

The PALIMPSEST

JUNE 1934

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT IOWA CITY BY
THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER JULY 28 1920 AT THE POST OFFICE AT IOWA CITY IOWA
UNDER THE ACT OF AUGUST 24 1912

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.

PRICE—10c per copy: \$1 per year: free to members of Society

ADDRESS—The State Historical Society Iowa City Iowa

THE PALIMPSEST

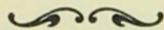
EDITED BY JOHN ELY BRIGGS

VOL. XV

ISSUED IN JUNE 1934

NO. 6

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Called to Iowa

In 1673 Iowa was already designated as a field for missionary activities. When Joliet was employed by the French government to discover the course of the "river to the west", the opportunity was seized by the Jesuit Society to Christianize the inhabitants of the undiscovered country. Father Marquette was therefore commissioned to join the exploring party as an emissary of the church.

Protestant groups did not begin the extension of their faith into Iowa until white settlers had supplanted the red men. Little time was lost in the organization of churches in the growing communities. Methodists erected a log-cabin church in Dubuque in 1834 to provide a place of worship even before a legal code existed. David Lowry, government teacher at the Indian school on Yellow River, acting also as a missionary, organized a Presbyterian church for soldiers and employees

in 1835. Congregationalism crossed the Mississippi at Dubuque in 1836, and in 1842 a group of theological students of Andover, Massachusetts, came as the Iowa Band to teach the Congregational creed.

First to spread the gospel among the Indians, the Catholics were equally zealous in providing the early settlers with the benefit of clergy. Early in the summer of 1833 a priest said mass at the Dubuque mines. Father Lefevre made an extended missionary trip into Iowa in 1834, but his plan to erect a stone church at the head of the Des Moines Rapids failed. Meanwhile, however, over \$1000 had been subscribed for a Catholic church at Dubuque. The cornerstone was laid in 1835 and the edifice was occupied for services before the end of the following year.

The swift growth of settlements west of the Mississippi was for many preachers in the East a spur to missionary activities. Iowa was a desirable field. One of the Andover group had said, when a location for his Christian endeavor was being determined: "I am going to Iowa: whether any one else goes or not, I am going."

The salvation of Iowa was also a matter of concern among Baptists. In 1834, a history of the church records that a house of worship was built at Long Creek, now called the Danville Bap-

tist Church, for a congregation of eleven members. The services of an Illinois minister were borrowed, but in 1836 a resident minister was secured. Meeting not far from Burlington in August, 1839, ten delegates representing three churches and less than ninety members organized the Iowa Baptist Association.

In response to a call voted by the Association just formed, a convention of brethren from the Baptist churches in Iowa Territory was held in Iowa City on the third and fourth of June, 1842, "to consider the expediency of forming a Territorial Association for missionary purposes." Twenty-five delegates were present — eight ministers and seventeen laymen.

One of the delegates was the Reverend Charles E. Brown. He had arrived in the Territory of Iowa from Warren, Herkimer County, New York, scarcely more than a week previous. It was an inclination for pioneer missionary work, he wrote many years later in his autobiographical recollections, which had directed his thoughts toward the West. In October, 1840, he expressed his desire to the New York Missionary Convention. "The application said nothing about salary or any special location, excepting a preference expressed for Iowa. The request was favorably endorsed by the convention and an appointment

by the American Baptist Home Missionary Society recommended.

"This appointment came in due time, designating the forks of the Maquoketa River in Jackson County, Iowa, as the field of labor, with an allowance of one hundred dollars a year from the board and seventy-five dollars for travelling expenses to the field."

At that time Reverend Brown's family consisted of himself, wife, and the two little boys, Benjamin and Charles. As household goods could not be economically shipped so far, everything was sold "except clothing, bedding, a common table and stand which could be conveniently packed, and a rocking chair, taken for the comfort and convenience of the mother in caring for the little ones on the journey." A small cook stove was taken apart, packed in straw, and boxed for shipment. Altogether their household effects weighed about 1600 pounds.

