

The **P**ALIMPSEST

JUNE 1931

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

Superintendent

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSESTS

In early times palimpsests were parchments or other materials from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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THE PALIMPSEST

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Historical and Memorial Parks

The Iowa State parks, with their forts, their hollows and bridges, their caves and ledges and dens, almost defy classification. Indeed, much of the interest in their beauty and grandeur lies in the fact that each is different from the others. To visit historic old Fort Atkinson, to search for deer, elk, or buffalo bones in Boneyard Hollow, to see the wonder of the Natural Bridge, or to behold the marvelous features of Ice Cave stimulates a desire for further exploration. One wonders what he would see at the Ledges, at the Palisades, at Pilot Knob, or at Wild Cat Den. He wonders if Clear Lake is really clear, if Wall Lake is walled, if Storm Lake is rough, and if Twin Lakes are of the same age and approximately the same size and contour.

Some Iowa parks are primarily historic, some are memorial. Some are recreational, while others are scientific. There is unanimity only in the fact that all are scenic, although they may have historical or me-

morial, recreational or scientific values as well. Fort Atkinson and Fort Defiance are clearly historic, and, without attempting niceties in classification, Lewis and Clark, Dolliver Memorial, Lacey-Keosauqua, Palisades-Kepler, Lepley, Theo. F. Clark, Ambrose A. Call, Pammel, and Bixby each have human associations which may justify their being called memorial parks.

Throughout the summer and autumn of 1840 horses, oxen, and mules stamped their weary way over fifty miles of prairie, drawing heavy loads of lumber, nails, and supplies from Prairie du Chien for the building of a fort on the Turkey River. A sawmill on the banks of the stream turned out walnut lumber for interior use, while limestone blocks were quarried near-by for use at the fort. Month by month the stone walls took shape: skilled workmen fitted joists and rafters and laid the floors. During the next spring the building began to assume the appearance of a fortification.

Why should a fort have been built only fifty miles west of the military post at Prairie du Chien? To protect the Indians! In 1837 the Winnebago chiefs had agreed to move across the Mississippi to the Turkey River Valley. But the tribesmen were reluctant to leave their native Wisconsin. Moreover, they were afraid of being attacked by their enemies, the Sacs and Foxes and the Sioux. To allay these fears and to hasten the migration, Brigadier General Henry Atkinson es-

corted the Winnebago to their new home in 1840. To make the position of the Indians more secure the troops established a camp and began erecting permanent buildings. Within a year Camp Atkinson became Fort Atkinson.

When the fortifications were complete, four long rectangular barracks, two of stone and two of logs hewn flat, enclosed a square parade and drill ground of more than an acre. These buildings were two stories high and twenty feet from the ground to the eaves, each having an upper porch along its entire length. Separate buildings were provided for the commissioned officers, for the non-commissioned officers, and for the private soldiers. Provision was also made for a hospital, a chapel and schoolroom, a storehouse, a powder-house, a guard-house, two blockhouses, and ample stable room. A picket fence of squared logs twelve feet high with loop holes at intervals of four feet enclosed the buildings. At the end of the parade ground a tall flag-staff towered above the fortifications.

For half a dozen years troops were maintained there in the interest of peace and safety. Finally, in 1848, the Winnebago moved on northward into Minnesota, and the need of maintaining Fort Atkinson was ended. Accordingly, one morning in February, 1849, the teamsters harnessed the mules at the fort for the last time, the troops loaded their supplies on the army wagons, and, having tacked to a walnut log in the sleeping quar-

ters a card inscribed "Farewell to bedbugs", they departed.

After the fort had been abandoned, the General Assembly of Iowa asked that the United States government give the buildings and two sections of land for the site of an agricultural school, which should be a branch of the State University. The request was not granted, however, and in 1853 the buildings at the fort were sold at public auction for \$3521.

A half century later, time had wrought its destructive work, and the buildings were falling rapidly into decay. By 1918 further evidences of waste and destruction were apparent. The old blockhouses were infested with pigeons; the chapel, with a hole in the roof and the windows gone, was surrounded by a forest of weeds; the powder-house had degenerated into a hennerly; and the walls of the barracks were crumbling away. The old fort with its beautiful setting and its elaborate and substantial equipment had gone down, down, down until it sheltered only the beasts and the birds. Old Fort Atkinson had become a pigsty.

In 1919 an appeal to the historical and patriotic interests of Iowa resulted in the preservation of what remained of the old fort. Two years later the buildings and five acres of ground were purchased by the State to be restored and preserved as a State park and recreational center.

During the days of the Civil War, Indian trouble

in the northwest resulted in the erection of another fort, the site of which, like that of Fort Atkinson, has now become a State park. The Sioux under the leadership of Little Crow had committed depredations in southern Minnesota and were laying siege to New Ulm. It was feared that the Indians, knowing that many white men were away serving in the Union army, might attempt to drive the settlers out of Minnesota and Iowa and again occupy the land west of the Mississippi River. To prevent such an attack, Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood commissioned W. H. Ingham to raise a troop of cavalry in northwestern Iowa. A company was accordingly organized and stationed at Estherville where in the fall of 1862 they began the erection of Fort Defiance.

As soon as Captain Ingham completed his plans for the fort, men were detailed to cut and hew logs for the construction of walls. Other workmen commenced to repair a dam across the Des Moines River which furnished power for the sawmill, where planks for the stockade and other necessary lumber was sawed. The weather was so bitter cold that frozen fingers, ears, and feet were common, but the work went steadily on.

The site of the fort was an inclosure one hundred and twenty-six feet square. One of the buildings — the captain's residence — was sixteen by twenty-eight feet, and contained two rooms below and an attic the full length. A second building sixteen by thirty-six

feet contained three rooms — a kitchen, a dining room, and general quarters commonly known as the “bar room”. This building also had a full-length attic which was used as sleeping quarters. A smaller building about sixteen feet square was erected for use as a jail or guard-house. The barn was so constructed as to form the south wall of the inclosure, twenty-six feet wide and a hundred and twenty-six feet long. Like the other buildings, it was solidly framed of hard wood, and sided with oak and walnut lumber. It was protected on the south — the exposed side — by a sod wall four feet thick and eight feet high. The ends were of four-inch plank as were also the outer doors. The intervening space between the buildings was stockaded with four-inch building plank, mostly black walnut, eight feet high, surmounted by rows of bristling spikes. All of the buildings as well as the stockade were loop-holed at frequent intervals.

In the center of the inclosure was a well with abundant water, and about midway between the captain's home and the company quarters stood the flagstaff, where Old Glory waved for about a year and a half. Captain Ingham's cavalry had enlisted for thirty days but it was fifteen months before they were finally mustered out.

In April, 1864, the fort was abandoned and disintegration soon followed. Although the buildings were left in charge of a caretaker, he seems to have had

little interest in their preservation. For a number of years, Fort Defiance served as a temporary refuge for families seeking homesteads in the northwest. Settlers would move into any of the buildings that happened to be vacant and hold them by virtue of a squatter's right until they could build cabins on their own claims. Plank by plank the stockade disappeared. Every board or stick that came loose or could be pried loose was used for firewood or in the construction of some settler's cabin. Lightning struck the "liberty pole" and it disappeared in splinters. In 1866 the property was sold and such parts of the buildings as remained were moved away.

In 1920, many years after the fort had vanished, the site of this frontier post was reclaimed and dedicated as an historic landmark. An area of fifty-three acres including the site of the fort has become one of Iowa's State parks. It is a place of such great natural beauty, abounding in ravines, flowers, and trees, that it has become not only an historic landmark but a valued wild life preserve as well.

Another Iowa State park — Lewis and Clark, near the Missouri River in Monona County — commemorates an historic event and stands as a memorial to the early explorers. In August, 1804, members of the Lewis and Clark expedition spent several days in this region exploring and making observations relative to the geographical conditions, the plants, and the animals

which they found. Clark in his peculiar spelling noted in his journal that "Beever is verry Plenty". He observed "great nos. of wild gees", and "Great Nos. of Herrons". The party also found "great quantities of Grapes". The "Musquitoes", however, were "very troublesome", and could scarcely be warded off even "with the assistance of a brush".

Geographically, Lewis and Clark State Park is an interesting place. It contains about three hundred acres on the margin of Blue Lake, a body of water covering about sixteen hundred acres. This lake is shaped like an ox-bow. When Lewis and Clark visited the region this lake bed was a part of the main channel of the river, but sometime since then the river has changed its course to the westward leaving a beautiful Iowa lake. One of the remarkable sights is a bed of American lotus growing in the quiet waters at the shallow end. The aquatic life is abundant and the lake offers good fishing. Sand bars and sand dunes partly covered with native trees add beauty and interest. Several thousand deciduous trees native to Iowa have been planted as a part of the memorial forest being established in honor of Stephen T. Mather, former Director of the National Park Service.

