and sightly prairie, and for twenty-five miles we passed but one house. At



that one we changed horses and took dinner. It is a one story building, about twelve by eighteen feet, with two rooms in it. The "best room" has a small stove in it, where we first saw coal burning in the interior of the State. The room has also two or three chairs in it, the "Pilgrim's Progress," and an imperfect pack of cards!

The other room, the kitchen and dining room, contained a table that was new once; four or five chairs that were whole, no doubt when new, and a piano, which had emigrated from the Atlantic coast. It was of the latest style — twenty years ago or more.

We asked the good lady of the house if she were not lonesome? She answered that she was not, because she had neighbors. We asked her where they were, expecting she would mention a family at Skunk Grove, five miles distant, but she replied that "her neighbors were at Webster City, only eleven miles off!" She is a contented, neat and tidy woman; makes good corn bread, and we hope she may live many years to feed pilgrims on their way through Prairie Land.

We passed Webster City, a new and thriving town on the Boone river, about two o'clock this afternoon, halting only long enough to shake hands with a few warm friends, and to take a glance at the new Town Hall. We shall have our say of that place on our return.

This evening we passed near two prairie fires

and through another. There was no breeze, and the fires spread at a moderate pace; yet as they approached us we could not help feeling a sense of *danger*, which Burke maintains is the mother of the sublime. It is certainly a grand sight to see one of these fires, stretching along for two or three miles, crackling and roaring, and lapping up the tall grass with its forked tongue.

The last ten miles of our ride this evening, was by the light of prairie fires, there being all the time at least two or three of them within a mile or two of us, making the heavens red with their light. We alighted here at the St. Charles Hotel, C. W. White, proprietor, between seven and eight o'clock, and found a good fire in a large chamber ready for our use.

We found plenty of snow one week ago, between Dubuque and Coffin's Grove, fifteen miles west of Nottingham; poor sleighing from the Grove to Cedar Falls; still poorer through Grundy and Hardin counties; and no snow at all this side of Webster City. The stage runs all the way from Fort Dodge to Nottingham on wheels. We have had good, comfortable, two-horse hacks, this side of Cedar Falls, and have had a pleasant ride — thanks to the enterprising Western Stage Company. Frank Dale, the stage agent at Nottingham, and every man this side of there, authorized to receipt fare, are disposed to be accommodating and human.

The valley of the Des Moines river, first seen by the light of prairie fires, aided by the moon, looks very attractive at this point, so far, at least, as natural scenery is concerned, but we shall speak of this feature after a survey of the town by day light.



Fort Dodge — established in 1850.

The village lies upon the east bank of the river. Its site was selected for a military post by Colonel [Richard B.] Mason nine years ago, when all this part of the country was a wilderness. He was then colonel of the 6th Infantry. His design, in fixing a post here, was to keep in check the Sioux

Indians, this being regarded as the neutral ground between them and the Sacs and Foxes. Major [Samuel] Woods came here in the spring of 1850, and established the post. At first he gave it the name of Fort Clarke, but there being a post of that name in New Mexico, it was changed to Fort Dodge, by order of the Secretary of War, in honor of Senator [Henry] Dodge of Wisconsin. The troops were removed to Fort Ridgely in July, 1853.

In the fall of 1856, a land office was established here, and the county took the name of the "Fort Dodge Land District." From a pamphlet before us, we learn that the present town site was purchased, on being vacated by the government troops, by the "Fort Dodge Company," consisting of Hon. Bernhart Henn, Hon. George Gillaspay, Col. Jesse Williams, and Maj. William Williams.

The government barracks, eleven in number, have been converted into dwelling houses, shops, &c. The first building, aside from them, was erected in the spring of 1855, or less than four years ago, yet the town now contains about one thousand inhabitants. We shall have more to say of it to-morrow.

Decorah, February 24, 1859

A very lovely village is Decorah, the shire town of Winneshiek county. Situated on the Upper Iowa river, with high bluffs surrounding it on every side, and the stream itself pursuing its tor-

tuous course through the town, the traveler may search a long time before he finds a village surrounded by finer scenery than is here presented to the eye. The first thing we did this morning, after breakfast, was to ascend to the top of the Court House, and take a view of the country. The prospect is not very extended, but the scenery is highly diversified and replete with beauty. When clothed in her garment of green, Nature, at this point, must be fascinating.

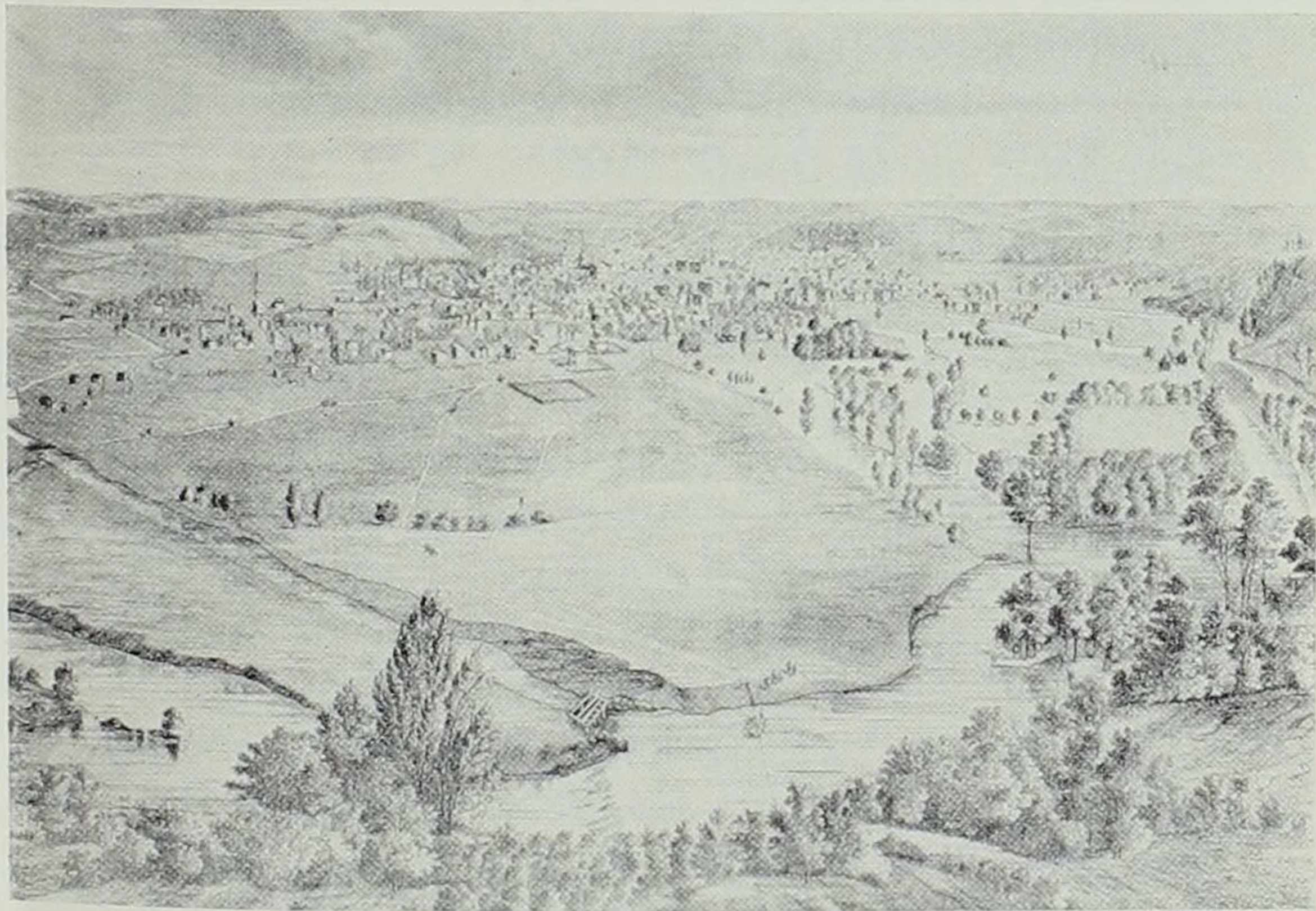
There are several natural curiosities in this neighborhood, some of which we have this day visited, in company with Mr. Belfoy, of the *Decorah Gazette*, and E. E. Cooley and Chas. C. Tupper of the Decorah Bar. We first went to the noted Cave, half a mile north of the town on the opposite side of the river. — The stream being open, we were obliged to go nearly two miles round, and along its steep bank to get to the point. This Cave is in the shelving and rent limestone, seventy or eighty feet above the bed of the river. For sixty rods or more, up and down the stream, huge masses of rock have been separated from the mountainous bed, and tumbled part of the way down to the water's edge, yet still pressing against the solid masonry. Between these loosened rocks and the main ledge, immense fissures are found. One of these is the Cave into which we went, in a slightly descending direction, a distance of ninety or a hundred feet, most of the way in nearly an

erect position. Mr. Cooley led the way with a truncated candle and Mr. Belfoy brought up the rear with a lamp. Having remained in the Cave long enough to write our several names on the smooth limestone, and thus secure immortality, and having whistled in vain to call the rattle snakes from their winter's sleep, we sought the open sky and day light once more. There is more or less ice in this Cave throughout most of the year. Large quantities of it are taken out in the summer, and used for manufacturing ice cream, and for other purposes. We met one man to-day, who took out five barrels of the ice at one time in the summer of 1857. It is said that the ice forms more rapidly in May and in the early part of June than in the coldest winter weather — though we cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement.