Let Mr. and Mrs. Brown describe their trip to their new home beyond the Mississippi. With slight adaptations, the story follows as it was published in the *Personal Recollections of Rev. Charles E. Brown*.

"On Monday May 2, 1842, we left Utica on a passenger packet known as a Line boat on the Erie canal, bound for Buffalo en route to Iowa

Territory. These boats were provided with a comfortable cabin with berths for passengers in the bow, kitchen and dining cabin at the stern, and space amidships for freight and baggage. With good company, clean wholesome food, a sober and accommodating master and crew, the two hundred mile trip from Utica to Buffalo was comfortable and pleasant. The fare, two cents per mile, which included berth and board with no charge for young children, was very reasonable.

"Arriving at Tonawanda, twelve miles from Buffalo, at midnight Saturday, we lay by until the next midnight, as the boat did not run on the Sabbath. We reached Buffalo at daylight Monday, May 9th, and the family and goods were transferred to the Lake steamer, *Great Western*, Captain Walker commanding, which sailed for Chicago at seven o'clock Tuesday evening.

"The shades of night were falling when the great steamer with nearly four hundred passengers bound mostly for Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin, put out into the lake for Chicago. Very few had ever been on the water, and ominous clouds were looming up in the west. The cabin passengers gathered on the promenade deck, some looking back on the lights of the city toward the homes and loved ones they were leaving; some at the dark waters of the lake, and some anxiously

at the threatening clouds, many with tearful eyes. It was one of the most solemn and intensely interesting scenes we ever witnessed and one we will never forget.

"We retired to our state room but could not sleep. The storm broke upon us with great fury in the night, but our noble steamer met and faced it bravely, and brought us safely into the harbor at Cleveland, which was the first landing place. The effect of the night's storm on the stomachs of the passengers was manifest at breakfast, many being absent from the table. We lay at Cleveland a few hours waiting for the storm to pass."

From Lake St. Clair, on Thursday, May 12th, Mrs. Brown wrote to her brother and sister describing their voyage. "In accordance with your request, I improve the first convenient season for writing you some of the incidents of our journey thus far. We are on board the *Great Western*, the most splendid vessel on the lakes. It is a lovely morning, the lake is still and we are sailing at the rate of twelve miles an hour. We are furnished with every comfort and convenience that could be obtained in the best hotel. Our journey has been pleasant, with the exception of some little sea-sickness for the first few hours on Lake Erie. Benny and myself have had a pretty thorough emetic. Mr. B. and Charley escaped with a

little nausea of the stomach, and no vomiting. We have been sailing up the Detroit River this morning with Victoria's dominions on our right hand, and borders of Michigan on the left; passed a British military station; saw a number of her Majesty's red-coated gentry.

"Our steamer stopped some time at Detroit. We went on shore. I priced articles in a number of dry-goods establishments, found a handsome assortment, and as low as can be purchased in New York. We find the tide of emigration to the far west has by no means subsided. There are between three and four hundred passengers on board, and quite a large proportion go round to Chicago. The children have been less trouble than I anticipated. We left Utica Monday morning in the *Little Western*; Captain Newcomb, a pleasant man and fine crew; heard no profane language; had a good cook and good fare, and with the exception of speed found ourselves comfortable."

The pioneer missionary and his family encountered stormy weather again on Lake Huron. For four hours the vessel lay by at Presque Isle until the worst of the squall was over. Thereafter they "had pleasant sailing to Chicago" where they arrived on Sunday afternoon, May 15th.

"We arrived in this city yesterday afternoon

safe and sound", wrote Mrs. Brown to her sister. "Our passage from Buffalo, together with freight, cost us forty-eight dollars; from Little Falls to Buffalo twenty-three." Except for the two bits of rough weather "we have had a pleasant journey. We are much pleased with the appearance of the western country so far. Milwaukee, Racine, and Southport on the Wisconsin shore are pleasant villages. We passed Mackinac in the night, regretted it very much, as it is said to be a very interesting spot.

"We are at the New York House in Chicago. There were eighty people at breakfast; very good accommodations; have plenty of radishes, onions, lettuce, etc.