As Iowa honors the explorers who led the way to a country such as Caleb and Joshua would have described as "flowing with milk and honey", so the State also honors and respects its statesmen. We like to

build monuments in their praise. As early as 1918, when memorial parks were still rare, a movement was started to perpetuate the name of Jonathan P. Dolliver, one of the most influential leaders Iowa ever sent to Congress. Three years later, the plans were completed and a tract of land was acquired in Webster County for a Dolliver Memorial Park.

This park of over five hundred acres is situated near the town of Lehigh, and is about fourteen miles from Fort Dodge where Dolliver lived from the time he came to Iowa in 1878. On one side of it flows the Des Moines River; on the other lies a wide expanse of prairie farms. Prairie Creek flows through the park and Boneyard Hollow and other ravines add interest and beauty. "Boneyard" is an appropriate name, for numerous bones of elk, deer, buffalo, and other animals have been found there. Primitive implements of copper, arrowheads, and the remains of other Indian weapons indicate that the red man may have used this gorge as a wild game trap.

Dolliver Park is interesting botanically, especially for its numerous varieties of ferns. The walking-leaf fern, the bladder fern, *Woodsia*, spleenwort, *Osmunda*, maiden-hair fern, and polypody — indeed, with one or two exceptions, all species of ferns found in central Iowa occur here. The trees, too, are of a wide variety. The park affords excellent camping and picnic facilities. It is interesting to the scientist, attractive to the lover

of nature, and inviting to all who are interested in the great out-of-doors.

It is fitting that such a place should be maintained as a monument to Jonathan P. Dolliver, for he was a lover of nature and a lover of mankind, fulfilling his own characterization of a worthy citizen. "I like a man", he said, "who is able not only to take care of himself, but to do something for the unfortunate who surround him in this world, and when you bury a citizen like that you do not call him a man, you call him a lover of mankind, and you build monuments to him".

John F. Lacey, like Jonathan P. Dolliver, was a native of West Virginia. Like Dolliver, too, he was born in obscurity and came to Iowa where he developed qualities of conspicuous leadership. He was by profession a lawyer, by necessity a soldier, by selection and design a statesman, but by nature and by choice he was also a conservationist — an ardent defender of wild life, a constant protector of the forest and woodland, and a genuine lover and admirer of the great out-of-doors. His name is written large in Iowa's conservation program and preserved in Lacey-Keosauqua State Park.

After nearly four years of gallant and meritorious service in the Iowa Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War, Major Lacey returned to his boyhood home in Oskaloosa and resumed the study of law. Eventually he was elected to Congress where he served for sixteen

years. During that time his most effective work was in connection with the Committee on Public Lands, where his aggressive conservation policy resulted in great benefit to the nation. He was the author of the "Lacey Bird Protection Act"; he fathered the law which set aside Yellowstone National Park, and drafted the rules for its government; he fostered legislation relative to Crater Lake in Oregon, Yosemite Park in California, and the petrified forests of Arizona.

In 1919 twelve hundred acres of land were purchased near Keosauqua in Van Buren County for the Lacey-Keosauqua State Park. The value of this area as a game preserve is increased by the fact that farmers in the vicinity have voluntarily agreed to assist the State in the protection of wild life on their own land. Thus the park and large areas surrounding it furnish undisturbed breeding places for birds and animals.

Ely's Ford between Keosauqua and the park is an historic landmark, having been a noted crossing of the Des Moines River before the roads were built. A quarter of a mile back from the ford is the site of a prehistoric Indian village, while on the river bank near the ford is a chain of six well-preserved Indian mounds. Lacey-Keosauqua is one of the largest and most valuable of Iowa's State parks.

Any one who has made a trip up the Hudson River will long remember the Palisades. In like manner, any one who has gone down the less romantic but very

beautiful and picturesque Cedar River will remember the Iowa Palisades. The Palisades of Iowa, it is true, may not equal in height those of the Hudson, "but for sheer beauty of surroundings, for a quiet resting place for tired and weary country folks, as a refuge for the over-heated people of the crowded cities, the Palisades of the Cedar River in Linn County cannot be excelled". In 1922 the State acquired one hundred and forty acres of flood-plain, upland woods, and vertical cliffs in this region. Five years later the Louis Kepler Memorial Tract adjoining the Palisades was received by gift, and additional land has since been purchased. The whole area constitutes the Palisades-Kepler State Park.

The varied topographical features of this area afford interest to the student of science and give protection to a large number of native plants, birds, and animals. The park is more than a place for rest and recreation. It is one of Nature's rare gifts to those who "see and hear with their brains and their hearts as well as with their eyes and their ears".

This region also has an historic and prehistoric interest. A molar tooth of a mammoth found there speaks of a far distant past, and numerous Indian relics are reminders that this was a favored haunt of red men before the white settlers arrived. The ruins of an old mill for the crushing of rock is evidence of the less remote activities of the region. To one who desires rest or recreation, scientific adventure and study, or the

acquisition of historical data of Indian and pioneer life such as can not be acquired in books, Palisades-Kepler makes a special appeal.

Among the pioneers of Hardin County the family name Lepley is prominent and persistent. Peter Lepley was the first of the family to enter Iowaland. His grandfather had come to Pennsylvania about 1750 and had witnessed a wasteful destruction of forests. His father had lived in Ohio and observed a similar waste. Peter and the other Lepleys — ten in all — who came to Iowa as pioneers purchased farms which were half timber and half prairie, and used the timber sparingly. "Save the good trees, and cut the poor ones", seems to have been a family slogan. It was Manuel Lepley who set aside ten acres of woodland and native flowers, near the town of Union, and instructed his sons not to use it for pasture land, and not to cut any trees that were "healthy and straight". This tract of virgin timber was later donated to the State and dedicated as Lepley State Park.

The park contains basswood, slippery and American elm, hackberry, green ash, white oak, bur oak, and red oak trees, and such wild flowers as the waterleaf, cranesbill, bellwort, Canadian lily, greater lobelia, bell flower, goldenrod, and aster. It is a small but a delightful picnic place.

Along the banks of Wolfe Creek, four miles northeast of Traer in Tama County is a beautiful little park

dedicated to the memory of Theo. F. Clark, a pioneer of that region. This area is the gift of Mrs. May Clark McCornack. It contains twenty-four acres of woodland in which there is a wide variety of trees — the elm and the basswood being the most numerous. The park serves as a valuable recreational center for the residents of central Iowa.

In the spring of 1854 Ambrose A. Call, a native of Ohio, left Cincinnati to seek a new home west of the Mississippi. He journeyed west and northwest across Iowa, visiting Iowa City, Fort Des Moines, and Fort Dodge. There he was advised not to venture farther because of the Indians. Little heeding this advice, however, he pressed on to the northwest until he arrived at the present site of Algona, where he camped for the night. Locating a grove near-by, he blazed a walnut tree with his hatchet and wrote on it, "Ambrose A. Call claims this grove — July 10, 1854". Later he built a log cabin and made his home in that grove. It was the first claim marked and the first cabin built in Kossuth County. This site now constitutes the Ambrose A. Call State Park.

The tract lies on the right bank of the east branch of the Des Moines River. It contains one hundred and thirty-four acres, and is profuse in all the beauties of nature. Its rolling hills covered with wild flowers make it one of the treasured spots of the State. Interested citizens of Kossuth County contributed liberally toward

the purchase price in order that this pioneer settlement might be preserved.

To one interested in nature study and in the preservation of areas which serve as geological and botanical laboratories as well as holiday resorts, Pammel Park in Madison County makes a special appeal. Because of its peculiar and significant rocky outcrop, this area was for a number of years designated as Devil's Backbone. Here a sparkling little river "fights" its way through timbered limestone hills. As if possessed of a personality and a will to win, it "twists and winds, and turns along steep rocky bluffs for two miles over limestone beds and rocky ripples, until it comes almost back into itself, stopped by a narrow, straight-up backbone of rock barely a hundred feet wide at its base, and then it sweeps along and away at the base of a magnificent timbered rock bluff". A mile more and it has fought its way through the Upper Carboniferous rocks. It makes one more turn, and then resumes its ordinary peaceful course across the rich Iowa prairies.

In this region, too, are numerous and varied prairie flora — flowers, shrubs, and trees, a veritable botanical garden. The conifers and white birches are numerous. The area is also a favorite wild life preserve. Ground-hogs, raccoons, minks, opossums, squirrels, foxes, and other wild animals as well as a great variety of birds are found there.

Early in the fifties, Tilman G. Harmon discovered

that by tunneling a mill-race through the shale stratum of the narrowest part of the ridge he could divert a stream of water from the higher level of the river on the west side of the backbone to the lower level on the east. A tunnel about six feet in diameter and a hundred feet long was dug, a dam was built, and a flour and saw-mill constructed. The water flowing through the tunnel fell twenty feet on the mill-wheel and thus supplied the power for the mill. The old mill-wheel has now long since ceased to turn.