Ascending, with great difficulty, to the top of the bluffs, between two hundred and three hundred feet above the bed of the river, and taking a survey of the town at our feet and of the surrounding country, we sought an Indian trail, and passing westward, through prairie grass higher than our heads, we soon came to the Spring Mill of Mr. A. McCalley — a great curiosity. The water gushes out of the fissures in the rocks, seventy or eighty feet above the surface of the Upper Iowa, in a volume at least fifteen inches in diameter; passes along a flume eight or ten rods, and enters the flouring mill on its top fifty feet from the ground,

where it falls upon the huge water wheel and thus performs its duty. The spring is never dry, and in some parts of the year, when the water is low, it is very clear. Just now surface water from remote sink holes, rushes in, and makes it turbid.

A short distance west of West Decorah, is another Spring Mill, owned by Mr. J. E. B. Morgan. It is almost as much of a curiosity as Mr. McCalley's.



Decorah — from bluff over the ice cave.

Trout Run, two miles southeast of Decorah, is another curiosity, the stream running only about half a mile before it leaps into the arms of the Up-

per Iowa, yet being of sufficient volume to form excellent water power.

Decorah was named for a chief of the Winnebago tribe. He was buried near the public square, partially in one of the streets. Teams have passed over his grave to-day, and the spot is marked simply by a slight depression of the ground. Seven or eight years ago, the surroundings of the grave were in a good state of preservation, and later than that date members of the tribe came here to visit the grave of their brave chief, who went, but a few years ago, to the hunting grounds and serried fields of the Spirit Land.

When Saxon settlers first came here to make their homes, they found Decorah's grave enclosed, with stones over it to keep the wolves from rifling it. Crotched stakes were stuck down at each end of it; a pole was put upon them, and against the pole puncheons of wood were put up, thus forming a roof. The aggressive hand of civilization has scattered these relics of savage custom, and the rude swain drives his team over the bones of the old chieftain! We are happy to learn that some measures are soon to be taken to protect these remains.

In our letter dated at Elkader, the name of that place was carefully spelled eight or ten times, with an E in the last syllable, but the compositor has it Elkador every time. The correct spelling is Elkader as we were informed by Hon. Henry B. Carter.



## Where Two of Us Went

[The following letter by "One of Us" describes the vicissitudes of winter travel in north central Iowa in pioneer days. It appeared in the Dubuque *Weekly Times* of February 24, 1859. THE EDITOR.]

Belmont, Wright Co., Iowa, Feb. 9, 1859  
Messrs. Editors. — Early this morning two of us left the flourishing town of Webster City — which was the city so happily described by your "itinerant" [Jesse Clement], on a trip to some of the counties lying up near the Minnesota line. The mercury indicated 12° below zero when we started, and a stiff breeze was blowing from the North, full in our faces. Our outfit consisted of an old "pung," drawn by two nags in very tolerable condition, two buffalo robes, three large heavy "comfortables," two blankets, a basket of edibles, and a big hickory block, half charred by baking in a red-hot oven, for the purpose of keeping up the circulation in our pedal extremities. Being both of us utter temperance men, it is not presumable that anything like "Claret" or "Schoidam Schnapps" formed a part of our real or imaginary necessities. We ascended the valley of the White Fox, keeping on our route several beautiful prairies. After proceeding some seven miles we passed the shelter

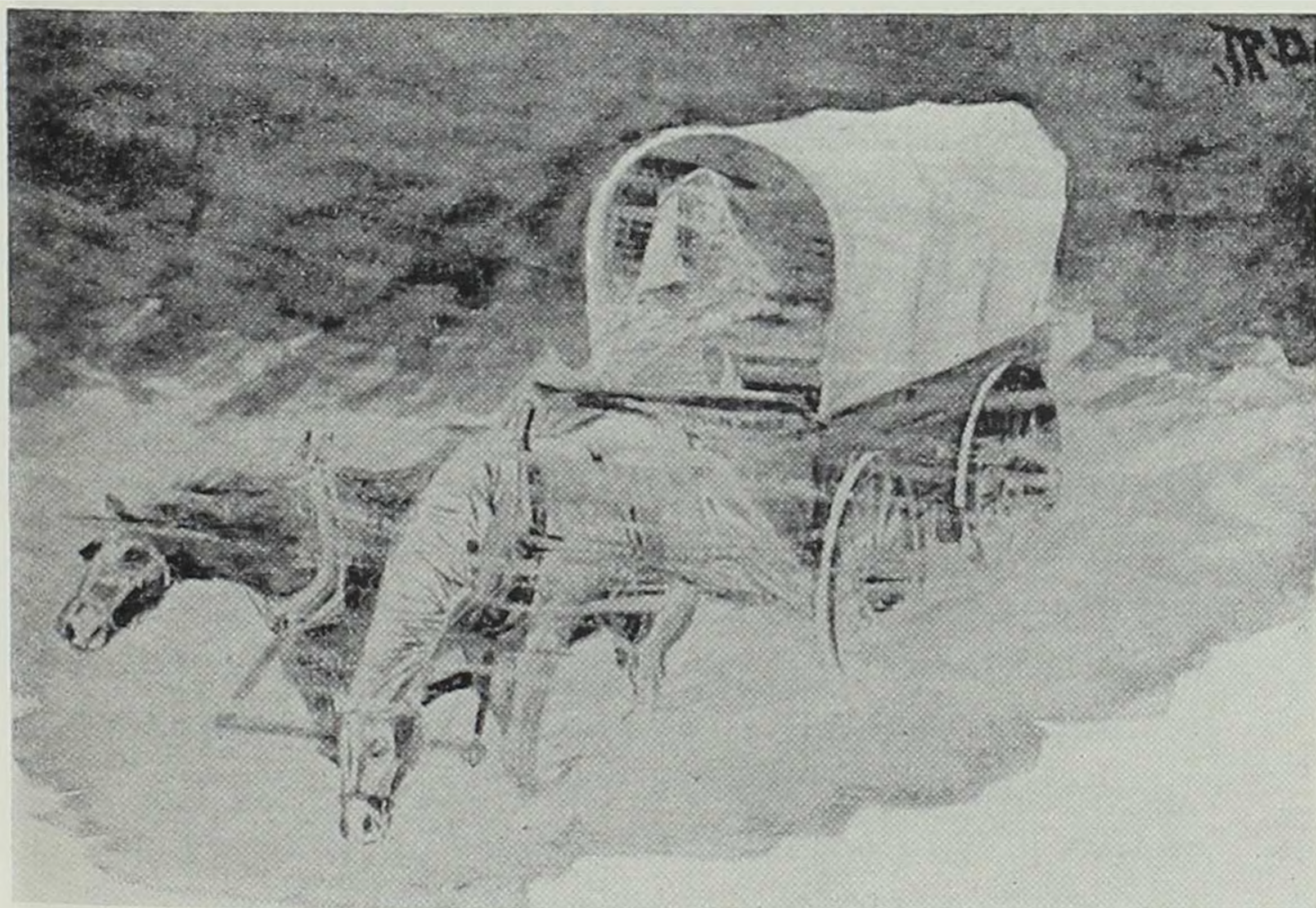
of the last grove, and struck out upon the open prairie. Here old Boreas greeted us with more ferocity than I have experienced at his hands for many a month past. We had proceeded but a short distance when my traveling chum informed me that my nose was freezing. I applied a cataplasm — always ready — of snow. We had proceeded but a short distance when he informed me that my left cheek was also “taking it.” Applied the usual prescription and passed on. Some dozen or more times during the forenoon ride, did my comrade impart to me similar gratifying information, sometimes laughing and sometimes commiserating my very evident predisposition to suffer from the twinges of Jack Frost.

At noon we arrived at the celebrated “Wall Lake,” of which you and your readers have heard so much. This wall is formed by the up heaved ice along the shores, carrying with it masses of dirt and gravel. This process is now going on, and large slabs of ice are in a standing position all along the shores.

Fed our good nags, solaced the “inner man” with sundry joints of cold fowls, &c., &c., and *thawed out* by the fire of the hospitable settler who made his “claim” at the lake a year or two since.

About 2 p.m. we bundled up and traveled over the frozen bosom of the lake and struck out due north on the open prairie for this place. Got be-

wildered after a short time and stopped to "take an observation." Found our pocket compass needle unshipped, and for some time feared that we should lose our course; but picking it open with a pocket-knife, we soon put it "to rights," found the course and passed along.



Caught in a Blizzard.

During this p. m., had the laugh upon my comrade. His nose and feet were frozen at least twenty times, frequently in patches as large as a

twenty-five cent piece, while I, luckily enough, passed unscathed.

We passed the little Wall Lake and Plum Grove, and arrived here just as the sun dipped below the Western horizon. We have partaken of a substantial supper, spread by mine host, M. O. O. Kent, cared for the team, and am now "as comfortable as can be expected."