"Mr. B. is making arrangements for prosecuting our journey to Iowa. The weather is fine and the roads good, and we hope to get along without any difficulty. We shall soon be on the road teaming off. I cannot realize the distance that separates us. It seems to be annihilated by the facilities for overcoming it. I think to come by railroad from Little Falls to Buffalo, and then by the lakes to Chicago, would make a delightful jaunt. Take an emetic before you leave."

From Chicago the journey was continued overland in a private conveyance. "On Monday", Mr. Brown recalled, "we found a man from Rock-

ford, Illinois, who came in with a lumber wagon and a load of produce, and engaged him to take us to Savanna on the Mississippi River. After loading our things, the rocking chair brought from New York was fastened on top of one of the boxes with a small chair secured alongside. Seated in the rocker with the youngest child in her lap, and the other in the little chair by her side, Mrs. Brown cheerily said, 'Now, this is fine,' and there was sunshine on the load all the way through. I took a seat on the box beside the driver with our feet on the whiffle-trees, and we started on our two hundred mile drive to our future home in the Territory of Iowa.

"We stopped for the first night about twelve miles out on the Elgin road, and the second at a small log cabin at Pigeon Woods, sixteen miles west of Elgin, where a hearty appetite for supper was demoralized by badly tainted ham; and the presence of two loads of stagecoach passengers to be cared for obliged us to sleep on the floor. But these incidents were minor matters in a journey like this.

"Early next morning, proceeding on our way we found a satisfactory breakfast at a small cabin located where the town of Marengo now stands. At noon we reached Belvidere, where we enjoyed a visit with Prof. P. S. Whitman who was one of

my teachers at Hamilton. Here on the public square we saw the stakes used to support a rude platform which had been the resting place of the body of an Indian chief. The body was gone but the poles and some fragments of his burial dress were there, a dismal and grewsome reminder of the past.

"That evening we arrived at the west side tavern at Rockford where, to our great disappointment, our teamster was summoned as a witness in a case on trial, delaying us until the following Monday. But while tarrying we found a good home and pleasant friends in the family of the Rev. Solomon Knapp, pastor of the Baptist Church at Rockford, for whom I preached on Sunday; my first sermon in the west.

"Monday morning, in good health and spirits, with fine weather and roads we continued our journey, taking the Galena stage road to Twelve Mile Grove, thence turning directly west for the Mississippi.

"About sun down we reached Crane's Grove, and as the next stopping place was eighteen miles west, here we must put up for the night. Mrs. Crane from Kentucky, middle aged and stout, was just coming from the cow yard with a pail of milk. To our inquiry if we could stop for the night she replied, 'Oh, I reckon, though I am mighty tired.

The old cow gives a right smart of milk, well on to half a bushel.'

"That night our teamster overfed his horses with grain and next morning found one of them dead. We arranged with Mr. Crane to take us eighteen miles to Cherry Grove, where we stopped with a Mr. Gardner, Mr. Crane's brother-in-law, who next day took us to Savanna on the Mississippi. We here had our first view of the mighty river, its volume then being much greater than in later years. That evening we were ferried across to Charleston, now Sabula, and put up for the night at the town tavern. In the morning we engaged a man and team to take us the remaining twenty-five to thirty miles to the end of our long journey.

"Owing to rain we were late in starting. About noon we stopped for dinner at a cabin on the west bank of Deep Creek, where we found nothing to eat but eggs. Of these they had eleven, which were boiled for us. But the children would not eat them. We did not see any other human habitation until night had fallen, when the little ones, tired and hungry, had long since cried themselves to sleep.

"In the darkness of midnight we reached a cabin occupied by Mr. C. W. Doolittle. At that spectral hour, in silence and solitude that could be

felt, we were at the end of our long journey, nearly a thousand miles from home and friends in the distant east. The Indian had recently left, and his pale-faced successors were few and far between. We had been twenty-four days on the road and had lost but little time, having diligently pursued our way from the start.