In June, 1930, the Devil's Backbone was rechristened as Pammel State Park in honor of L. H. Pammel, for many years one of Iowa's most ardent advocates of a systematic, consistent, and forward-looking park and conservation program. Dr. Pammel was among the early scientists of the State to see the value and beauty of Iowa's natural resources, and to plan definitely for parks and wild-life preserves. As a member of the Board of Conservation, as a member of numerous committees in the interest of wild life, as a scientist, an author and a teacher, no other man has been as influential as he in the development of Iowa State parks. The high regard in which he is held throughout the State is in a measure shown by the naming of Pammel State Park in his honor.

When Marquette and Joliet looked upon the shores of the Mississippi River a few miles below McGregor in 1673, they beheld a wild, hilly country which in

recent years has come to be known as the "Switzerland of Iowa". To this region in 1854 came the pioneer Bixby family. Natives of the Green Mountain State, accustomed to hills and valleys and woodlands, they were delighted with the scenery of northeastern Iowa. The family homesteaded in Clayton County, where a son, Ransom J. Bixby, was born. With the passing of time the younger Bixby became a teacher, a farmer, a legislator, and the owner of a considerable tract of Iowa land. Upon one of his farms was "most rugged and beautiful scenery". There he built a log cabin, equipped it with a fireplace, kept it in excellent condition, paid taxes on it, and allowed the public to use the place as a park free of charge. This area has now been acquired by the State and dedicated as Bixby State Park.

The most peculiar phenomenon of this region is the Bixby Ice Cave — one of the few scientific wonders of its kind found in the middle west. Numerous springs of flowing water, a charming waterfall, a profusion of wild flowers and native trees, and a wide and varied distribution of wild life makes this region "the real mecca of the lover of nature". The park contains sixty-nine acres. It is near the town of Edgewood, and is one of the most attractive of Iowa's summer resorts.

A retrospective view reveals the fact that a brief century ago the Winnebago had not yet moved westward. Old Fort Atkinson and Fort Defiance with their

blockhouses and stockades were not yet built. Boneyard Hollow in Dolliver Memorial Park was a rendezvous of the elk and the buffalo. The sparkling little river, that "twists and winds and turns along steep rocky bluffs" in Pammel Park was still undiscovered, while Bixby's Ice Cave, and the Palisades awaited the advent of appreciative visitors.

Now all is changed. The Winnebago have come and gone. Forts have been erected and fallen to decay. The elk and the buffalo, too, have gone. But there remain memories and tokens of the past. Old forts, stockades, and even the sites on which they stood recall the days of Indian warfare. Gorges, hollows, caves, and cliffs with their surrounding points of historic and memorial interest, together with their present-day scientific and aesthetic value, make a wide and fascinating appeal. As a result of this interest Iowa stands in the forefront in the maintenance of the historical and memorial State parks.

J. A. SWISHER

The Enchantment of the Lakes

A complete panoramic view of the physiographical features of Iowa would afford pleasant surprises. The wide and seemingly ever widening expanse of prairie is in fact frequently broken by gently flowing rivers, bordered maybe, with fringes of timber. Rich grain and harvest fields are ever now and again interspersed with groves and bits of woodland. Hills, too, are apparent — sometimes peaks, high, wooded, and beautiful. Deep-cut valleys, gorges, and ravines all add variety and splendor. And as for lakes and ponds, reflecting the beauties of a summer sunset, they are far more numerous and varied than one would suspect. Indeed, a panoramic view would reveal the presence of three score and ten beautiful, enchanting Iowa lakes.

There are four Silver lakes in as many different counties. There are two Clear lakes, a Blue lake, a Crystal lake, and a Diamond lake. There are three Swan lakes, two Goose lakes, an Eagle lake, and a Duck lake. There is a Prairie lake and a Lost Island lake, a Big lake and a Medium lake. There are two Wall lakes and a Little Wall lake. There is a Spirit lake and a Little Spirit lake. There is a Pleasant lake and a Storm lake, Pickerel lake and Lizard lake, Elm lake and Wood lake. There are three pairs of Twin lakes

— North Twin and South Twin, East Twin and West Twin, and two beautiful little lakes very closely joined, sometimes called Gertrude and Ida, but more commonly known as Twin Sisters.

In recent years, through the development of a State-wide conservation and park program, an increased interest has been shown in the preservation of inland waters. In accordance with this plan ten State parks have now been established on the margins of Iowa lakes.

Iowa lakes are of two kinds — bayou lakes formed by the shifting of river beds, and glacial lakes formed by the great ice sheets which came down from the north and, receding, left basins here and there which are filled with water.

Blue Lake in Monona County is the only example in western Iowa of a bayou lake which has become a State park. Sometime within the last century and a quarter the bed of the Missouri River shifted to the westward leaving a great horseshoe shaped channel. On the banks of this meandered lake has been established a State park of about three hundred acres — a splendid hunting, fishing, and camping ground, a wild life preserve. It is not only a lake park but an historic spot as well. In honor of the early explorers who camped on its shore it has been dedicated as the Lewis and Clark State Park.

Five times during its geological history Iowa was

invaded by glaciers. Great ice sheets pushed down from the north, wiping out the previously existing drainage lines, overriding the hills, filling up the valleys, and converting the land into a region somewhat resembling modern Greenland. The last glacial ice sheet—the Wisconsin — was in the form of a great lobe projecting into Iowa from the north, covering the land from Worth to Osceola counties and extending southward to the present city of Des Moines. Its outline may be traced to-day by low irregular chains of morainic hills and knobs which were heaped up along the edge of the ice. With the exception of Silver Lake in Delaware County all of Iowa's glacial lakes are found in this area.

Silver Lake is geographically and geologically unique. It lies in the Iowan glacial deposit, beyond the eastern limits of the Wisconsin drift, and is, therefore, much older than any other Iowa lake. Moreover, with the exception of the Mississippi River bayou lakes in Allamakee County, it is the only lake in northeastern Iowa. Silver Lake contains about forty acres within its meandered lines. Its banks are well defined, grass-covered slopes. On the margin of this lake a fifteen-acre tract, purchased mainly with the generous contributions made by the citizens of Delhi, has been christened Silver Lake State Park.

Common native herbaceous plants are numerous and varied in this area. Shrubs and vines such as sumac,

New Jersey tea, wild grape, bittersweet, choke-cherry, and prickly ash are widespread. Oak, elm, and bass-wood trees are also numerous. Migrating ducks and geese use this region as a haven of rest, while the robin, the bluejay, the mourning dove, and the whip-poor-will make it their home.

Four of Iowa's lake parks — Lake Okamanpedan, Storm Lake, Lost Island Lake, and Twin Lakes — are located in the Wisconsin drift sheet of northwestern Iowa. The four remaining lake parks — Clear Lake, Rice Lake, Eagle Lake, and Wall Lake are in the north central part of the State.

On early maps of Iowa and Minnesota a large inland lake was indicated on the boundary line between the two States. On some maps, it was designated as Tuttle Lake, while other cartographers labeled it Turtle Lake. In the early part of the nineteenth century the lake was surrounded by an extensive and beautiful woodland, which served as a rookery for herons and other gregarious birds, and as an Indian rendezvous. When Jean Nicholas Nicollet visited the place in 1838 the Sioux Indians referred to it as Okamanpedan — "the nesting place of the herons". This euphonious Indian name appealed to the fancy of the government explorer and on his maps and reports the Indian name appears.

The region around this lake appealed not only to the Indians but to the white men as well, for as early as

1856 settlers began to stake their claims on the margin of the lake. One of the earliest squatters was Calvin Tuttle. Later pioneers naturally associated his name with the body of water near which he lived, and on the maps of that period the name Tuttle Lake may be found. If this name were not clearly written it might easily appear to be Turtle. Moreover, there is nothing particularly incongruous in thinking of turtle in connection with a body of water. Hence the name Turtle Lake erroneously appears on some of the early maps. In more recent years, however, the former Indian name has gained favor, and so on the modern maps the name again appears as Okamanpedan.

Lake Okamanpedan contains more than twenty-eight hundred acres, only about one-third of which is in Iowa. A small tract of beautiful woodland adjacent to the lake on the Iowa side has been set aside as a recreation plot. On July 4, 1926, in the presence of a large number of visitors from both Iowa and Minnesota, this area was dedicated as Okamanpedan State Park.

Somewhat south and west of Lake Okamanpedan on the boundary line between Clay and Palo Alto counties is one of Iowa's favored fishing and hunting resorts — Lost Island Lake. Early settlers in this region were informed by the Indians that at one time a large and beautiful wooded island was located in the middle of Lost Island Lake, and that it was inhabited by savages and desperadoes. One morning, as the story goes, the

Indians were amazed, upon waking, to find that the island had disappeared beneath the placid waters of the lake, leaving in its stead a beautiful expanse of water, which, from that day to this, has been a delight to the fisherman. On the margin of this lake is an attractive little resort, which, in accordance with this Indian legend, has been given the name Lost Island State Park.