We have attended the flourishing village lyceum this evening, and listened to a thorough ventilation of the social relations of the sexes.

This is a flourishing little village on the Iowa river, and is destined to become quite an important point when times revive, and the resources of the surrounding country are developed. It has a steam saw mill, cabinet shop, blacksmith shop, a store, and the finest school house in this section of the State. A doctor and a lawyer — my friends Cutler and Kent — dispense pills and pettifogging, as family ailments and the belligerent spirit of the community demand. A fine flouring mill is in process of erection. The town needs a merchant, and another lawyer would find it a very good location.

To-morrow morning we pass on over the wastes of snow at the north, destined for Winnebago, Worth, and Cerro Gordo counties. Whether I shall write you again depends very much upon whether I do or not. If I do, you shall hear from me.

Yours,

ONE OF US.

P.S. I have a little bone to pick with "Itinerant." In speaking of the freezing to death of several inhabitants in this section during the last three years, he left it to be inferred that it was a fault of the country, whereas, the cases he mentioned could nearly all be traced to the utmost carelessness. We have some "cold snaps" out here, but not colder than in New York or New England. Let no one who desires a pleasant home be scared out by the cold weather, and the next time "Itinerant" sets these things out, let him be more explanatory and less terrific.

## A Visit to Pella in 1860

[Although Iowans can travel from Des Moines to Pella in a matter of minutes in 1959 the traveler of a century ago had to measure his journey by stagecoach at the rate of "two weary miles per hour." There is a tremendous difference, however, between Pella of yesteryear and Pella of today. The clatter of wooden shoes will ring through your ears as you read the following letter from the *Daily State Register* (Des Moines), March 5, 1860. [THE EDITOR.]

*My dear Register:* — A wretched road, but a fair sky — a most uncomfortable "jerkey," crowded with passengers, but not a grumbler among them all — two weary miles per hour, but the time enlivened by conversation with one of the most entertaining ladies of our goodly city — these were the rare good fortunes and common misfortunes that befell your correspondent on his journey day before yesterday to this city of Refuge — for that is the signification of its name.

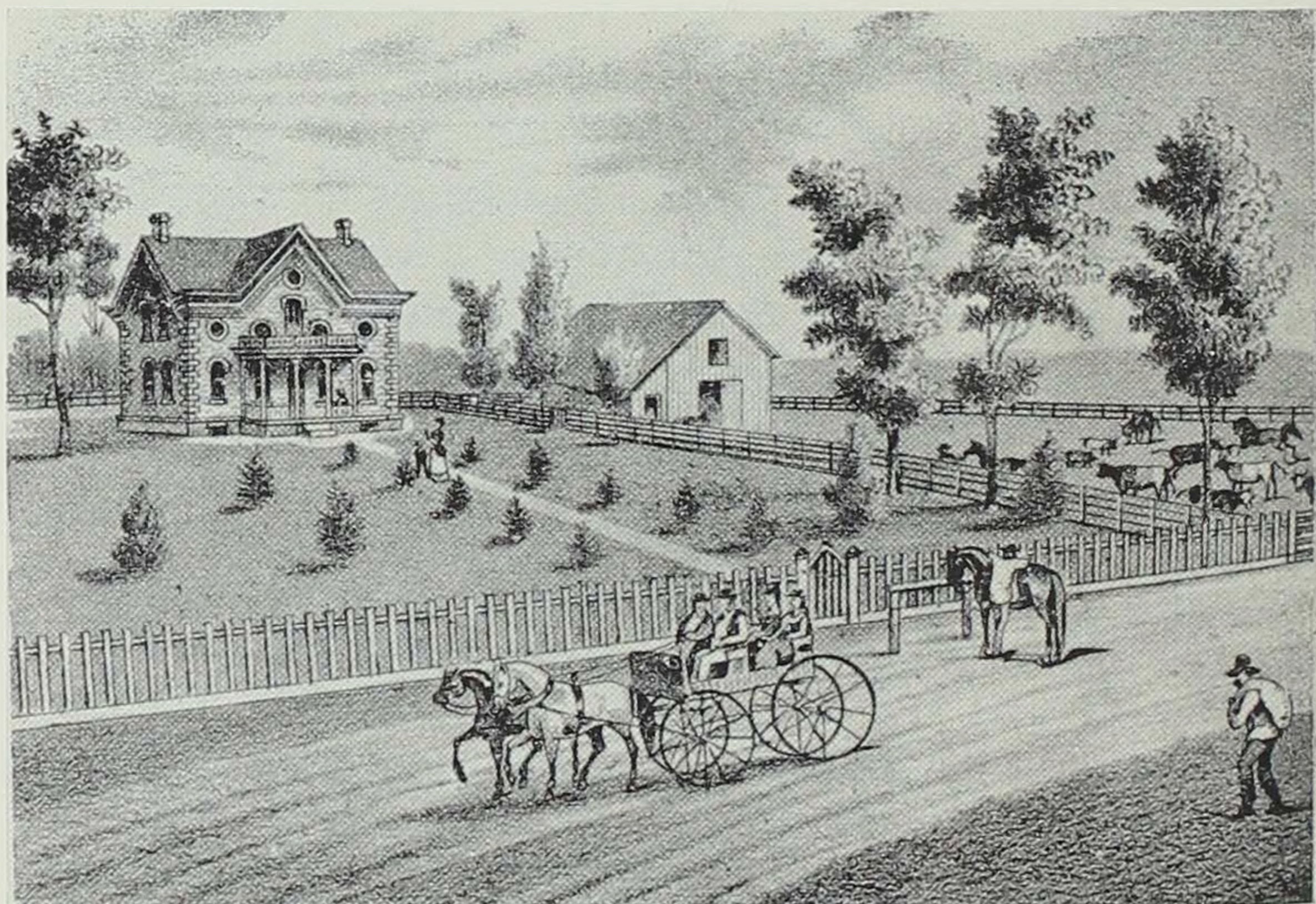
And when I got out here, and a larger man than I got in — no less indeed, than Mr. Curtis, "the gentleman from Marion," — (who was going, with the most cheerful resignation imaginable, to serve our State at the Penitentiary) — when *he* got in and surged down in the narrow seat, already

full enough, how I pitied him, and the poor mortals with him, destined to ride in all that discomfort through that dark and dismal night! — "'Pears to me" I heard some little grumbling then, and a few epithets, not suited to ears polite, applied to things in general.

Last night, three hours later than *our* arrival, came down another load of passengers — among them two or three of our Des Moines merchants, *en route* for the east, for goods. They were sensible enough to lie over. There were no less than three of our merchants on the stage the previous day — so I judge our tradesmen generally are ready to face their eastern creditors, square accounts, and prepare for a vigorous campaign the coming season. This speaks well for Des Moines — than which I believe no city in the State stands better with eastern men.

This is a queer old town. It boasts an antiquity of only fourteen years — yet here are houses that look as if the bricks of which they are built, might have been brought over in a Dutch sloop in the early days of "Nieuw Amsterdam," and their plans have been drawn by some portly burgomaster of that renowned city. "*In Deo spes nostra et refugium*" is the motto written on its seal, painted in large letters on the front of "Mr. Scholte's church," and impressed, I trust, on the hearts of the people. I wonder who will write the history of the Von der Dams, the Knickerbockers and Stuy-

vesants, the Vonheernens and Niemandsverdriet, of Marion county, in the age to come? Let me recite a few facts for some quaint genius, like our beloved Irving, to "work up" into veritable history.



A scene from Pella — farm Residence of Peter Van Domselaar.

From the first number of the "Pella Gazette," published by Scholte and Grant, Feb. 1, 1855, I learn that the settlement was begun in 1846, when the claims of all the settlers in two townships hereabout, numbering some forty families, were bought up, partly on account of a colony of Hollanders who had emigrated from the old world, with the



purpose of making their home in the United States. The site where Pella now stands, was then an open prairie, having one enclosed field, and two log houses. The first company of Hollanders came on in August of that year, — and a second company came two years after. They now compose over one half the population of the city — which numbers something over 2000 inhabitants. The Central University of Iowa was located here in 1853. This is a Baptist institution, and although heavily encumbered by indebtedness, the school is in a flourishing condition.

Mr. Scholte is the patriarch of the colony. He acted as the agent of his countrymen in securing the land, laid out this town, and has spent large sums in its adornment and improvement. His extensive grounds are covered by fine, thrifty trees of his own planting, and are handsomely laid out. The Hollanders have identified themselves with our people by effecting their naturalization as early as practicable, establishing English schools, and intermarrying with the natives. Thus Holland solidity is united with American enterprise; making a composition which will endure the severest trials, and prove a benefit to the State, the Union, and the world. The Empire State has given indubitable evidence of the aptitude of the Hollanders to become perfectly identified with the American nation.

Here wooden shoes abound. You can buy a

cord of them for about \$15. Old men and women go trudging along in them with ponderous footfalls. Middle aged men walk in them with the grace and gait of a chain-gang. Little children wear them as though life were a solemn thing. I have bought a pair, and already begin to speak the Holland language with fluency. I took to my bed last night with the firm conviction that I was lying down in "Sleepy Hollow," dreamed I was having a seven years' sleep, and that when I got home I should find my wife a stout old lady in high cap and wooden shoes, and my children grown up and married. (P.S. — I forgot to say that I helped my friends from Des Moines dispose of a bottle of "native wine" last evening — a circumstance which may have had something to do with my lingual proficiency.)