"With cordial frontier hospitality which we gratefully appreciated, Mr. and Mrs. Doolittle turned out and welcomed us, prepared supper and then gave us their bed, while they found lodging for themselves and family in the cabin loft. Tired and worn by the long and tedious last day's drive we slept sweetly and soundly, four in the bed, myself, wife and two children."

The next morning a dense fog obscured the country. Nevertheless Mr. Doolittle and the new minister went to visit some neighbors two miles away. Reverend Brown was surprised to learn that there was no organized Baptist society in that part of Iowa. The settlement was so new that the few Baptist families were widely scattered. "This and the fog and the fact that, aside from the \$100 per year from the home missionary board, our living was to come from our field of labor was rather discouraging and made me feel a little blue. But during our walk a breeze came up and carried away the fog. The clouds lifted and the sun came

out, revealing a most beautiful prairie country to the south, with a grand body of Maquoketa timber to the north for a background. My blues went with the fog; hope, courage, and cheer came with the sunshine and clear sky."

Desiring to attend the convention in Iowa City to organize a Baptist Territorial Mission Association, Reverend Brown borrowed a horse and light wagon and, accompanied by his wife, drove across country to the new capital. Early in the morning on June 1, 1842, they set out toward Bergoon's ford across the Wapsipinicon River. "We soon lost the dim uncertain trail", remembered Mr. Brown, "but having a good general idea of the direction did not miss our way. The weather was fine, the prairies carpeted with wild flowers, and the trip novel and wonderfully interesting. The broad expanse of rolling prairies extending in every direction as far as the eye could reach, with now and then a beautiful grove to relieve the monotony, was a great change from the hills, valleys, and heavy timber of our central New York home."

Having stayed over night at Tipton, they started early the next morning and after a hard drive reached Iowa City in the evening of the second day. The business of the convention was soon finished and three days were occupied with preaching and devotional services. Reverend

Brown was glad to "meet the brethren and sisters from different and distant parts of the Territory." On the return trip he preached at Tipton and at a settlement on the Wapsipinicon.

Temporal affairs next claimed the attention of the missionary and his family. Most of June was spent in building a log cabin at Wright's Corners about two and a half miles south of the present site of Maquoketa, just over the line in Clinton County. It was a crude habitation but it was home.

Meanwhile Reverend Brown did not neglect his missionary duties. Assigned to the vicinity of the forks of the Maquoketa, he visited the settlers, preached to them whenever possible, and on the last day of August organized a Baptist church in that community. During that first summer in Iowa, he also preached at Iowa City, Andrew, Tipton, Marion, and Davenport. In September he and Mrs. Brown drove to a meeting in Davenport on a cart made out of the rear wheels and axle of a lumber wagon and a pair of rails for shafts. There they participated in forming an association of the seven Baptist churches north of the Iowa River. "There was precious enjoyment in this pioneer missionary life and work and we loved it."

MARIE HAEFNER

The Flood of 1851

The deluge began in May. For more than forty days the rain fell, not continuously but at very frequent intervals. Farmers in the valleys despaired of getting their corn planted. Crops of small grain were washed out or ruined. Not until July did the skies clear and the floods subside. A newspaper reported that neither the "memory of the oldest inhabitant" nor "any traditional accounts from the Indians" furnished any evidence of such an inundation.

There was no need of so much rain in Iowa. During the previous year of 1850 the rainfall was estimated at forty-nine inches which, according to modern records, was about eighteen inches above normal. The ground-water level must have been high in the spring of 1851. After the first down-pour, the earth became saturated and the surplus ran off to swell the creeks and send the rivers surging out of their banks, even above the second terraces.

Everywhere the same conditions prevailed, even on the narrow watershed of the Missouri slope. But the damage was greatest in southeastern Iowa, for there the water in the Cedar, Iowa,

Skunk, and Des Moines rivers, drained from two-thirds of the State, reached the highest mark. Moreover, that region was the most densely populated portion of Iowa. The settlers, clinging to the valleys, had not penetrated to the upland prairies of the central and northern sections. When the floods came, they discovered that their lowland farms were unfavorably situated. Most of the towns, being located on the rivers, were under water, but the inland communities were comparatively unharmed.