Lost Island Lake contains some twelve hundred acres, and has an average depth of about twelve feet. The park adjacent to the lake contains twenty-seven acres of timber land. A wide variety of native plants such as iris, arrowhead, reed grass, New England aster, and goldenrod flourish there. Shrubs such as sumac, wild rose, wild indigo, and New Jersey tea also appear, while bur oak, elm, basswood, and ash trees are common. The park is situated almost equidistant from Emmetsburg and Spencer and is near the town of Ruthven. There, on the margin of one of Iowa's enchanted lakes, where once "the red man and the buffalo reigned supreme", the voices of the youth of Iowa now mingle with the songs of the wild birds, while the cottagers and campers enjoy the sport of fishing.

Storm Lake in Buena Vista County is not normally stormy and rough as the name might seem to indicate. Indeed, it is a delightful boating, swimming, and fishing resort. Situated almost exactly on the divide, the normal outlet of the lake is to the southeast into the

Raccoon River, thence into the Mississippi. But within the memory of the early settlers flood waters have gone southwestward into the Boyer River and thence to the Missouri. Indeed, at a very early date it was thought that Boyer River was the normal outlet and the lake itself was known as Boyer Lake.

In 1855 a party of United States surveyors was encamped on the shore of the lake, when an old trapper appeared and wanted to remain for the night. The surveyors had just discovered that the lake was not the source of the Boyer River, and that Boyer was not an appropriate name for the lake. Accordingly, when the trapper asked the name of the lake they told him that it had no name, and that the privilege of naming it would be reserved to old settlers, hunters, or trappers. That night a furious storm blew down the tent in which the old trapper was sleeping. The next morning he suggested Storm Lake as an appropriate name, which was thereupon adopted by the surveying party.

The lake has an area of a thousand and eighty acres, and varies in depth from seven to nine feet. Here and there along the shore are areas of woodland — slippery and American elm, basswood, green ash, bur oak, sandbar willow, and cottonwood trees. A wooded area of eighteen acres has been set aside by the State as Storm Lake State Park. The city of Storm Lake borders the north bank of the lake.

About thirty miles southwest of Storm Lake in the

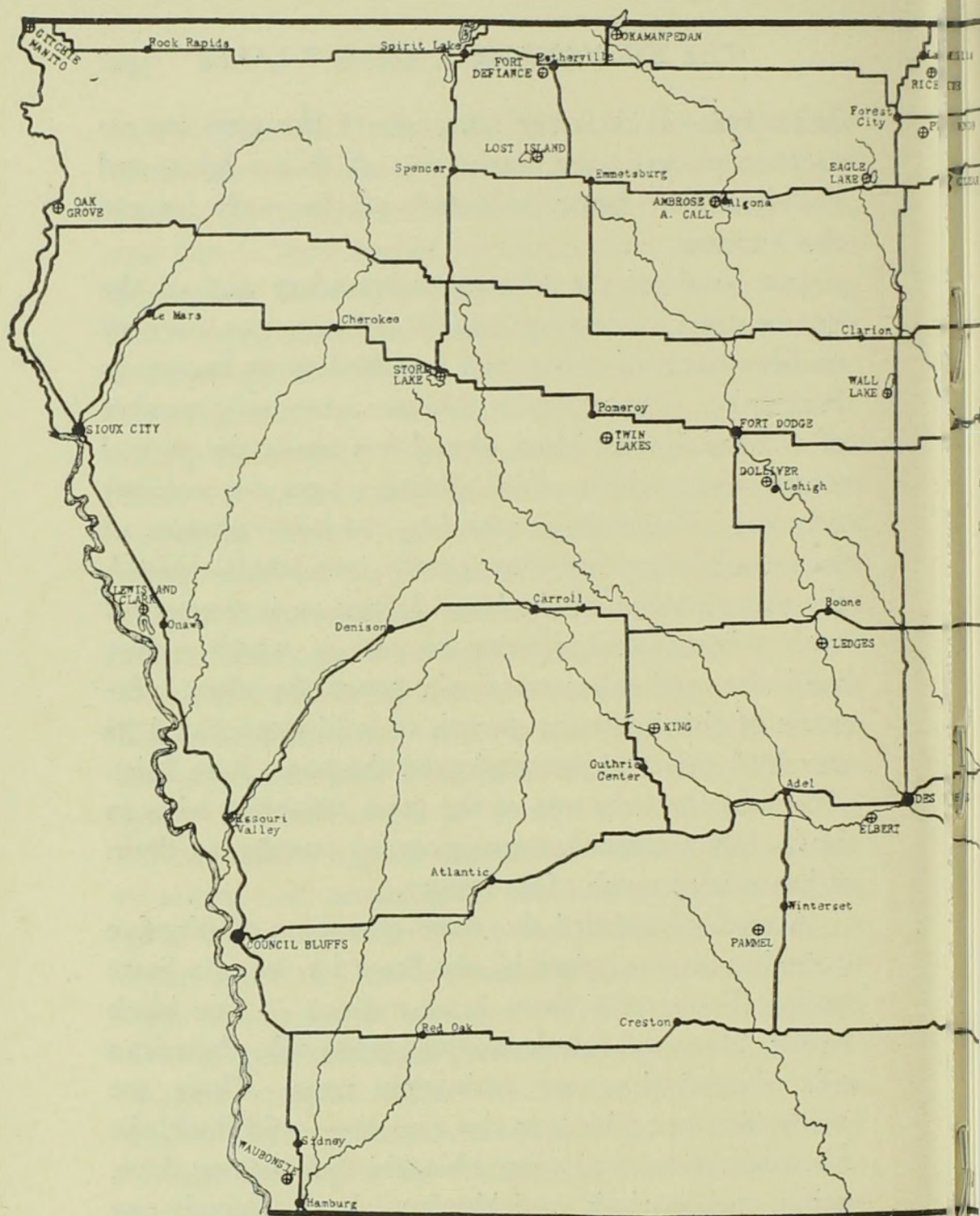
northern part of Calhoun County are two closely associated bodies of water commonly referred to as Twin Lakes. North Twin is somewhat longer and narrower, and has a little higher elevation than South Twin. Separating the two is a narrow neck of land ranging from five hundred to a thousand feet in width. A ditch cut through this narrow divide furnishes an outlet for the northern lake. Both bodies of water are shallow, the normal depth being only about five or six feet. Indeed, during extremely dry seasons the south lake has sometimes become quite dry and is in recent years nearly filled with a growth of reeds and water grasses that spoil the lake for boating or bathing but furnish a fine breeding and feeding place for game.

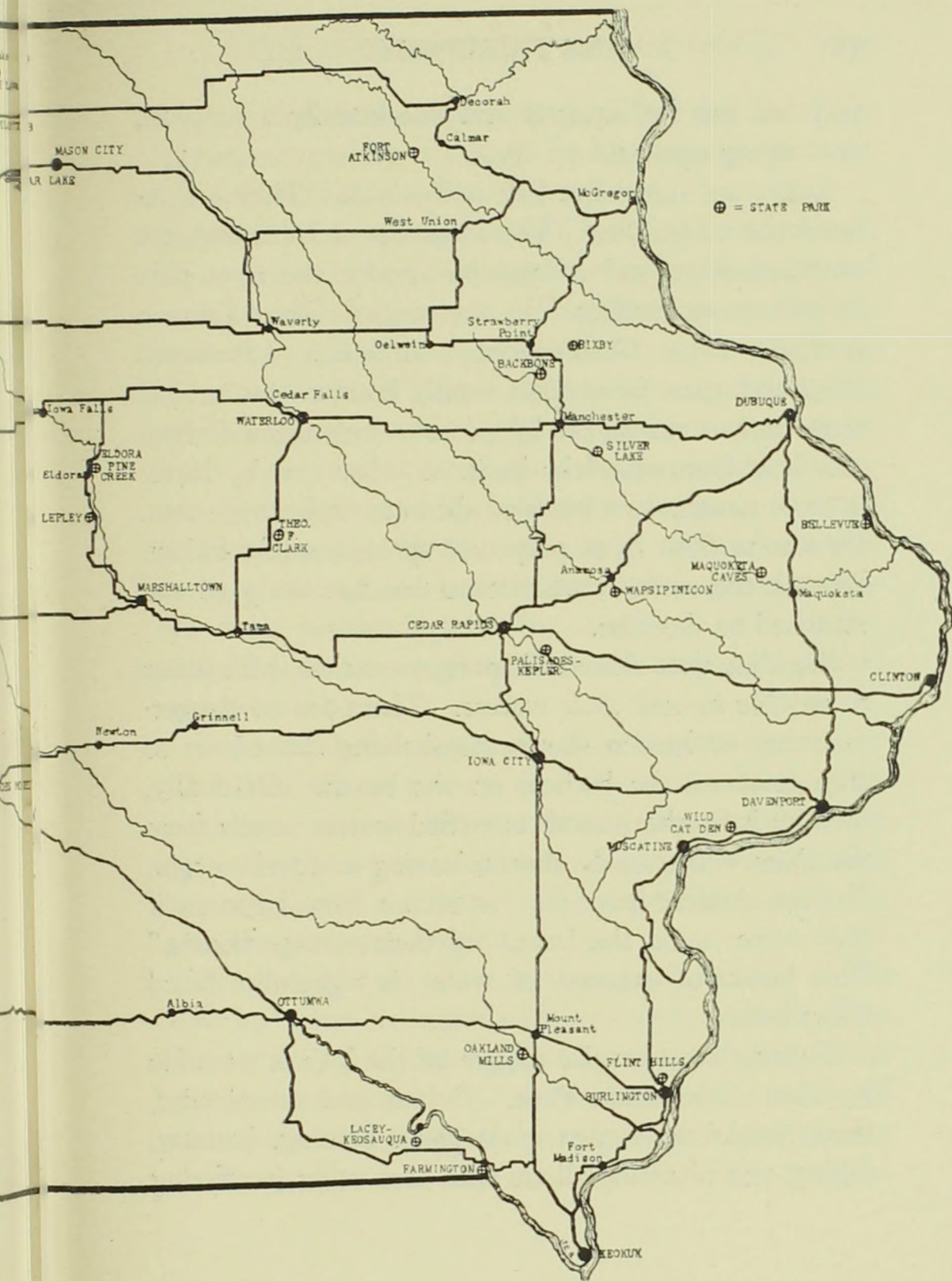
An area of twenty acres on the east shore of North Twin Lake has been set aside as a recreational center and given the name Twin Lakes State Park. The margin of this lake is not as heavily wooded as many of the Iowa lake regions are, yet a considerable number of native oak, maple, green ash, and cottonwood trees grow in and near the park. In addition to these, the State Board of Conservation has planted hundreds of trees of the native varieties. Shrubs and vines such as wild rose, wild indigo, sumac, wild grape, lead plant, Virginia creeper, and snowberry are numerous. The lake is well stocked with aquatic life, and migratory birds in this region are abundant. With the improvements which are being provided by the State, Twin