The names of the streets or avenues strike me as singular. Here they are — a regular Pilgrim's Progress of christian experience. Entrance, Inquiry, Perseverance, Reformation, Gratitude, Experience, Patience, Confidence, Expectation, Accomplishment! — And really, when one considers the mud in these streets, he feels as if the "Entrance" to the town were a serious matter, and the exit an "Accomplishment" to be thankful for.

Truly yours, my dear Register,

D.

## When Fonda Was Young

[In 1871 one who signed himself "H.B." took the east bound train from Storm Lake to visit the rapidly sprouting towns along the way — Newell, Cedarville [Fonda], Pomeroy and Manson. The opening of farms, the beginnings of churches and schools, and the coming of merchants, tradesmen, and professional men, were described by "H.B." in considerable detail, particularly in the case of Cedarville, a name chosen because of the location of the town on the Cedar River, a tributary of the North Fork of the Raccoon. Cedarville was originally named Marvin, and a post office established there on April 7, 1871, with Samuel N. Alford as first postmaster. Six weeks later, on May 23, 1871, because of the confusion of the name Marvin with Marion in Linn County and neighboring Manson in Calhoun County, the name was changed to Cedarville. Not satisfied with this name, the townsfolk petitioned the post office department to change Cedarville to Fonda because only one such post office existed in the United States and it was located in western New York. The name accordingly was changed to Fonda on December 3, 1873. The letters of "H.B." are from the Storm Lake *Pilot*, June 14, July 12, 1871. THE EDITOR.]

*Dear Pilot:* — As your ship is now sailing in the tranquil waters of prosperity's sea, I embrace the present opportunity of hailing you from the look out of Marvin.

Since my visit to your city I have passed through

some delightful portions of this part of our glorious Iowa.

Beautiful prairies, long and wide,  
In which whole armies abreast might ride:  
Beautiful fields as e'er were seen  
Clothed in fresh robes of loving green.  
You may search through the world for the richest and best,  
And you'll not find a place to compare with the West.

Last Saturday I left Marvin for the eastern part of my work, comprising Manson and Twin Lakes.

On my way I passed through Pomeroy, which at present looks bloomingly healthful. Six or seven miles farther brought me to that noted place called "Purgatory." Now, I would not have you understand by this, that it is the intermediate place supposed by our Roman Catholic friends to have a location beyond this earthly existence, but Purgatory in Iowa is simply a vast slough near the head of Twin Lakes, over which a substantial cross way has been built affording safe passage for man and beast.

Thousands of immigrants cross the slough at this place, and they have cause to be thankful that they came across dry shod. Many of the early settlers can give amusing accounts of the swimming times they had when they first located.

A new school house has been erected on the east bank of the upper lake. It is large, well built, painted, has green window shutters, patent seats,

and in short all the modern paraphernalia of a first class school house.

To strangers it is a source of wonder how the people can afford such things, when they have little or no income.

The possession of a few hundred acres of land would clear up the mystery, yet to our country, and our clear minded sensible citizens, taxation is not a vexation when employed for such glorious purposes.

The good people of Marvin, talk somewhat of a celebration on the 4th of July, but as yet nothing has been decided upon.

Mr. Morris has painted his store building, and Mr. Haye, the proprietor of the hotel, has done the same to the *facade* of his house. We think this outreach of the spirit of improvement commendable, and would advise others to go and do likewise.

A copious shower of rain visited this place last evening, and moistened the ground in a thorough manner.

More Anon, H. B.

### CEDARVILLE

#### LOCATION - BUSINESS FIRMS - &c.

On Saturday last we "shipped on board" of Conductor Doherty's train — or rather on Mr. Quimby's engine "No. 67" — and in a few minutes found ourself in the good town of Newell, situated ten miles east of Storm Lake. We found that some improvements were being made in Newell among which is the business house of Mr. N.

Sickel. Its size is 20 x 48 feet, and is well finished, and is being filled with a general stock of dry goods, groceries, boots and shoes, and everything needed to make a full stock for that market.

Mr. Wilson, of the firm of Hendrickson & Wilson, is putting up a residence. Mr. Batten is also supplying himself with a like useful institution.

We had "written up" Newell pretty fully in former issues of *THE PILOT*, and therefore concluded to go to

CEDARVILLE - LATE MARVIN,

at which place we had never stopped off. So taking the 2 o'clock freight we were soon landed at the "Cedar," and commenced a general interview of her citizens. Cedarville is located on the Iowa Division of the Illinois Central Railroad and is distant from Fort Dodge thirty-five miles and from Sioux City one hundred miles. It is in the county of Pocahontas, one and a half miles from the south line and two and a half from the western limits. The population is about one hundred people and all are live and progressive. The town was laid out in October 1870, and with the settlement of the county will grow to be a place of importance.

A magnificent country surrounds the town and thousands of acres of the virgin prairie are being plowed for the first time. In fact we have seen no part of Iowa which presents evidences of more rapid development than the country surrounding Cedarville. The Cedar River and its tributaries

furnish splendid drainage for the land and water for stock. The soil is very rich. We saw specimens of corn and vegetables which would make an old New Englander crazy.

THE BUSINESS of Cedarville now consists of three dry goods stores, one hotel, two lumber yards, one real estate agent, one boot and shoe shop, one blacksmith shop, one hardware and agricultural implement store, school house, depot and postoffice.

THE TOWN SITE is owned by the Iowa Railroad Land Company. Business lots range in price from \$80 to \$125; residence lots, from \$40 to \$100. The business lots are 25 x 100 feet in size; residence lots, 60 x 140. The same land company also own large quantities of land around the town.

SAMUEL HUGHES is the proprietor of the "Marvin Store," and keeps a full line of dry goods, groceries, stoneware, salt, tobacco, candies, &c. He also keeps a small stock of drugs and medicines, and in fact about everything that is wanted by the trade of that section. He owns and occupies a two story building -- size 20 x 36. The room on the second floor is used as a town hall where public meetings are held and where the young people dance. Mr. Hughes is a live business man, advertises in THE PILOT, and claims to have a large stock and that he is selling more goods and for less money than any of his competitors. He buys in

Dubuque and Chicago. He also deals in all kinds of country produce.

E. M. BUSBY, proprietor of the "Farmers' Store," flies the American colors from his sign post, and keeps a large and varied stock of dry goods, groceries, hardware, tinware, stoves, farming tools, flour, &c. His store room is the largest in town. It is well filled and Mr. Busby claims to sell cheaper than "any other man."

WILLIAM MORRIS keeps a general store

**LOCAL NEWS.**

**Illinois Central R. R.--Iowa Division.**



Trains East	Names of Stations.	Trains West
No. 2.		No. 3.
6-30 a. m.	.....Sioux City.....	12-16 p. m.
7-28 "	..... Le Mars, .....	11-15 a. m.
7-54 "	..... Remsen, .....	10-47 "
8-15 "	..... Marcus, .....	10-24 "
8-37 "	..... Hazard, .....	9-58 "
8-52 "	..... Cherokee, .....	9-41 "
9-15 "	..... Aurelia, .....	9-15 "
9-36 "	..... Alta, .....	8-53 "
9-50 "	... <b>Storm Lake,</b> ...	8-38 "
10-15 "	..... Newell, .....	7-51 "
10-35 "	..... Marvin, .....	7-30 "
10-56 "	..... Pomeroy, .....	7-08 "
11-14 "	..... Manson, .....	6-47 "
12-00 m.	..... Ft. Dodge, .....	6-00 "

ALL kinds of job work promptly done at this office.

If you want land or town lots call at the office of Barton & Hobbs.

MR. CHAMBERLIN has remodeled and fixed up his property on Cayuga street.

**"Marvin Store."**

**SAMUEL HUGHES**

ANNOUNCES to the citizens of

**MARVIN,**

And the "rest of mankind" that he has in store and for sale a large stock of

**Dry Goods,**

**GROCERIES,**

**Boots and Shoes,**

**GLASSWARE,**

**Yankee Notions,**

**PROVISIONS, &c.,**

And shall sell

**Cheap as the Cheapest.**

Everybody is invited to give him a call, and examine his

**GOODS AND PRICES.**

Marvin, Iowa, May 31, 1871. n321f.

**Geo. A. Strong,**  
Practical Watchmaker & Jeweler,



in which may be found dry goods, groceries, hardware, &c.

K. TYSDAL is the village boot and shoemaker, and from an examination of specimens of his work we put him down as a good workman. He also does repairing in good style and at fair prices. In an adjoining room he has a stand from which he dispenses ice cold lemonade, good cigars, cakes, candy &c.

JOHN A. HAY is Postmaster and also a member of the Board of Supervisors of Pocahontas county. In the same room where the Postoffice is kept Mr. E. O. Wilder has a small stock of notions, stationery, drugs and medicines. He designs starting a full-fledged drug store. When completed he will have one of the neatest rooms in the town. Mr. Wilder is Deputy Postmaster.

J. SNYDER deals in lumber and farm machinery. He keeps a good supply on hand and says he will sell at prices as "low as the lowest."