The heavy rains reached the first climax toward the end of May, culminating in a veritable cloudburst that lasted more than an hour. When the downpour finally abated the whole country presented "the appearance of one vast lake of rushing waters." Hundreds of acres of tilled land were overflowed; horses, cattle, hogs, sheep, and chickens were drowned; fences and buildings were swept away. Huge trees, washed out by the roots, came floating down or caught at the bends to form temporary dams. Water flowed in at the second-story windows of mills and warehouses built close to the river.

At Fort Des Moines the river was twenty-three feet above the low-water mark. Buildings on the east side were swept away or destroyed by the swift current that extended to the foot of capitol

hill. The present site of the North Western depot was submerged. Boarders at the Marvin House near Third and Walnut streets made their entrances and exits by means of a raft. Business was completely paralyzed.

While their ordinary occupations were suspended, several citizens spent the time catching trees that came down with the flood. These were towed to shore and anchored. When the water receded they were trimmed into sawlogs. Much valuable timber was secured in this way. This hazardous employment, however, cost the life of Conrad Youngerman at Fort Des Moines. In some unaccountable manner his boat capsized and he was drowned before help could reach him. His two companions were saved after a hard struggle.

Several other deaths were attributed to the flood of 1851. Two small boys were drowned at Red Rock. Sandert De Jong fell from a bridge at Union Mills and was gone before bystanders could help him. An elderly couple named Alloway living beside the Maquoketa River were overtaken by the rising water while seeking a place of safety. Mrs. Alloway was carried away by the swift current and her husband escaped only by clinging to a bush until he was rescued in the morning. Perhaps there were other casualties which were not recorded, for the newspapers of

that day had little space for anything but politics. No doubt the loss of life would have been much greater if the country had been more thickly populated.

Though newspaper descriptions of the flood were exasperatingly meager, general conditions were incidentally revealed by casual local items. All of the streams from the Maquoketa to the Des Moines were out of their banks. Muscatine Island was almost completely overflowed by the Mississippi. At Rochester on the Cedar River a monument was placed to mark the limit of the "High-water of 1851". Some railroad surveyors who wanted to determine the high-water mark of the Iowa River near Columbus Junction took the elevation of a muddy streak on the plaster of the ferry house "about three feet from the floor, where the water had evidently stood." The Skunk, too, spread itself in every direction. "Judging from appearances one would suppose it determined to declare itself navigable (without any act of legislature) by removing, without the aid of civil law, everything calculated to hinder small craft from taking an uninterrupted voyage to the Father of Waters."

The towns in the Des Moines Valley, however, seem to have suffered most. This stream drains nearly a third of the State, and the cloudburst on

May 21st seems to have been centered between Fort Dodge and Fort Des Moines. Further augmented by steady rainfall, the river took full possession of its former dominion, attaining a width of four miles in some places and leaving its "mark" on the land "so that the settlers may hereafter know how much is *claimed* by it." Nor was the monster any respecter of places. Timber land, cultivated fields, and towns were treated precisely according to their altitude without regard for human safety or property rights. Red Rock, Eddyville, Ottumwa, Iowaville, Keosauqua, and Farmington were all ravaged by the flood. Not once but three times the angry Des Moines reached out of its normal channel to invade streets and dwelling places, leaving behind a smear of mud.

Roads, which were not good at best, were utterly impassable. Many of the bridges were out and the rope or hand-power ferries were useless. Under these circumstances the settlers in the interior were isolated. In a few weeks the supplies of food and other merchandise, depleted during the winter, were in danger of being exhausted. Most of the mills could not grind because of the high water. Moreover, gardens had been destroyed and crops ruined by the flood.

In this emergency, four men at Fort Des Moines determined to go to St. Louis for a steam-

boat load of supplies. If the flood closed the normal routes of transportation it also provided a navigable waterway. Though the trip was hazardous, the enterprise promised big profits.