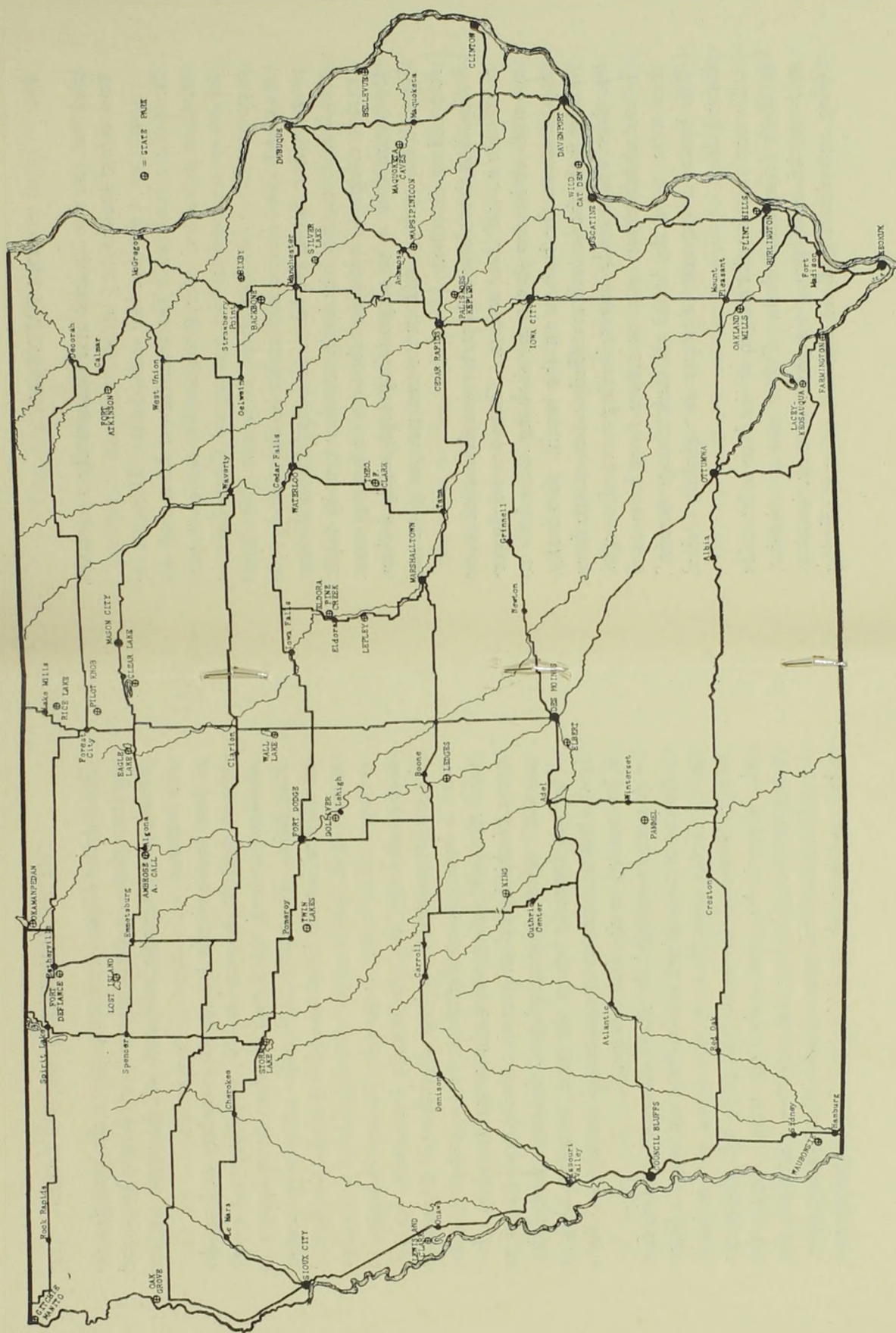
Lakes State Park is becoming one of the very fine recreation places in the northwest. A shelter house and bath-house are being built and will be ready for use this summer.

Just south of the Minnesota boundary and on the line between Winnebago and Worth counties is a very shallow basin of about two hundred acres known as Rice Lake. The waters of this lake surround a number of wooded islands, lifted several feet above the normal water level, which afford pleasant sites for summer cottages. The basin occupied by the lake embraces an area much larger than that actually inundated. Indeed, the major portion of the large depression is overspread with a heavy accumulation of peat in which rushes, wild rice, and other water plants are abundant. Because of this luxuriant growth of wild rice around its marshy borders pioneers adopted the name Rice Lake. This was formerly one of the most attractive lakes in Iowa, but a somewhat unsuccessful attempt to drain it has spoiled much of its beauty.

A tract of wooded shoreland consisting of fifty-five acres has been acquired by the State for use as a State park. Trees grow there in abundance — fine black maple, basswood, black walnut, green ash, American ash, slippery-elm, and crab-apple trees. There are many interesting birds in this region — wild duck, the Canadian goose, red-winged blackbird, mourning dove, robin, meadow-lark, and bluejay. In the woods one







may see the fox squirrel and occasionally a raccoon, or a flying squirrel.

Lakes are somewhat like individuals. They are related one to another. The hundreds of lakes that dot northern Iowa and Minnesota are for the most part in groups or families. In this regard Clear Lake in northern Cerro Gordo County is unique. It stands alone and apart from other similar bodies of water. It is an orphan among the lakes. No underground channels lead from this lake basin to other near-by lakes: it owes naught to whimsical showers or fleeting snow. Its waters flow from perpetual springs, safely hidden beneath the surface, whence no one has yet gone and returned to describe.

Standing thus alone and apart, no restless spirit seems to trouble its still clear waters. There are no dangerous reefs or hidden shoals; no shelving shore lines to trap unaware the bathers on the beach. Gradually, inch by inch, the smooth unruffled waters recede from the clean white sandy shores, leaving an ideal margin, "where children may play as secure from harm as if they were upon the lawns of their cottage homes." This beautiful expanse of water is rightfully called Clear Lake.

Twenty acres on the margin of the lake is set aside as Clear Lake State Park. Drives and promenades, shady nooks, and open grass plots, boating, bathing, fishing, and picnicing all vie with each other in offering

the best diversion to the visitor. Thus at Clear Lake "exhausted vitality is coaxed back, if not in one way, then in another".

About fifteen miles west of Clear Lake, in Hancock County, lies another lake region which makes a special appeal to the ornithologist. The water is very shallow, and reeds and rushes are abundant. The woodland along the water's edge adds beauty and renders the whole region a secure and delightful nesting place. Birds come in great numbers — spring birds and summer birds, fall birds and winter birds; birds in pairs, in bevvies, and in flocks; little birds twittering hither and yon among the reeds and the rushes; giant gregarious birds soaring high in the tree tops; birds on the nest, birds on the bough, birds on the wing; birds, birds, everywhere birds.