GEORGE FAIRBURN is the station agent, telegraph operator, and also deals in lumber of which he has a good stock at a yard just west of the depot. He claims to have the most extensive supply in the town, and to sell very cheap. Mr. F. is now putting up a good residence.

WILLIAM MARSHALL deals in all kinds of agricultural machinery, hardware, stove, tinware, patent building paper, &c.

PETER IBSON is the "village blacksmith"

and has the reputation of being a splendid workman.

JOSEPH HAY is proprietor of the hotel at Cedarville, and attends to the wants of those who may call upon him.

WILLIAM SNELL is land agent and has on his books a large quantity of choice lands and town lots. He owns a farm two miles north of town which he designs for dairy purposes.

### CHURCHES

Cedarville as yet has no church buildings, but services are held regularly in the school house. — Rev. Henry Brown, of the Methodist church officiates, and is liked very well.

### SCHOOLS

There is a small school house in which quite a number of youths are commencing their education.

A FLOURING MILL would pay well here and the citizens are making commendable efforts to induce some mill man to come and locate in their midst. Mr. Hughes informed us that the citizens of town and surrounding country would guarantee a bonus of \$1,500 to any one who will erect a good mill.

MARVIN — name of the Postoffice until a few weeks ago, when, by authority of the Postmaster-General the name was changed to Cedarville. This was found necessary from the fact that "Marion," in Linn county, was often written so that it was difficult to tell whether the letters was really intended for "Marvin" or "Marion."

## A Trip to Sioux City

[Pioneer editors were a convivial lot; they always enjoyed getting together to compare notes on problems relating to their profession. In 1872 the editor of the Spirit Lake *Beacon* and a companion made a trip to the metropolis of the Upper Missouri — Sioux City. They traveled by stagecoach to Storm Lake and then boarded the newly-completed Dubuque and Pacific [Illinois Central] to Sioux City. Overnight stops were made along the way at Spencer, Sioux Rapids, and Storm Lake, during which time visits were paid to local editors and an estimate made of the hotels and meals served along the way. The excitement over a local railroad bond election at Spencer, the court activities in Sioux Rapids, as well as the "glitter and tinsel" of "gay and dashing" Sioux City attracted the "green uns" from Spirit Lake. The trip was made during the decade that saw the last American frontier line, that of 1870, pass out of northwest Iowa. The enthusiasm of the frontier had not been dimmed by the Panic of 1873 or the ravages of the grasshopper plagues. The letter appeared in the Spirit Lake *Beacon* of March 1, 1872. THE EDITOR.]

On Monday, the 19th ult., in company with Henry Barkman, we left our quiet and peaceful home to encounter the temptations which beset the verdant in the gay and dashing "metropolis of Northwestern Iowa."

After a chilly ride of three hours we reached the busy town of Spencer. Called on Bro. Ford,

of the *News* and found him up to his ears in business, yet he spared us time for a pleasant chat. The people of Clay county justly recognize the *News* as their friend. Spencer is an example of what railroad prospects will do for a town. The citizens we met were all jubilant over the voting of the five per cent tax in favor of the Minneapolis, St. Paul & U. P. R. R.

Tuesday morning we left Spencer for Sioux Rapids, arriving there at about 10 o'clock a.m. We first visited the new Court House, and were surprised to find so commodious a structure. It is provided with good desks, seats, tables, and other conveniences for the accommodation of the bar. The Circuit was in session, His Honor, J. M. Snyder presiding. The Bar was represented by the following gentlemen: Galusha Parsons, of Fort Dodge; Judge Cook, of Cedar Rapids; Sutfin & Wirick, G. S. Robinson and Frank E. Chamberlain of Storm Lake; Eugene E. Snow, of Spencer; John T. Long and J. C. Saylor of Newell; Eugene Cowles, of Cherokee; D. C. Thomas and Lot Thomas, of Sioux Rapids. The Court was engaged in the trial of a suit of *mandamus*, which will occupy the most of the term. We understand that the case was argued at the last term upon a demurrer, which was sustained, and the Plaintiffs amended their petition. The suit is to get possession of the office of the Board of Supervisors. — Attys. for Pltf. — Sutfin &

Wirick, Joy & Wright and Judge Cook. Attys. for Defts. Galusha Parsons, Lot Thomas and John T. Long.

While at Sioux Rapids we took our "hash" with W. S. Lee, mine Host of the Sioux Rapids House, by the way, one of the best hotels in Northwestern Iowa.

**NEW STAGE LINE**

FROM  
**Storm Lake to Spencer.**

ON AND AFTER JULY FOURTH, 1871,  
THOMAS M. SELKIRK

will run a semi-weekly Stage from Storm Lake to Spencer, starting on Tuesday and Friday mornings immediately after the train arrives from the East. Will connect at Spencer with the Jackson, Minnesota Line and Spencer and Algona Line. Stage will leave Spencer for Storm Lake on the mornings of Wednesday and Saturday at six o'clock.

Office at the Lake House.  
STORM LAKE, June 28, 1871. 36m3

**CHARLES A. SANDERS,**  
**Architect & Builder,**

P. O. Box 157, STORM LAKE, IOWA.

ALL kinds of Furniture made to order. Carpenter and joiner work promptly done.

**J. B. PHIPPS,**  
**Physician & Surgeon**

HAVING permanently located at Newell, Buena Vista county, Iowa, respectfully solicits patronage from all those that need medical assistance. All calls promptly attended to. Office and Residence in the south part of town. 32m6\*

**N. W. CONDRON,**  
**Notary Public, Real Estate Broker,**

**AND TAX-PAYING AGENT.**  
Will pay the highest Cash price for county Warrants.  
NEWELL, Buena Vista Co., IOWA.

**J. C. SAYLOR,**  
**ATTORNEY AT LAW & LAND AGENT,**  
NEWELL.

Buena Vista County, Iowa.  
Special attention given to the Collection of Claims. Will also attend to the purchase and sale of Real Estate, to Conveyancing, Examining Titles, Paying Taxes, &c., on reasonable terms.

ORANGE WARNER,  
**Real Estate Agent,**  
AND CLERK OF THE COURTS.

SIOUX RAPIDS, Buena Vista County,  
Iowa.

Taxes paid. Lands bought and sold. No. 15. ly.

G. W. STEVENS,  
**Justice of the Peace,**  
Newell, Iowa.

D. C. THOMAS,  
**ATTORNEY AT LAW,**  
Real Estate and Tax-Paying Agt.,  
SIOUX RAPIDS, Buena Vista Co., Iowa.

STEPHEN OLNEY, Jr.,  
**Physician & Surgeon,**  
SIOUX RAPIDS, IOWA.

**ASHLEY HOUSE,**  
K. BATEMAN, Proprietor.

Hotels, stagecoach lines,  
land agents, and lawyers  
all advertised in the Storm  
Lake Pilot.

**FORT DODGE HOUSE,**  
A. J. Burbank, Proprietor.  
FORT DODGE, IOWA.

**City Hotel.**  
Lake Avenue, bet. 5th and 6th Streets.

T. S. SMITH, Proprietor.  
This House is centrally located and offers good accommodations to travelers and boarders.

**Lake House.**  
Cor. Lake Avenue and Third St.,  
STORM LAKE, IOWA.

THOS. M. SELKIRK, PROPRIETOR.  
THIS hotel has just been completed and opened to the public, and the proprietor solicits the patronage of travelers. 1ly.

**CLIFTON HOUSE.**  
SIOUX CITY, IOWA.  
JOHN WEBBER, Proprietor.

Located in the business centre of the City and newly refitted and furnished with a view to first-class accommodation. Free Bus to and from all trains and steamboats. n26yl

**"EAGLE SALOON."**  
(First door south of Iowa House.)  
FORT DODGE, IOWA.

For choice Wines, Ale, and Porter, Cigars and Tobacco, this is the place. n26yl

Leaving Sioux Rapids Wednesday in one of Selkirk's stages, we arrived in the course of time

at the pleasant town of Storm Lake. We first landed at the Lake House, but upon reflection we concluded not to take our "peck of dirt" in so short a time, as we should have been obliged to had we remained there. Accordingly we wended our way to the City Hotel, which we found to be a "hotel what is a hotel." We assure the traveling public that the City Hotel is a first class house, and that they will find in Mr. T. S. Smith, the proprietor, a gentleman ever attentive to their wants.

We called at the *Pilot* office, but did not have the pleasure of seeing Col. Vestal, the Grand Mogul of Iowa journalism, as he was attending to his *stern duties* at Des Moines.

