

# The PALIMPSEST

AUGUST 1942

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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

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## THE MEANING OF PALIMPSEST

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

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

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# THE PALIMPSEST

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## The Election of 1842

When the question of creating the Territory of Iowa was debated in Congress during June of 1838, Representative Charles Shepard of North Carolina declared that "if the Territory of Iowa be now established, it will soon become a State". This prediction proved to be essentially true. Governor Lucas in a message to the Second Legislative Assembly suggested that the "advancing prosperity of the Territory" might encourage the lawmakers to sponsor Statehood. The growth of population and industry was not sufficient, however, to induce the legislature to take action during the 1839-1840 session because the prevailing sentiment of the Territory seemed to be that State government would bring an increased burden of taxation without an addition to the well-being or freedom of the pioneers.

During July, 1840, however, when the legislators met in a special session to consider reapportionment of the Legislative Assembly, the



Governor again pressed upon the lawmakers consideration of the Statehood question. This time a bill was approved authorizing the calling of a constitutional convention providing the Territorial electors approved. The measure, signed by Governor Lucas on July 31, 1840, left but a short time before the August elections for consideration of the convention proposition. As might have been expected, the old arguments, particularly the financial one, prevailed and 2907 persons wrote "No Convention" on their ballots while only 937 wrote "Convention". The resounding defeat of the Statehood proposal caused even Governor Lucas to conclude in his message to the Third Legislative Assembly that "all further legislation on the subject at the present session" is precluded.

At this time a change in the fortunes of national politics brought John Chambers to Iowa as Governor. In his first message to the Fourth Legislative Assembly, Governor Chambers again opened debate on the Statehood question. The message was sent to Butler's Capitol on Wednesday, December 8, 1841, where the Council and the House were meeting for the first time in Iowa City.

Among the subjects worthy of the lawmakers' attention, Governor Chambers felt that "of paramount importance" was "legislation necessary to



the ascertainment of the wishes of the people of the Territory" relative to the admission of Iowa into the Union "as one of the confederates, in the duties and obligations of the National Government." The Governor was aware of the judgment previously expressed by the people of the Territory. Nevertheless, the Chief Executive felt that the rapid populating of the Territory and the effect of the National Distribution Act might have produced a change of opinion. The Distribution Act provided that the States would share in the proceeds from the sale of public land and that each new State would receive 500,000 acres of land for internal improvements.

On December 21st, S. C. Hastings from the Committee on Territorial Affairs presented to the Council a bill "to provide for the formation of a Constitution and State Government". The day before James Grant had introduced a similar measure into the House of Representatives which, having been revised by the Committee on Territorial Affairs, was passed by the House on February 3rd. On February 11th, the Council gave its general approval but asked for certain modifications. After the measure was agreed upon, the Governor signed the proposition on February 16, 1842.

The act "to provide for the expression of the



opinion of the people of the Territory of Iowa, upon the subject of the formation of a State Constitution and Government, and to enable them to form a Constitution for the State of Iowa" contained a series of elaborate provisions. It was provided that the judges of elections at every precinct in the Territory at the next general election, on the first Monday in August, 1842, were "to interrogate the several qualified electors when they approach the polls to vote, whether they are in favor or against a Convention, to which interrogatory the said elector shall answer simply 'Convention,' or 'No Convention,' and the clerks of said election shall thereupon write down his name in a column headed 'Convention,' or 'No Convention,' in accordance with the vote of said elector." The returns were to be certified to the clerk of the board of county commissioners who was in turn required to make an abstract of the convention vote for his county. Within thirty days these returns were to be received and opened by the Secretary of the Territory in the presence of the Governor. Thereupon the Governor was authorized to issue a proclamation "declaring the number of votes given for and the number of votes given against a Convention."

The statute was particularly detailed in its provisions relating to the calling and meeting of the



constitutional convention provided that the proposition should be adopted. Eighty-two delegates were to be chosen in the following October. After their deliberations in November at Iowa City, the delegates were to see to it that the proposed constitution was published in the newspapers of the Territory. Nine months later, at the general election in August, 1843, the people were to accept or reject the constitution.

Quite naturally, the convention issue dominated local Iowa politics during the spring and summer of 1842. The Whigs, who were in the minority, opposed the proposition because they could neither dominate the convention nor elect an appreciable portion of the officers of the new government. In contrast, the Democrats favored Statehood because of the prospect of determining the character of the new government and of occupying a majority of offices.

The issue was hotly debated. On February 19th, the Iowa City *Standard* printed an undelivered speech by Francis Springer, a Whig member of the Council. Commenting upon the speech, which the editor said "was suppressed in the Council, through the application of the gag", the *Standard* declared that it would "tend to show to the People of this Territory, the chicanery and trickery of the Loco-Federalists in the Legislature,



to palm off upon the People, a measure fraught with so many objections, and coming in conflict with common sense and reason." This outburst was quite a change from the approval the *Standard* had expressed for the Governor's message. On December 11, 1841, the editor had written: "The views entertained by the Governor, of the course that the Legislature should pursue in providing for the admission of the Territory into the Union is the only legitimate and Democratic course, that could be pursued, and we trust and hope, that course may be adopted."

Springer's speech as printed in the *Standard* contained the following main viewpoints: the financial burden of becoming a State would be prohibitive; and the returns from the Distribution Act would be small recompense. After examining in detail these propositions, Springer concluded: "Are we slaves? is our liberty restricted? are we deprived of the rights, immunities and privileges of American citizens? Is the rod of oppression held over us by the General Government? Has that Government manifested its care towards us by sending persons to 'spy out our liberties, misrepresent our character, prey upon us and eat out our substance?' It is not pretended, there is not a murmur of the kind. We are in possession of the most enlarged liberty and the most liberal favor.