Pioneers in this region were not ornithologists nor were they able to classify all of the native birds. Accordingly, selecting the one bird that was familiar to all — the one which soars the highest and is emblematic of strength and swiftness — the eagle, they named this paradise for birds Eagle Lake.

An area of twenty-seven acres on the shores of the lake has been set aside and equipped as Eagle Lake State Park. It is provided with a rustic shelter house, quite in keeping with its surroundings. Groves of wild crab-apple trees make it in apple blossom time a very charming place.

One of the most interesting lakes in Iowa is located in Wright County and walled with great boulders. Many fascinating stories have been told of how the aboriginal inhabitants of this region — perhaps the mound builders or more recent Indians — built the walls of this lake. In point of fact, the same natural force that brought these boulders down from the north placed them in an orderly fashion upon the embankment of this lake. The expansive power of ice, working silently through the centuries, without the aid of human hands, piled up these walls of stones. Because of this curious phenomenon this little dot on the physiographical map of Iowa is widely known as Wall Lake.

The lake is very shallow and therefore frequently freezes solid. Thus it becomes a great body of ice frozen to the boulders on the bottom of the lake. As the water freezes it expands, moving the boulders slowly from the center to the circumference of the lake. This movement for a single season is very slight, but its repetition year after year throughout the ages has placed the boulders in a great wall about the lake. It has been observed, too, that the embankment opposite the prevailing wind is the largest. This is due in part to the fact that ice cakes laden with small boulders have frequently been picked up by the spring floods and floated shoreward. The whole process is intensely interesting, so interesting, in fact, that Wall Lake has become a geological laboratory.

Wall Lake State Park, an area of twelve acres on the shores of the lake, is a favorite resort for hunters, fishermen, and boating parties. This place is also widely known for the beauty of its white water lilies.

Iowa lakes are numerous and varied, charming and beautiful. Silver Lake, Clear Lake, and Rice Lake; Storm Lake, Eagle Lake, and Wall Lake, each has its special appeal. If one is interested in aquatic flora, in attractive groves and bits of woodland; if one would study geological formations, or the birds of a dozen climes; if one enjoys boating, swimming, or fishing let him visit one of Iowa's enchanted lakes.

J. A. SWISHER

Scenes of Rare Beauty

The fertile valley of the Nile
Is famed in story old;
And the Yukon's turbid waters
Rush across their sands of gold;
But for beauty, find the valley
Where the 'Wapsie' winds its way
Or the lazy Boone flows idly by
In good old Iowa.

The scenery of the highways and byways of Iowa and along the winding rivers is not always remarkably picturesque, yet there is charm in the ever-changing panorama. Now and again there is something that connects the present with the past. Falling Rock at Eldora Pine Creek speaks of geologic ages. There are also many reminders of the pioneers. Pilot Knob is interesting not only because it spent a million years in the distant north, but also because it moved southward to become the real "pilot" which directed the course of many a weary pioneer as he traveled across a trailless, trackless western prairie. Again, there are objects which speak pleasantly of the present — the lotus beds, the white water lilies, and the birds on a thousand boughs. To lovers of nature everywhere,

Iowa affords many scenes of rare beauty, of fascination, and of charm.

As early as the forties David Dale Owen made a geological survey of Iowa, and discovered many areas which, for scientific and aesthetic purposes, he believed should be preserved. One of these places lies along the Iowa River in Hardin County between Eldora and Steamboat Rock, and is now known as Eldora Pine Creek State Park. In this region the Iowa River has cut a deep channel through layers of sandstone and formed heavily wooded ravines, which in earlier years served as hiding places for horse thieves. Indeed, this was the headquarters of that noted band of desperadoes lead by the Rainsbarger brothers. It was in this vicinity, too, that Herbert Quick spent his boyhood and received many of the impressions he described so vividly in *Vandermark's Folly* and *The Hawkeye*.

The country around Falling Rock and Wild Cat Cave is noted for the remarkable variety of boreal plants that grow there. It marks the southwestern limit of the distribution of the white pine in the United States. In the early days fish abounded in every pond and brook, prairie chickens and quail were common, and even deer were not unknown. Attempts are now being made to reestablish these early conditions, and to conserve wild life in natural surroundings like Herbert Quick knew them as a boy.

The largest, most attractive, and best known park

in central Iowa, and one of the most delightful in the entire State is an area of about six hundred acres in Boone County known as the Ledges. Long before the State park movement began, this spot was a favorite haunt of geologists, botanists, and zoologists, as well as of sightseers and picnics. It is at once a great scientific laboratory and a delightful pleasure resort.

The Ledges State Park extends on both sides of the Des Moines River. Bear Creek — so named because a bear was killed there by early settlers — drains the tract west of the river, and Pease Creek, named in honor of John Pea, an early settler, drains the east side. A half mile above the outlet of Pease Creek is an outcrop of sandstone on both banks forming vertical walls about seventy-five feet high, from the top of which a gentle slope extends about one hundred and twenty feet more to the prairie above.

This area contains a wide variety of ferns and a remarkable collection of northern plants, such as the pale vetch, the juniper moss, and the reindeer lichen. It is a favorite resort for wild animals, and more than a hundred species of birds have been observed there. Prehistoric Indian mounds in this region add further interest. "To spend a day or an hour at the Ledges is a pleasure and leaves sweet memories — but to visit this restful place with the coming and going of the seasons, in sunshine and storm, to learn its secrets and find its hidden treasures, is to love them".

On the boundary line between Hancock and Winnebago counties in north central Iowa is a unique and interesting area known as Pilot Knob State Park. Pilot Knob is a glacial formation, which rises to an altitude of fourteen hundred and fifty feet and is one of the highest points in the State. To the pioneer, the wide prairies — the endless meadows of dark grasses driven in waves before the wind — seem to have given the impression of a boundless sea. Any natural object high and visible to the traveler became a veritable "pilot". Hence the name Pilot Knob.

The region around Pilot Knob was once a favorite Indian resort, and fascinating Indian stories are still current. Near Pilot Knob, nestling high up in the hills, is a tiny little spring-fed lake. Cool and clear, in summer it is decked by water lilies and many forms of northern aquatic vegetation. When the white settlers came to this region and the Indians moved on, a solitary Indian remained to live alone in a neat little cabin beside this tiny lake. Because of disappointment, it was said, he refused to follow his tribesmen. To them he came to be known as the "Dead Man", and the lake was known as Dead Man's Lake.

Pilot Knob was not only a favorite Indian resort and a place of interest to the pioneer. It has a significant present-day appeal. From the top of the Knob spectators may behold a most charming and extensive landscape — "a perfect Garden of Eden lying at their feet

and extending for forty miles in every direction as far as the vision extends, showing to the astonished beholder one of the richest and best improved farming sections to be found anywhere."

The wooded tract surrounding Pilot Knob contains white oak, red northern pin and bur oak, basswood, pig-nut hickory, black walnut, slippery-elm, American elm, and wild crab-apple trees. It has always been a favorite resort for birds and wild game. Once the wild turkey, ruffed grouse, prairie chicken, and even deer were found there. These now are gone, but other birds and wild animals are still numerous. An area of more than two hundred and eighty acres, including this "wonderfully picturesque promontory", was dedicated as Pilot Knob State Park in 1924.

In the extreme northwestern corner of Iowa in Lyon County is a forty-seven acre tract known as Gitchie Manito State Park. This area is noted for its prairie flora, its ancient outcrops of Sioux quartzite, its red pipestone, and the mystic Jasper Pool. Once inside the park area the monotony of the surrounding level prairie instantly disappears. The ridge crossing the park, where the red rocks come to the surface, probably does not rise more than twenty feet above the surrounding plain, "but it is apparently solid red quartzite rock, covered in places by a thin coating of soil in which a few patches of trees have taken root". Near the entrance of the park on the left "low bluffs of rock" may

be seen, and a little farther within the park is a beautiful sparkling body of water known as Jasper Pool.

Until recently — perhaps even yet — the “original prairie grass, the blue stem and the buffalo grass that carpeted the great plains when the Indians and the buffaloes held undisputed sway” was undisturbed. To this neutral spot came the Indians for native red pipe-stone to carve into calumets or peace pipes. Many of these Indian relics may have been carried far away, “for Gitchie Manito is close to the Big Sioux River, a part of the ancient Indian all-water route from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson Bay.”

Somewhat south of Gitchie Manito at the confluence of the Rock and Big Sioux rivers is another area of one hundred acres designated as Oak Grove State Park. This park, in part, is of rough topography, with small and narrow valleys, fine springs, and exposed clay or shale slopes. In part, it is devoid of vegetation, somewhat resembling the Bad Lands of the Dakotas. The sunny slope of the prairie, however, is covered with beautiful prairie flowers. In the woodlands are sumac, basswood, elm, soft maple, green ash, and the bur oak, which is rare in northwest Iowa.

This area was acquired by the State in 1924 and is “a delight to Nature lovers, as it forms a natural meeting place of prairie, woodland, and imposing rocky bluffs whose steep slopes contain a great variety of native shrub and tree life”. This park is but a few

miles from Hawarden, and is one of the attractive recreational centers of the northwest.