It was a cloudy morning in June when J. M. Griffith, a general merchant, W. T. Marvin, proprietor of the leading Des Moines hotel, Peter Myers, a speculator, and Hoyt Sherman, the postmaster and county clerk, "started on their perilous journey of 170 miles to the Mississippi, without chart or guide, on a river running out at a higher stage of water than ever before known". Their means of navigation, in the words of Mr. Sherman, "was a rough board skiff made by unskilled hands out of native lumber, with a flat bottom, and not at all constructed to resist the bumps from violent contact with stones or piles of heavy drift". The space was so limited that each one "had to remain seated in the same place between starting and stopping" places.

In all probability these four men still hold the rowboat record from Des Moines to Keokuk — a little less than four days. Carried along by the swift current, their principal task was to keep in the main channel and avoid snags. About noon on the second day they reached Eddyville. Rowing up to the hotel, they tied their boat to the bannister of the outside stairway, climbed to the second

story, and ate a hearty dinner. They reported that a "three foot rise" was due soon, but their prophecy was not taken seriously by business men who already had to reach their stores by boats. By the next morning, however, the river had risen so high that hundreds of bushels of corn which had been drying in a warehouse had floated out of the open doors and were "bobbing up and down in the swift current or circling in golden eddies near the shore."

From Eddyville the voyagers "floated out over the overflowed bottom, following as closely as possible the submerged stage road for a large part of the distance to Ottumwa." At that town "every store, warehouse and residence on the low ground was partially submerged." Having obtained a good map of the river, they had "no further trouble in guiding the boat through the proper channels."

At Lowaville, then a village of "thirty houses, some stores, a blacksmith shop and hotel", the flood spread across the bottom land to the bluffs about a mile away. Most of the inhabitants had retreated to Joel Avery's farm on high ground where they camped for more than a month on a kind of compulsory picnic, but a few simply went upstairs and lived in the second story of their houses until the water subsided. Guests at the

Iowa Hotel were made as comfortable as possible on the upper floor.

On down the river went the boatmen from Fort Des Moines impelled by business motives but making a sort of holiday lark of their trip. At Keosauqua, Bonaparte, Farmington, and Croton they found typical flood conditions — families homeless, streets changed to canals, merchants selling groceries and gingham from the top shelves. On the afternoon of the fourth day they "floated into the great Mississippi, and their boat was soon safely moored to the wharf at Keokuk."

Having proceeded to Saint Louis by packet, they chartered the steamboat *Kentucky*, bought a load of flour and other provisions, took on some passengers for Des Moines, and set out for home. At Keokuk additional goods were taken aboard and the voyage up the flooded Des Moines began.


Obstructions to navigation at Croton and Farmington were passed without difficulty. At Bonaparte, however, Meek's dam was a more formidable barrier. "The steamboat was pointed directly at the breast of the dam" and had nearly passed the obstruction when the paddle wheel at the stern reached the deep trough in the water just in front of the dam. Out of the water it "flew around with great velocity," threatening to break the machinery, until the engine was stopped.

Then the steamer drifted back in the swift current. Again and again the boat was brought up to the dam, only to repeat the failure of former trials. At last the owners decided to abandon further efforts, stored the cargo in a warehouse, and returned to Saint Louis for another steamer.

Captain Joseph Price was induced to attempt the voyage to Fort Des Moines with his *Caleb Cope*. After reloading at Bonaparte, he boldly approached the Waterloo of his predecessor. Confidently and steadily he piloted his boat "through and over the surging flood of the dam to the still water beyond." The worst of the trip was over, and the remainder of the journey was made without delay or danger.

All along the way the *Caleb Cope* was welcomed by the settlers in the Des Moines Valley. Supplies of flour, sugar, and coffee were sold at every town. The arrival of the steamer at Iowa-ville on the Fourth of July made memorable the celebration of the national holiday that year. On the following day the steamboat reached Fort Des Moines and delivered the much-needed provisions. By that time the river had returned to its normal course, but the water was still high enough to enable Captain Price to make the return trip without serious difficulty.