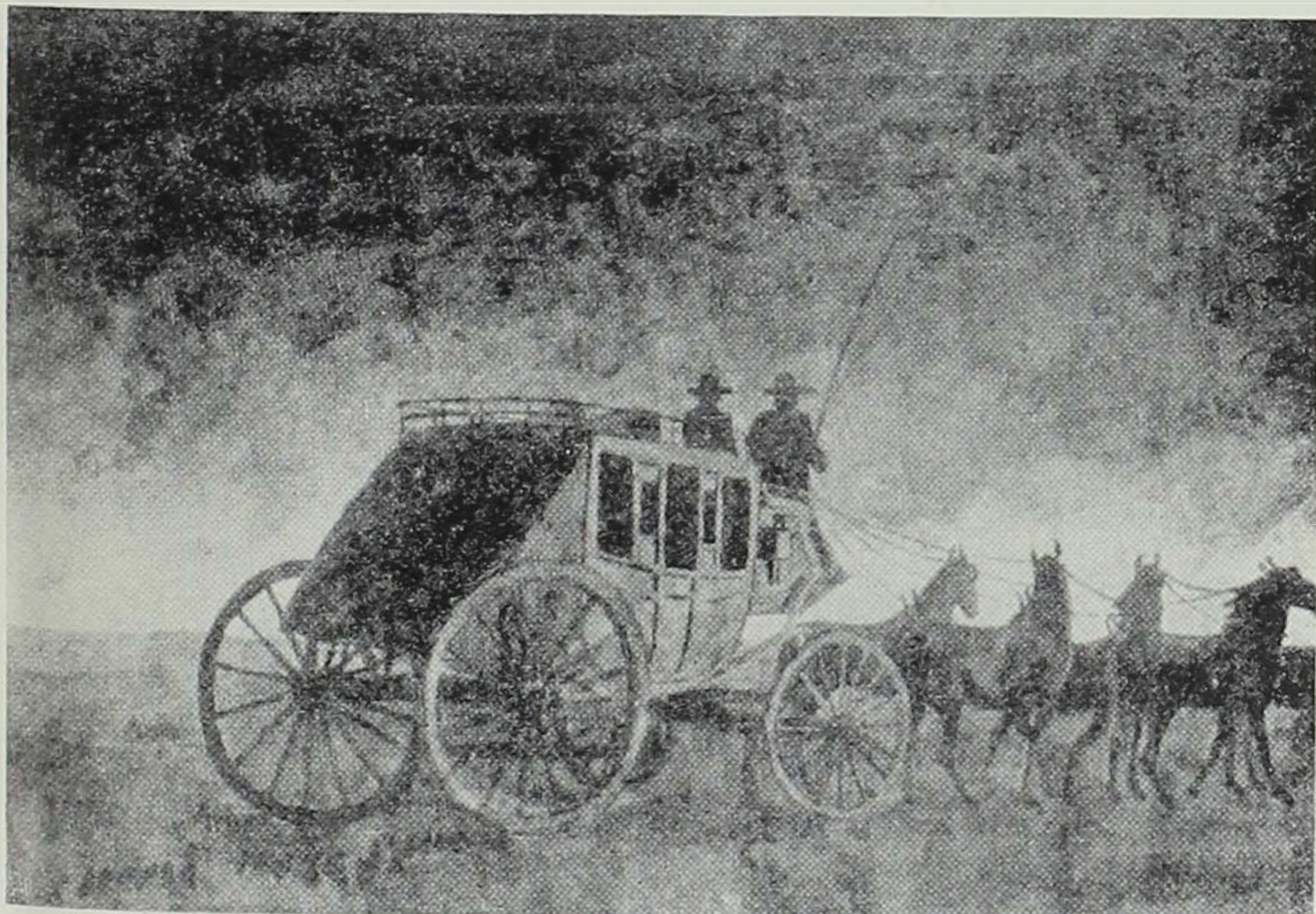
Thursday morning we took the train for Sioux City, where we arrived after a three hours ride. Busy and bustling is the embryo metropolis; many changes had taken place since our last visit; still we recognized the gay and reckless town; the energetic and enterprising Sioux City.

The merchants are getting ready for the spring trade, which promises to be very heavy. The Hubbard House, which was closed for a time, has been re-opened under the management of Messrs. Ballantine Bros. & Bragg. This House is of brick, four stories high, and 80 feet in width by 125 in length, and with one exception the largest hotel in the state.

City politics was the all-absorbing topic and the

coming municipal election is one of unusual interest. The *Journal* thus defines the situation:

"The question is as to whether our city government is to be a help or simply an encumbrance; whether it is to be so conducted that Sioux City



Deep mud, flooded streams, rough roads, prairie fires, and howling blizzards — these made stage coaching memorable if not comfortable.

shall be recognized as a haven for liquor-sellers, gamblers and prostitutes, or be inviting to merchants, artificers, and all the better classes of society."

We met many of our old friends at Sioux City and passed the time pleasantly until Monday, the 25th, when we bid adieu to the "glitter and tin-

sel" of city life and started for our hyperborean home, arriving here Tuesday noon, with the comfortable feeling of having acquired considerable polish during our metropolitan pilgrimage.



## A Gallup Poll in 1872

[During presidential years travelers by steamboat, train, or stagecoach frequently took straw votes to determine the popularity of presidential candidates. The pollster of 1872 could scarcely be described as "unbiased" or "Non-partisan" even though his letter was reprinted in the *Story County* (Nevada) *Representative* which was owned and edited by W. H. Gallup. One might gather from the following letter that Greeley would garner few votes in Iowa. Actually, Greeley received 71,179 while Grant received 131,566. THE EDITOR.]

From Sioux County, Iowa, August 8th, 1872

Editor Representative — Permit me to write up a few items for your paper from the Northwest. I left your county by rail, the 24th of July and arrived at Grand Junction at about four o'clock. Desiring to take a ride on the Valley Road, I was compelled to lay over some four hours, taking up my lodging at the R. R. House known as the Ashley House where every attention is given to make comfortable those who stop as guests. We improve our leisure four hours in learning something of the political features of the town and county, and other localities represented by guests of the Ashley House. And first to remark, Greeleyites around Grand Junction are few and far between, and be it said to the honor of

quite a number of Democrats in the locality, that they declare for Grant in preference to Greeley, and avow they never can vote for a turncoat. John A. Hull, it was remarked by one present, declares that Greeley will be elected, but throws in as conscience compels, "that the people in and around Boone dont stand up for him as they ought." It was remarked by one present that over 20 liberals in Webster County had gone back on Greeley. We also had an Iowa City man, Mr. Berry Hill, present, and he stated that Greeley had no show there, that Grant was the coming man, that Greeley stood identified with the Democratic Convention and not of Liberal Republicans, as is claimed, that the Democrats made Greeley *their* candidate by formal declaration in convention assembled at the city of Baltimore, and to-day he stood before the people as a Democrat, pledged to do their bidding, whether it is in keeping with his feelings or not.

At 8 o'clock and some minutes, we took the train for Ft. Dodge, arriving there near eleven o'clock P.M. and on recommendation, we took the Omnibus for the Occidental House, where we were carefully stowed away until 4:30 A.M., when we were rushed from our sleeping apartments into the omnibus, away for the morning train, westward bound. There is nothing like being on time, too, in traveling, as one of our lady guests realized that morning when upon the sharp

whistling of the train she was compelled to take to the omnibus half appareled, as she remarked, by no means well pleased with such hurried work. Going in on the night train and leaving on the morning train, we had no opportunity of learning anything of the local politics of Ft. Dodge.

**ASHLEY HOUSE,**

**K. BATEMAN, Proprietor.**

GRAND JUNCTION, IOWA.

**Herd! Herd!!**

To the citizens of Nokomis township: I, the undersigned propose to herd cattle for the season at \$2.50 per head or 50 cents per month, salting included.  
ALFRED WINTERS.

**Des Moines Valley R. R.**

No. 104. TIME TABLE. 1871.

On and after Thursday, May 25, 1871, trains will run as follows:

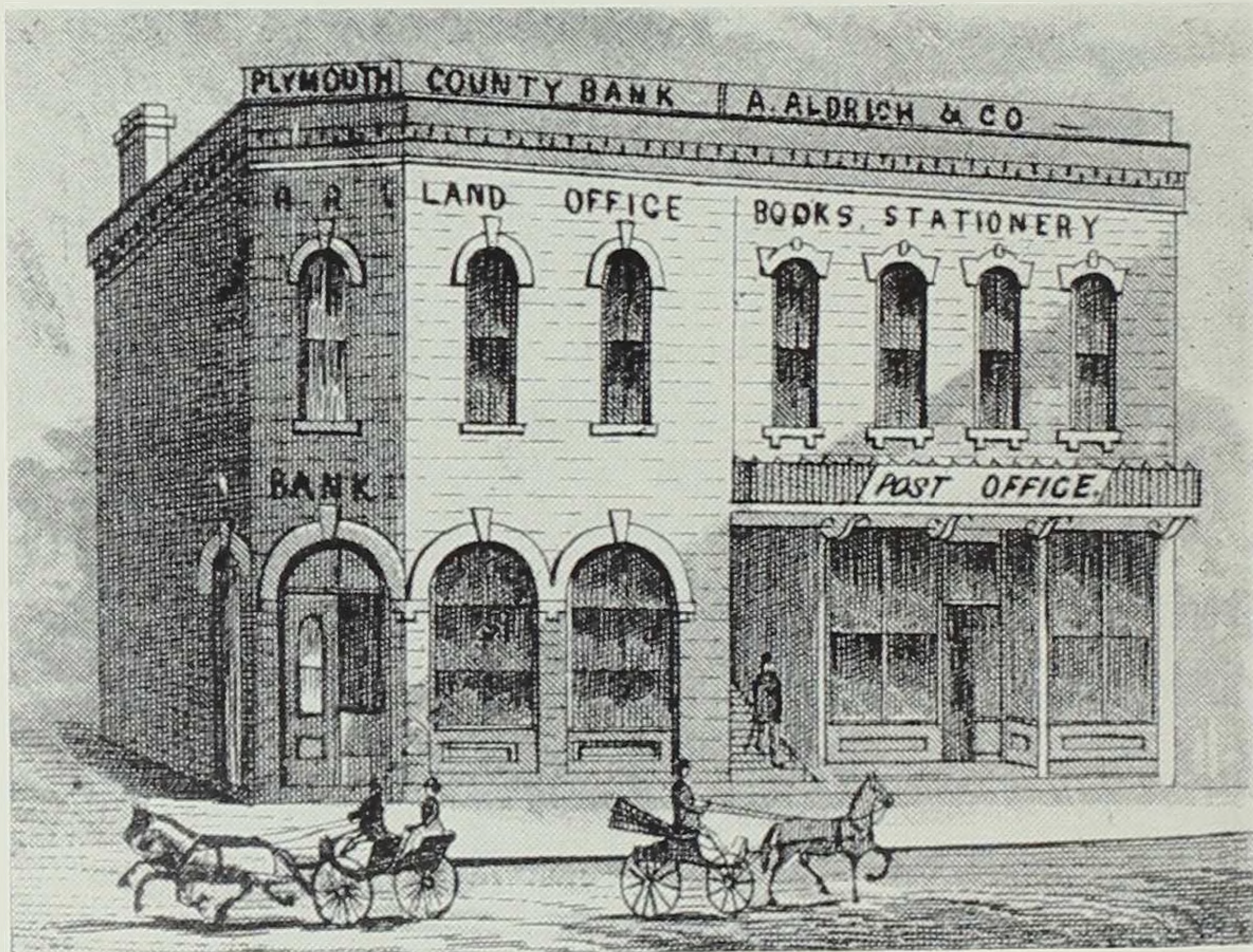
WESTWARD.	STATIONS.	EASTWARD.
Leave Keokuk.		Arrives Keokuk.
2.45 PM 7.30 A M	Keokuk...	4.15 PM 3.45 A M
4.21 " 9.02 "	Farmington...	2.40 " 2.08 "
4.41 " 9.18 "	Bonaparte...	2.23 " 1.50 "
4.53 " 9.29 "	Bentonsport...	2.12 " 1.39 "
5.14 " 9.48 "	Summit...	1.52 " 1.17 "
5.58 " 10.30 "	Independent...	1.08 " 12.31 "
6.15 " 10.45 "	Ashland...	12.48 " 12.15 "
7.15 " 11.50 "	Ottumwa...	12.10 " 11.35 "
8.05 " 12.37 P M	Eddyville...	11.05 " 10.35 "
8.33 " 1.03 "	Oskaloosa...	10.38 " 10.08 "
8.55 " 1.25 "	Leighton...	10.18 " 9.47 "
9.22 " 1.50 "	Pella...	9.55 " 9.22 "
9.47 " 2.12 "	Otley...	9.32 " 8.52 "
10.03 " 2.28 "	Monroe...	9.17 " 8.40 "
10.31 " 2.52 "	Prairie City...	8.52 " 8.14 "
11.14 " 3.30 "	Altoona...	8.15 " 7.32 "
11.50 " 4.10 "	Des Moines...	7.45 " 7.00 "
12.32 A M 5.08 "	Waukeo...	6.30 " 5.55 "
12.52 " 5.33 "	Dallas Centre...	6.05 " 5.35 "
1.10 " 5.57 "	Minburn...	5.42 " 5.18 "
1.30 " 6.22 "	Perry...	5.15 " 5.00 "
2.15 " 7.20 "	G. Junction...	4.15 A M 4.15 "
Arrive 10.00 "	Fort Dodge.	Leave 1.30 P M

JOHN GIVEN, Superintendent.

JAS. BARKER, General Ticket Agent.

The speed made by the train during the day, was very slow, so we enlivened the times by canvassing the political views of those aboard the train, and be it said to the credit of the cars in which we rode, that there was but one Greeley man found, who was from Newark, who knew nothing only as he received it from Senator Tipton and such men. A Pennsylvania man, and by

the way I chiseled him up one side and down the other, and then an Ohio man, now living in the Southwest part of the State would go for him, and in his confusion to hold up his side of the question



Union Block — LeMars, Iowa.

the ladies in the car would laugh at him, and finally being grounded for want of argument, he confessed he had always been a Democrat and voted with the party. So with a great many of our pretended Liberals, when you grind them down you find they never were true Republicans but hangers on for the loafs and fishes.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania represented the political aspects of that State as being for Grant decidedly.

We finally arrived at LeMars, near four o'clock, and compelled to stay until the next day in order to get conveyance up into Sioux county, where we are located, making three days by rail and stage. — We drove in with a team in five days. — Expenses by rail from Nevada to Le Mars *via* Ft. Dodge, is \$8.25; distance 183 miles.

Grant has the balance of power in Northwestern Iowa. Too many soldiers' Homesteads in this neck of woods for a Greeleyite to prosper here. It is reported that at Cherokee they have quite a nest of them. As to the truth of it I know not. I have yet to know a Republican who is a Greeley man. Hon. J. Orr will carry Sioux County delegation, and from present indications, he will be unanimously nominated and returned to a second term in Congress.

Crops are very fine in our part of the country. Wheat the best I have ever seen in the State. An average is expected from 20 to 30 bushels per acre. Corn is very rank and thrifty. We will have a market for our grain within  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles, at Sheldon, a town on the St. Paul and Sioux City R. R. Buildings are going up very rapidly. Not out of the world, but the garden of Eden for farming. I close lest I weary your readers. Respectfully

A. K. Webb

## An Early Iowa Wagon Train

[Iowa may not have had its "Chisholm Trail" nor its "Twenty Mule Team" but it did have pioneer wagon trains supplying the more remote regions of the frontier. In the spring of 1872, A. K. Webb traveled from Nevada through Story City, Webster City, Fort Dodge, and on to Sioux County with his wagon train. The difficulties of traveling in late March and early April can be readily appreciated, particularly since only mud roads were available and these became veritable quagmires at this season of the year. The town of O'Brien that is mentioned in this letter was located in Waterman Township in O'Brien County, a scant three miles west of Peterson. A post office was established at O'Brien on February 26, 1862, with James W. Basler as first postmaster. It was discontinued in 1882. The Webb letter appeared in the Story County (Nevada) *Representative*, May 16, 1872. THE EDITOR.]

From Sioux County, Iowa. March 6th, 1872.

EDITOR REPRESENTATIVE. — A few reminiscences of the Northwest may be of interest to the readers of your most excellent paper. We left your town March 29th, and the first evening found our company near the City of Stories [Story City]. The morning of the 30th was dreary and by noon we were compelled to turn in for quarters on the outlet of Mud Lake. With snow and rain driving, convinced that our quarters were untenable, we

hitched up our train and made our way from the outlet of Mud Lake to a Mr. John Fosters, where we found comfortable quarters for our selves and 17 horses. On the 31st Sabbath, we found a snow from 3 to 4 inches deep, and very cold. We lay over until Monday April 1st. Nothing out of the usual order occurred until we neared Webster City, when we had a slough down. We found Webster notwithstanding her muddy streets, full of business. The evening of the first, found us some three miles from the City, west, where we were puzzled to find enough dry ground to camp on. April 2d, found us wending our way toward Ft. Dodge, passing through a section of country wonderfully adapted to the raising of aquatic animals. Finally we arrived at the much heard of but never seen Ft. Dodge, and we must confess that our expectations were not met. It was with the greatest difficulty that our train made its way through her streets without sticking, and a mule in our train was so impressed with the idea of going under, that when it stopped to rest it climbed upon the sidewalks. After replenishing, somewhat, our provision box with dried beef and the best cheese we ever had the fortune to buy, we at last took our course westward and continued to march until we came to the turbid waters of Big Lizzard, where we camped for the night and fed corn fodder for hay. The 3d found us winding our way up the east side of the Lizzard until we could make a

crossing. The evening found us near the borders of Pocahontas county. On the 4th, we began the crossing of the 26 mile prairie without a house.