In southwestern Iowa in Fremont County there is a rugged region, which was once held sacred as an Indian council ground. The Indians did not dwell there permanently but now and again they "came in large bodies, chief riding proudly in front, war feathers gay, paints of many hues smeared over brown bodies, while squaws trailed in the rear". There they attended tribal councils, danced the war dance, smoked the pipe of peace or formally buried the hatchet. At these councils, Waubonsie, principal chief of the Pottawatamie, was frequently the leader.

At a later date, pioneer settlers in this region found themselves involved in boundary disputes, and they were not always quite sure whether they lived in Missouri or in Iowa. Indeed, Stephen Cooper of Bartlett in Fremont County once represented Holt County, Missouri, in the Missouri legislature. But the boundary question has long since been settled. Now it is possible to stand on the knolls and peaks of this region and, looking across the boundary lines, view the landscape of four Commonwealths — Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas.

About 1857, Augustus Borchers, a young German, settled in this region and laid out a village which he called Hamburg in honor of Hamburg on the Elbe. Nearly seventy years later a park area of two hundred

acres near this town was set aside. It has since been formally named Waubonsie State Park in honor of the Indian chief who once held this land.

The drifted loess hills in Waubonsie park abound in the flora of the sandy southwest — cactus, yucca, and other such plants being found there. Vegetation thrives on the north and east slopes of these dunes, but the south and west slopes are bare.

On the Middle Coon River in Guthrie County, about equidistant from Guthrie Center, Bagley, Bayard, Yale, and Panora is an attractive park of one hundred and thirty acres known as the King State Park. Oak trees of a wide variety are found there — red oak, white oak, bur oak, timber oak, and the dwarf chestnut oak. The dwarf oak, from three to six feet tall, occurs on the "hogbacks", and in July is usually laden with acorns. It is a secluded place, however, reached only over unimproved country roads.

Other trees are also numerous — the pig-nut hickory, common hickory, slippery-elm, basswood, many fine red haws, American plums, and wild crab-apple trees. The red haws, with their white flowers in spring and the bright red fruit in autumn, give these woods a peculiar charm. Traces of an overland trail used by gold seekers in 1848 add a touch of historic interest to the park.

A beautiful area of almost three hundred acres on the banks of the Raccoon River, near the town of

Commerce in Polk County, has been dedicated as Elbert Tract State Park. This region consists of sandy bottom land and provides delightful beaches upon which youth may bathe and bask in the summer sunlight with pleasure and safety. Many of the trees are of the original forest. Here one finds a large display of black walnut trees, and some of the largest red elms that may be seen anywhere in the State. The park is only a few miles from the city of Des Moines and is rapidly becoming one of the favorite picnic spots for residents of the capital city.

The scenery along the Des Moines River in southern Van Buren County is rugged and picturesque. Near the town of Farmington a small bayou is formed in which there is a great bed of American lotus. In India, Japan, and Egypt the lotus has long been the emblem of purity, and the American lotus is no less beautiful. Springing as it does from the lowliest places, "lifting its golden-hearted white blossom high above the restless reach of the waves that it may open pure and spotless to the sun", it is indeed the "lily of the Gods". An area of one hundred acres, including this bayou of beauty, has been reserved as the Farmington State Park.

The upland area contains a wide variety of trees — red oak, white oak, and bur oak; red-bud elm, slippery elm, and American elm; pig-nut hickory, shellbark hickory, and white hickory; black walnut, butternut,

and basswood. Birds, too, are numerous. A charming trail leads around the lake upon a high ridge, now following closely the water's edge, now high above overlooking the water.

In Henry County a few miles south of Mount Pleasant lies the now almost deserted village of Oakland Mills. Near the site of the village, where the Skunk River flows swiftly to the southward, the surrounding picturesque hills used to resound with the noise of water-wheels. In the sixties a woolen mill with its many spindles furnished labor for factory hands, but by the close of the seventies the machinery had been removed and the building was "spotted with decay". There, too, once stood a flour mill to grind the farmer's grist, but it also has long since vanished. In more recent years a dam has been constructed, an artificial lake formed, and a hydro-electric plant has been built. The old mills with their stories of pioneer days have passed, but there is still charm and romance in the name of Oakland Mills.

In 1920 an area of one hundred and ten acres was acquired and given the name Oakland Mills State Park. The park land is broken by gulches and has attractive outcrops of limestone. Oakland Mills State Park is not only a delightful recreational center but a valued botanical and zoological laboratory as well — a laboratory available to all, for the Department of Botany at Iowa Wesleyan College has labeled plainly the differ-

ent kinds of trees and shrubs and plants so that he who runs may read.

The region near the mouth of the Flint River in Des Moines County is one of historic interest and of natural beauty. As early as 1808 a trading post was established there by the American Fur Company, and a thriving business was carried on with the Indians. Twenty-four years later white settlers began to arrive and a town soon sprang up. The Indians called it Sho-ko-kon but, on account of the many flint arrowheads found there, the name Flint Hills came into common usage. This name was later changed to Burlington, however, and the pioneer settlement eventually became the Territorial capital of Wisconsin and of Iowa.

About a mile north of West Burlington is a wooded tract which descends to the banks of the Flint River. This area contains a wide variety of plants and an abundance of excellent spring water. It is known, too, for the caves in the stone outcrops — particularly for the peculiar features of Starr's Cave. Attractive, unique, and interesting, this cave has long been a "playground for the Burlingtonians" — the Mecca of countless pilgrimages of adventure, and an ideal picnic rendezvous.

In 1925, an area of one hundred acres was secured by the State and dedicated as Flint Hills State Park. While Starr's Cave is not included in the park, it is

in an adjacent ravine. The park lies almost wholly on the high ridge between two valleys. The bluffs are heavily wooded.

Benjamin Nye and other redoubtable pioneers came from Vermont in 1833 and settled in the rugged country at the mouth of Pine Creek in Muscatine County. Presently a store was opened for the sale of coffee, sugar, molasses, salt, pork, and whisky; and a post office was established. Letters came addressed to "Iowa Post Office, Black Hawk Purchase, Wisconsin Territory". The New England settlers, however, seem not to have liked the name Iowa for their village, for the name of the post office was soon changed to Montpelier.

Pine Creek is a racing, rippling stream, admirably adapted to the use of the water-wheel. Along its wooded embankments Mr. Nye, it is said, built three grist mills, one of which still stands, although its wheels have ceased to turn, and its sturdy timbers have grown mossy green and spotted with decay.

The town of Montpelier never became more than a mere hamlet and the few buildings which were once there have long since disappeared. The precipitous cliffs, vine-clad ledges, and great canyons overhung with towering hickory, elm, maple, and oak trees, the numerous and varied wild flowers and ferns, and the birds and wild animals everywhere present make this a place of rare beauty and unusual interest to lovers

of nature. In recent years an area of more than two hundred acres, including Horeshoe Bend, Steamboat Rock, Flat Iron Rock, Lovers' Lane, and the site of the old rustic mill, has been obtained by the State as a park and a wild life preserve. To this area, by the will of the Brandt sisters, owners of the loveliest of these woods, is now being added a tract of seventy acres of timber land including their own homestead. Efforts are being made to acquire an additional one hundred and twenty acres of adjacent woodland. This park area is widely known as one of Iowa's most picturesque spots — Wild Cat Den State Park.

Jones County in pioneer days has been referred to as "A Realm of Paradise". An early settler declared that wild geese, ducks, and pigeons were there "by the millions", while prairie chickens and quail were "innumerable". He lamented that these now are gone and suggested that there is little to compensate for the "superb, unequaled, near-to-nature delights and experiences of the huntsmen and the fishermen who made this veritable paradise their home in the days of the early pioneers".

Fortunately, however, there is an area along the banks of the Wapsipinicon River, near the city of Anamosa, where the "Big Woods" have been conserved and where the "superb, unequaled, near-to-nature delights and experiences" may still be enjoyed. Rugged cliffs there are to scale, rustic and romantic features —

caves, ledges, and dens — to explore. There are also modern recreational facilities — golf links, tennis courts, a ball park, and a swimming pool. Commercial vandalism has not destroyed all. Rather, naturalists and public minded citizens have collaborated to conserve and develop some of nature's gifts. Wapsipinicon State Park, now, as in days of yore, might well be referred to as "A Realm of Paradise".

When Joshua Bear and David Scott settled in Jackson County in the early thirties their food supply depended largely upon their rifles and the chase. In hunting seasons they would frequently go out together for a ten-day's hunt. On one occasion they went directly to the heavy timber along the Maquoketa River knowing that the deer would seek shelter from the heavy snow storm. There they hunted until nearly sundown, "having hung up some five or six deer during the day". At evening they started up a ravine that led from the river and soon struck the trail of ten or a dozen deer. The bluffs on either side were too steep for the deer to ascend. Looking ahead the hunters noticed that the ravine seemed to terminate in what appeared to be a great bridge of rock. They were delighted, for they thought they had their game in a death trap. But suddenly to their surprise the deer "disappeared as completely as if the ground had opened up and swallowed them". They had taken refuge in a great limestone cave.