JOHN ELY BRIGGS



Indians at Gray's Ford

Ninety-five years ago my grandfather, Ebenezer A. Gray, left Ohio with his wife and three small children and came to Cedar County, Iowa. They came by boat down the Ohio River and then up the Mississippi River to Muscatine, which at that time was called Bloomington. There grandfather bought a covered wagon and a yoke of oxen. With this outfit they set out across country in a northerly direction looking for a place to settle. The Cedar Valley seemed most attractive and there they decided to make their home. In the timber along the Cedar River near a shallow place where the stream could be forded they blazed their claim. The place, a few miles up the river from Rochester, is still known as Gray's Ford.

Grandfather immediately set about building a log cabin. The country was very new and wild. There were only a few white settlers for miles around. A band of Sauk and Fox Indians, however, had a camp nearby, and it was not long before a big brave came to call upon the new neighbors.

The Gray family was much pleased with this

friendly red man and a warm friendship sprang up between the Indians in that vicinity and the Gray family. The ties of friendship were never broken by either the Indians or the Grays. Even now the Gray grandchildren feel kindly toward the red men; indeed, we feel a deep sense of gratitude toward the Indians of long ago, for they welcomed the Gray family and did all they could to make their life pleasant and comfortable.

During the first months, the Indians came often to the Gray cabin and soon the white family learned to speak the Indian language. Some of them helped to clear a little patch of ground and in many ways helped the newcomers. In return for this kindness grandfather made guns for them, for he was a gunsmith by trade. Naturally he had brought his tools and set up a little shop.

Grandmother was an energetic, thrifty, Welsh woman, and looked well to the ways of her household. She had white flour and made things in a culinary way that pleased the Indian's palate. The little Indian girls often came to play with my aunt. You know how hungry children get while playing. How they did enjoy the bread and butter and little cakes which grandmother gave them to eat.

Once some squaws brought some maple sugar which they wanted to trade for white flour. On looking at the sugar, grandmother saw it was

dirty and said she did not want it, but she got some of her own maple sugar and explained to them how she made it. Then she directed them to make theirs the same way and she would trade. They were pleased and showed by all their signs and guttural language that they would do it.

In about three weeks a half dozen ponies were led up to the cabin and to grandmother's surprise they were all laden with maple sugar. This sounds big, but the Indians had done exactly as they were told. Grandmother had taught them to hollow out little troughs of basswood in which to mold the sugar. They had done so, but each two quarts or thereabouts was put in a separate wooden trough all of its own, so there were many troughs and some sugar. Needless to say grandmother took the sugar and not only gave them the white flour but took two young squaws into the cabin and taught them to make a kind of white bread.

At another time the Indians wished to borrow a long-range gun. They said a large gray wolf was bothering their pony colts, and the wolf was so cunning and swift their bows and arrows could not reach it. Grandfather said they could have the gun if they would bring him the wolf hide. To this they readily consented and went off with the gun. In four days two Indians rode up, proudly

displayed a huge gray wolf pelt, and handed back the gun, but they wanted to keep the hide and tan it for grandmother. In a reasonable time the hide was tanned and brought back to her.

Sometime after this the Indians near Fort Des Moines wanted grandfather to stay all winter with them and fix their guns. He told them it was impossible for there would be no one to look after his family. Finally, however, after much talk, he said he would go if the Indian chief would promise to see that no harm came to his wife and children. But the Indian refused to assume that responsibility because the Sioux were getting quarrelsome. If they made war, the Sauks and Foxes would have to run, for the Sioux had many braves. After much controversy, however, it was agreed that grandfather would go and if the Sioux made war, the Sauk and Fox Indians were to take grandmother and the children with them in their flight. They would be much safer with friendly Indians than left in the warpath of a hostile tribe. But the war parties of the Sioux did not pass that way.

The Gray cabin had a low upper story reached by a ladder. On retiring at night grandmother would draw the ladder up and close the trap-door. Never once were they disturbed from their peaceful slumbers. Quite often on lifting the trap-door

early in the morning and peering down a very strange sight would confront her. There, lying on the wolf hide before the log fireplace, would be three or four braves rolled up in their blankets and sound asleep. She would come down and shake the sleepy Indians until they sat up. They were waiting for grandmother's approval of the fine young deer they had brought all dressed and ready to cook. Often she gave them their breakfast and then they would silently slip out and disappear in the woods. Such huge piles of wood they left for her, and such choice gifts of wild game — deer, bear, pheasants, turkey, and quail — more than the family could use.