A Pioneer Cabin — Always Room For One More

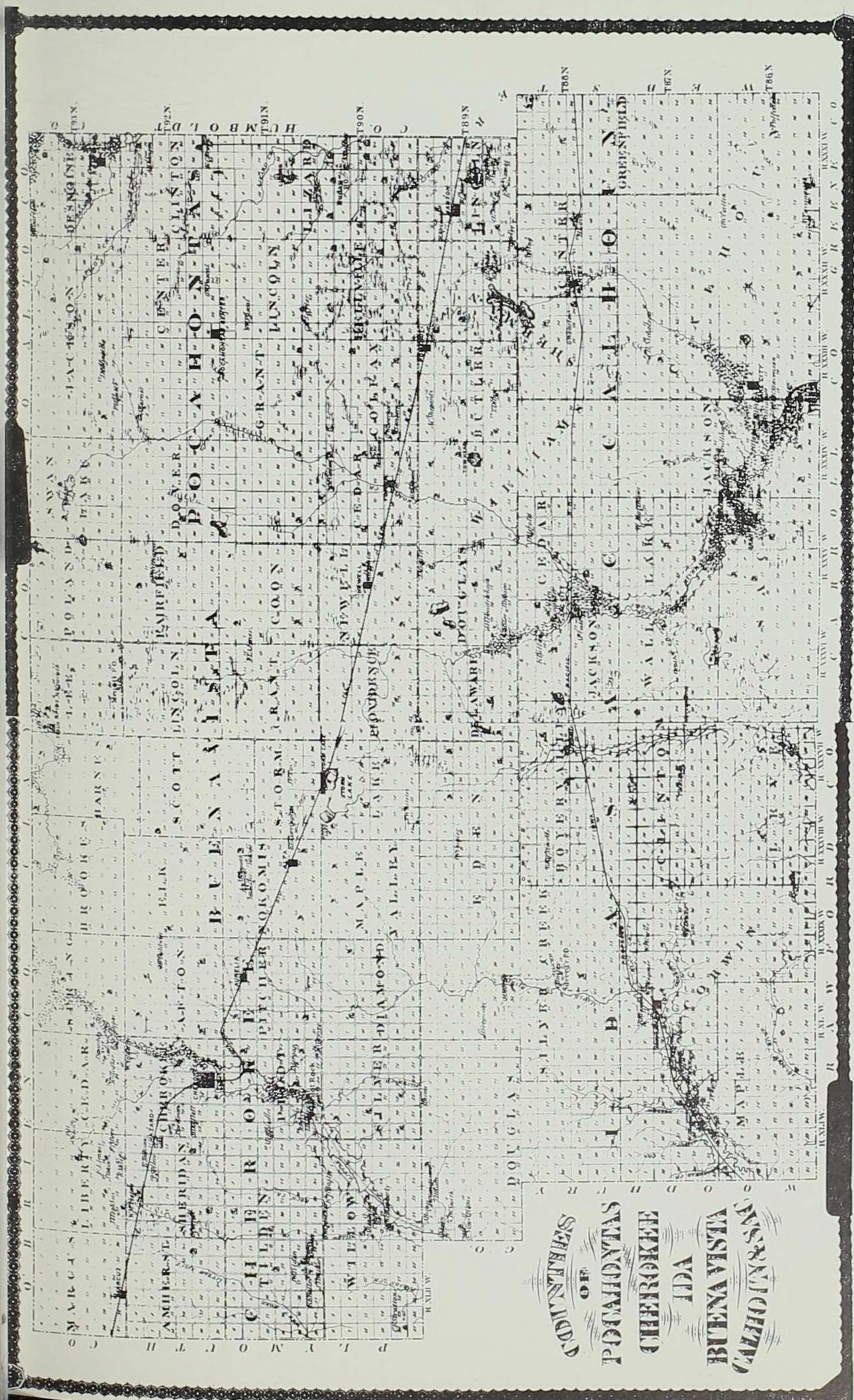
But to make the 26 mile prairie interesting, we had the exquisite pleasure of seeing an Elk and having a chase, but without success. Pocahontas is noto-



rious for ponds and small Lakes. The evening of the 5th brought us to the residence of Mr. B. the Richest man in O'Brien County, whose farm lies on the banks of the Little Sioux. He has near a hundred head of horned cattle, horses by the score, and greenbacks by the thousands in the bank so we were informed. Here is a chance for some old maid to make her fortune. Mr. B — having never been married though living for the last 16 years in his little old cabin on the banks of the Sioux. April 6th, 12 o'clock M., brought us up standing at the town of O'Brien, startled with the information that we could not cross the Little Sioux, the ferry boat not being in repair. After a consultation with some of the county officials and those who had the authority to put in running order the old ferry boat, we agreed to put in our time in helping to repair the boat if they would lead out. So they agreed, and we hauled up at the O'Brien House and remained there until the afternoon of the 9th, when we effected a crossing. The boat was hauled out into the current of the river on Sabbath, and turned upside down by the aid of the river, then hauled in corked and pitched, and then thrown back in the river. Mr. Whipple was our boss in repairing the boat. We give him the appellation of Commodore Whipple, and named the boat the "Geny Whipple" which the traveling community will always find ready, with the smiling Commodore to cross them over. The prevalent

sin of O'Brien, is profanity. We arrived in Sioux county T. 97, R. 44, April 11th. People were sowing wheat when we arrived. Wheat is now up and looking well. A great deal of wheat sown in the northwest. Our weather is now very fine. We have had several days very high winds. Our prairies now are beautiful to behold. The Northwest against the world for fine prairies. Planting corn will begin briskly this week. Ground in fine order for corn. The coldest day last winter, the thermometer stood at 22 degrees below 0. The people of our section of the country have experienced their hardest winter, as they will be better prepared for the future. Cattle have been living on the prairie since the 1st. Some Homesteads yet to be had. This cannot be said long of our part of the country. "The star of Empire" takes its westward course.

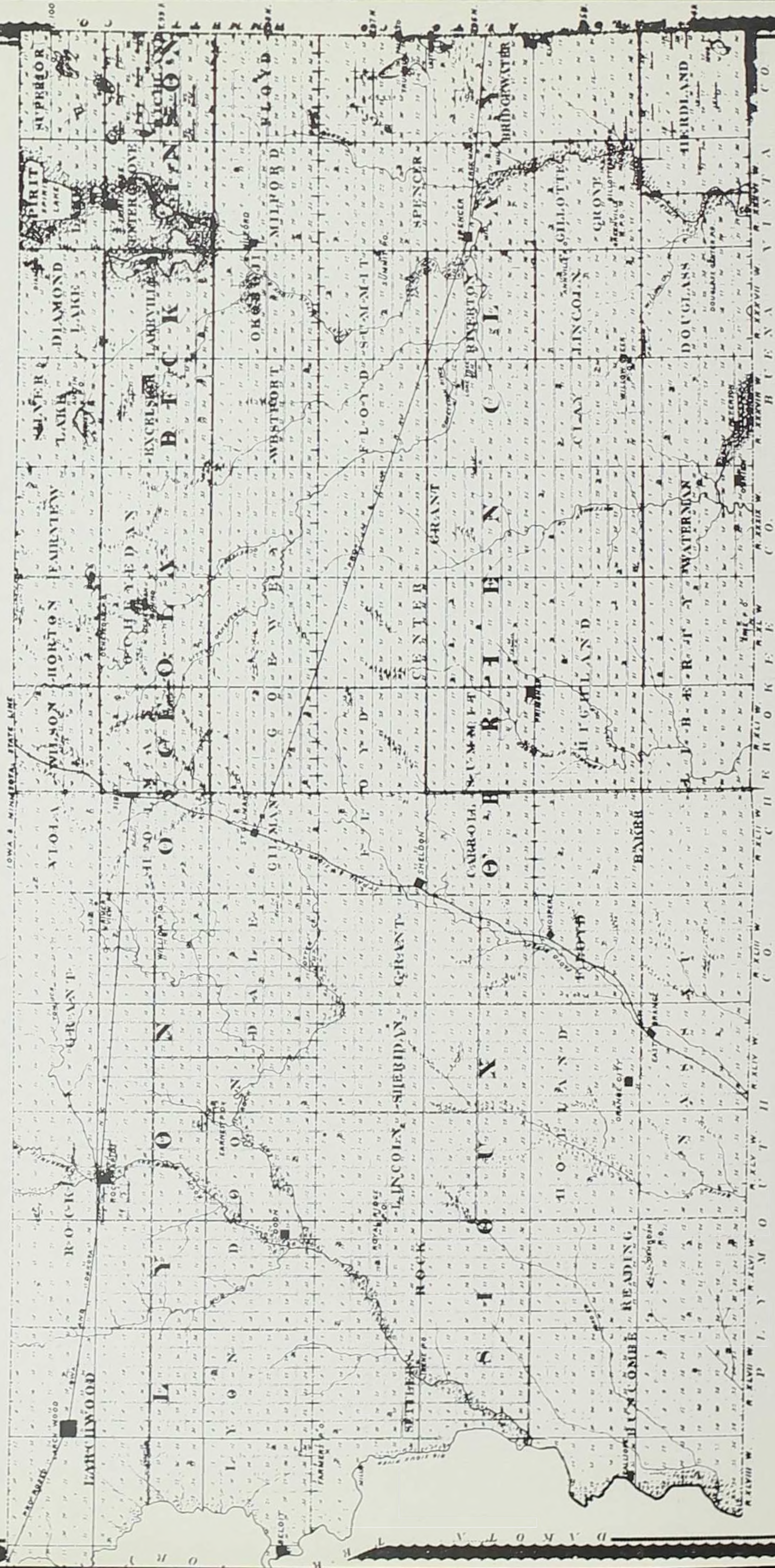
A. K. WEBB



These six counties were more heavily populated than the six to the northwest in 1870. The Illinois Central had been completed to Sioux City in 1871 and towns were sprouting along the right of way.

CODDINGTONS (D) 11

# LYON, OSCEOLA, DICKINSON, SIOUX, O'BRIEN AND CLAY.



...kempt towns, but the stagecoach was the most common means of transportation. Map from A. T. Andreas' Atlas of 1875.