When first discovered the ceiling of these caves were hung with "most beautiful stalactites", and upon the floor corresponding stalagmites — the slow deposits of centuries — arose to meet their companions above. Some of the stalactites were from two to three feet in length, and scarcely more than a half inch in diameter at the base. Some were hollow like pipe-stems and not much thicker, the water filtering down through the openings in the center. Most of them were translucent, almost transparent. Others were of a dull muddy color. Avidity for relics has robbed the caves of their rarest beauty, yet much of the unique, attractive, and fascinating formation remains in the Maquoketa limestone caves.

Near the caves is a natural bridge, another phenomenal work of nature. In describing this bridge, James H. Lees declares that "enthusiasm, however exuberant, is entirely pardonable". It is, of course, not comparable in dimensions with the immense natural bridges of Utah. But in point of "massive architectural beauty, the coloration of the rock and the crown of foliage which covers its summit . . . Iowa's natural bridge surely excels those of the barren west. The top of the arch is flat, perhaps forty or fifty feet above the floor of the valley and bears upon its back several large trees, besides a complete covering of smaller vegetation. The arch itself rises twenty feet or so above the base and is twenty or thirty feet thick."

The limestone caves and the natural bridge make Maquoketa State Park a most delightful resort. But there are other charming features. The whole area is carpeted with hepaticas in early spring, while in the autumn the many hard maples and small evergreens make gorgeous color contrasts.

The city of Bellevue, with its picturesque setting and beautiful surroundings, has character all its own. Situated upon a beautiful plateau and surrounded by an amphitheater of hills which protects it from the chilly blasts of the winter wind and lends enchantment to the romantic adventures of youth in springtime, it is, indeed, a place of rare beauty. On either side of the city are high bluffs which afford a superb view of the river, its wooded islands, the near-by sand dunes, and the rugged woodlands on both sides of the Father of Waters. The river bank for more than a mile along the water's edge has been cleared of buildings and is cared for as a park, offering a marvelous view of the majestic Mississippi rolling down to the sea.

White settlers began to arrive in this region in 1833 and the town Bellevue — first called Belleview — was incorporated three years later. During the early years of its history the town was infested with thieves and desperadoes. These continued to operate until their nefarious grip was broken in 1840 by the Bellevue War.

From 1837 to 1841 and again from 1848 to 1861, Bellevue was the county seat of Jackson County. With

the development of the State park movement in recent years citizens of Bellevue became interested in conserving one of nature's beauty spots and preserving its history. Accordingly, a beautiful park area of one hundred and forty-eight acres on the heights overlooking the Mississippi was set aside as the Bellevue State Park.

Scientists have frequently vied with each other in describing the remarkable bit of topography located in Delaware County and widely known as the "Backbone" — formerly called the "Devil's Backbone". This noted ridge has a higher altitude than the surrounding country. During the glacial period it stood up "like an island in the midst of an ocean of ice". It was not covered by the Iowan drift and is therefore a relic of the far distant past — an area of the "oldland" upon which "ten thousand of centuries have gazed". In 1922 an area of nearly thirteen hundred acres in this region was dedicated as Backbone State Park.

The "backbone" is a long, narrow, limestone ridge, around which the Maquoketa River forms a loop. As one enters from the north, looking to the right, he sees the Maquoketa flowing southward, and as he looks to the left, behold there is the same stream flowing northward. The summit of the ridge rises sometimes a hundred and forty feet above the river. In places the sides are precipitous, rising sheer upward for a hundred feet. The exposed surfaces are frequently carved into "picturesque columns, towers, castles, battlements and fly-

ing buttresses". This rugged area has long been known as a picnic ground and a summer resort, and many are the youths who have strolled down "Lovers' Walk" and climbed the "Devil's Stairway".

Aside from the areas which have been dedicated as State parks, Iowa is rich in gifts of nature and in areas of scenic beauty. Alonzo J. Berkley Park Preserve — a rugged forty-acre tract, eight miles northwest of Boone, heavily wooded but inaccessible by highway — has been given to the State and set aside as a refuge for wild life, for the preservation of native flora, and for scientific research. Wood Thrush Park Preserve, an area of twenty-six acres in Jefferson County, near the town of Lockridge; Woodman Hollow, consisting of thirty-five acres in Webster County; and a small area known as Pillsbury Point bordering on the high bank of West Lake Okoboji near Arnold's Park are other wild life preserves.

The regions around Lake Okoboji and Spirit Lake are profuse with rare gifts of nature and are the scenes of many pleasure resorts. The varied topography, the forest and prairie flora, and the wide variety of "habitat conditions" make this a paradise of wild life and an ideal place for scientific research. There naturalists may study natural objects in their natural surroundings. There "the fungus starts in the forest shade, the wings of bird or insect fan the sunny air, or the fossil speaks its significance from the stony pages of the riven quarry

stone." To the scientist this is one of the most fascinating and fruitful regions, but as yet no State park has been established on the shores of Iowa's largest lakes.

As a region of universal charm the area around McGregor in northeastern Iowa stands out with especial clearness. So interesting and attractive is this section of the State that it has come to be widely known as the "Switzerland of Iowa", and it is being considered as the site of a national park. James H. Lees, comments particularly on the Pictured Rocks, about a mile below McGregor, which "are an unusual phenomenon even in this land of the unusual. A hundred feet or more of St. Peter sandstone, stained with all the browns and reds and yellows and purples of the iron oxides, in contrast with the translucent white of the pure sand, form cliffs and grottoes and nooks of marvelous colors and patterns, set off by groves and lanes of shady trees."

The scenery of Iowa is not all remarkably picturesque. But here and there throughout the State are panoramic scenes of rare beauty. Iowans may visit foreign climes where sea and sky, mountain and plain, lake and river contrive to make havens of rest. But if they visit the park regions of their native State they may find a restfulness, a calm and serene quietude, a beauty and grandeur quite comparable to that which they seek afar. To spend a day or an hour at such a resort is a pleasure which leaves sweet memories. But to visit it again and again with the coming and the

going of the seasons, in sunshine and storm, to learn its secrets and find its hidden treasures is to love it as one loves a friend.

J. A. SWISHER

Comment by the Editor

A MEASURE OF CIVILIZATION

Conservation is a measure of civilization. If greed and bigotry are traits of barbarism, then general altruism and tolerance proclaim tremendous progress in the art of living. It is hard to conceive of a public policy more generous than the preservation of primeval beauty and natural resources for the benefit of everyone, even the generations of the future. The recognition of such a social obligation is a distinct manifestation of high cultural attainment — all the more significant for being voluntary. It indicates a moral attitude as idealistic as the Golden Rule. Any people who place the welfare and happiness of their neighbors and successors above private gain deserve the epithet of "civilized".

For many years the pioneers of Iowa were too busy making homes and earning a living to heed the need of conservation, either of human energy or of natural resources. Even into the nineties the breaking of the prairie and the clearing of the timber continued. At last, in 1895, the voice of Thomas H. Macbride was heard urging that romantic, wooded spots should be reserved for general use and devoted "purely to the public happiness, a holiday ground for country and city folk alike." The establishment of parks, he be-

lieved, would promote public health and happiness, serve as community object lessons in forestry, and "preserve to those who come after us something of the primitive beauty of this part of the world", to the end that the benefits of our natural heritage might be shared by all.

When the Iowa Park and Forestry Association was organized in 1901, upon the invitation of L. H. Pammel, these objects were incorporated in the constitution and Professor Macbride was selected as the first president. To arouse "an interest in, and to encourage the establishment of parks," to aid in the "protection of our wild game and song birds," and to create "one or more state parks in the vicinity of our lakes and streams" were among the avowed purposes of the Association. Yet after more than a decade of persistent agitation not a single State park or forest reserve had been established. As late as 1916 Governor George W. Clarke declared that only a veritable John the Baptist could arouse Iowa to its need of recreation grounds.

Nevertheless the Iowa conservationists had exerted a steady influence which made eventual success all the more secure. In 1917 the General Assembly authorized the establishment of State parks and created a Board of Conservation "for the preservation of places of historic, natural or recreational interest". Within five years more than one hundred and fifty applications for State parks were filed with the Board, fourteen sites

were acquired, jurisdiction over meandered lakes and streams provided seventy more potential "beauty spots", and the public park system had become a popular State institution.

Now there are thirty-six State parks containing approximately seventy-six hundred acres, acquired at a cost of half a million dollars. Last year more than eighteen hundred thousand people visited these Iowa State parks. That is half as many as went to all of the national parks in 1930. It is as though seven of every ten residents of Iowa use our State parks every year.

The hopes of Professors Macbride and Pammel are being realized. Iowa is becoming civilized.

J. E. B.

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