One morning a strange Indian dashed up to the cabin and in sign language made it known to grandfather that he desired to borrow a long steel knife. A member of his tribe had a thorn in his hand and they were unable to get it out. The Indian told grandfather he was a Sioux and had travelled all night to get there. The knife was brought out and the Indian was instructed how to use it. Then grandmother gave him some clean cotton cloth and told him how to bind up the wound. Grandfather invited the Indian to leave his jaded pony and take one of the Gray ponies, which he was glad to do. He promised to return the knife and the pony when the moon was "so

high" — making a sign and pointing to the sky. Yes, he brought them back on time, and told grandfather about the wonderful medicine in the knife and clean cotton bandage.

Years passed. The white settlers came and occupied most of the land. The Indians were driven farther and farther west. At last none was left in Iowa, except some who returned to buy a few acres of their own along the Iowa River in Tama County.

When I was about ten years old we were visiting at grandmother's and one morning we saw father hurrying toward the house. He told us that a band of Indians had come down the river to pay a last visit to Gray's Ford. Great excitement prevailed in the Gray household then.

After noon we all went to the river, about a half mile away. There were only two of the older Indians along with them, a man and a woman. They had come to visit with grandfather and grandmother once more. Many of the younger ones had never been to Gray's Ford and took a great deal of interest in exploring the surrounding woods.

We children were greatly interested in watching an Indian mother swing up a hammock made of a blanket. Then she lay her tiny papoose in and sang it to sleep, very much as a white mother

does. We arrived in time to watch them fix their camp fire and cook their dinner.

After their meal was over they all assembled in a pow-wow group, with the Gray family included. The Indians talked broken English and made many signs to which our folks nodded their heads and tried to make them understand that we were glad of their visit to Gray's Ford, and hoped they would enjoy their stay. I was brought forward and told to count the Indians, which I did in their language. They all began to smile. Some even laughed out loud. They were much pleased, for they knew grandfather still remembered them because he had taught his grandchildren to count.

ADA GRAY SMITH

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Comment by the Editor

A MISSIONARY PIONEER

A missionary is an altruistic person who goes to a strange land in the service of the church. The title implies great zeal in a holy cause, a life of hardship among primitive people in a remote part of the world, danger of disease and accident, and utter renunciation of financial profit. Modern prototypes of Paul answer the Macedonian call of Africa and the Orient.

Less than a hundred years ago, Iowa was a field of missionary endeavor. Charles E. Brown travelled twenty-four days by canal boat, lake steamer, and lumber wagon from central New York to his mission at the forks of the Maquoketa River on the frontier. He built his own cabin, suffered from rheumatism and ague, managed to live on a \$100 a year from the missionary fund, and found deep satisfaction in the conversion and baptism of more than fifty persons at a revival during the first winter. At that time there was no Baptist church west of Iowa City.

Most of the pioneers sought material advantage from the prairies of Iowa, but Reverend Brown was dominated by spiritual motives. Well edu-

cated, clear minded, and energetic, he might have achieved high distinction in his denomination, but he preferred the humbler station of rural pastor. First in Jackson and Scott counties and later in Howard County, he ministered to the religious and educational needs of his neighbors. He founded several churches, helped organize two Baptist associations, and served as a chaplain in the Union Army. Careless of opportunities for personal exaltation, he spent half a century working for the benefit of others.

Nor did he shun his civic duties. From 1858 to 1861 he was the superintendent of schools for Howard County, and in 1877 was elected Representative of that county in the State legislature. His record as a law maker, no less than his Christian ministry, was indicative of his idealism. He served on committees dealing with various charitable and educational institutions of the State, railroads, and the suppression of intemperance. His proposal to legalize majority jury verdicts in civil cases passed the House but was indefinitely postponed in the Senate — which prompted him to observe that reform in the administration of justice was hopeless “so long as our legislative bodies are made up largely of lawyers”.

J. E. B.

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