Then, why, urge this measure, uncalled for by the people, unwarranted by the condition of the Territory. Were we to pass it, there would be little hyperbole in saying,

The child that is unborn may rue  
The decision of this day."

This Whig blast received no notice in the *Iowa Capitol Reporter*, the Democratic sheet. It was unusual for an editor of an opposing party to let such an opportunity pass. However, Editor Van Antwerp was out of the city and perhaps the *Reporter* subordinates did not feel motivated to reply. Indeed, the *Reporter* throughout the summer until almost election time concerned itself with the selection of legislators rather than the constitutional convention issue.

By 1842, party politics had developed to the point where the various Iowa counties were holding local conventions to nominate county officers. For example, on June 4th, the Whigs of Johnson County convened at the "temporary State house" (Butler's Capitol) and approved nominations for the following local offices: Territorial representative, sheriff, recorder, county commissioners, treasurer, justices of the peace, clerk of the commissioners court, coroner, assessor, and constables. Delegates were chosen to meet with representa-



tives from Muscatine County for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the Territorial Council. On Saturday, July 2nd, the Democrats of the county met and nominated a similar ticket. These political maneuverings concerned the local press until late in July when the State-government question again came to the front.

On July 23rd, the *Iowa Capitol Reporter* reprinted a broadside from the *Burlington Gazette*. Occupying the seven columns of the first page and five and a half columns of the last page, the article presented a review of the State-government question. The main thesis of the argument presented was stated as follows: "It may in truth be said, that the sooner the people of Iowa pass through the scene of confusion from a Territorial to a State government, the sooner they will be able to present to the world a civil organization worthy of the country in which they live." The writers or writer of the article (probably James Clarke) said that the issue had no connection with partisanship because Whig Governor Chambers as well as Democratic Governor Lucas had suggested the action. What reasons could be given for saying that action on the government issue in 1840 should be binding upon the people in 1842? The financial argument was likewise disposed of: a State government would make it possible for the people to



better keep their local expenses within their means. Some had argued that the expense of constructing the State House should not fall upon the people, but even this, argued the writer, was a false statement because past Federal appropriations and the sale of Iowa City lots would be sufficient for this purpose.

The article estimated that the costs of officering the new State government would be \$30,300. It was argued that the opponents of Statehood had overestimated its cost. For example, they had allowed \$1500 for the Governor's salary "when every man knows that \$1000 would be ample compensation". True, State taxes would be levied but at the same time local taxes would be reduced. Furthermore, the Distribution Act would contribute to the financial support of the State. Could any one doubt that the prosperity of Iowa would be enhanced with Statehood?

In reply to this verbose statement, the *Standard* commented: "All we have to say is, that if any body wants to pay more taxes, let them go for a Convention. For our part, we are content with the enormous County taxes to which we are subjected, and shall beg leave to decline the honor of adding a State one to them."

On Saturday, July 30th, the *Reporter* issued a one-page "Extra" on the election issue. In addi-



tion to the arguments previously advanced by the Democratic press, the editor pointed out that Statehood would make possible the establishment of a school fund, the improvement of the Des Moines River Rapids, and the right to help select the President and Vice President. Editor Ver Planck Van Antwerp concluded that Statehood, "we are glad to find, is every day gaining friends. Could a month more intervene before the election, and the matter be thoroughly discussed, we verily believe that it would be adopted by a vote of two to one."

Either the time element was important or the Democrats were over-enthusiastic because in the election on August 1st every county in the Territory returned a majority against the calling of a constitutional convention. The vote as reported in the *Iowa Standard* on September 10, 1842, with Delaware County missing, was as follows:

| <i>County</i> | <i>Convention</i> | <i>No Convention</i> |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Des Moines    | 540               | 902                  |
| Scott         | 167               | 349                  |
| Henry         | 299               | 613                  |
| Lee           | 663               | 705                  |
| Johnson       | 258               | 277                  |
| Cedar         | 165               | 199                  |
| Muscatine     | 206               | 287                  |
| Jones         | —                 | 124                  |
| Clinton       | 93                | 98                   |



|                               |       |       |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Linn                          | 145   | 270   |
| Washington                    | 187   | 394   |
| Louisa                        | 223   | 309   |
| Jackson                       | 136   | 325   |
| Dubuque                       | 115   | 477   |
| Clayton                       | 39    | 107   |
| Jefferson                     | 340   | 542   |
| Van Buren                     | 553   | 847   |
|                               | <hr/> | <hr/> |
|                               | 4129  | 6825  |
| Majority against a convention |       | 2696  |

The vote on Statehood seems to have had little effect upon the election of members of the Legislative Assembly. In the Fourth Legislative Assembly, there had been seven Whigs and six Democrats in the Council and ten Whigs and sixteen Democrats in the House of Representatives. The calculations of John C. Parish summarized the 1842 election as giving the Whigs six seats, the Democrats six seats, and one undetermined in the Council, and sending twelve Whigs and fourteen Democrats to the House of Representatives. However, the Whig *Iowa Standard* soon after the election reported that seven Whigs and six Democrats had been elected to the Council, while twelve Democrats, twelve Whigs, and two Conservatives had been chosen to compose the House. Whether the editor of the *Iowa City Standard* was subject to wishful thinking or not,



it is clear that the election of 1842 marked a high tide for the Whigs in Iowa Territorial politics. Perhaps the Statehood issue was a reason for their success, but the defeat of the constitutional convention was ever so much more decisive than the victory of the candidates. Perhaps it was a mere reflection of national politics.

JACK T. JOHNSON



## Invention and Progress

The Yankee jack-of-all-trades, like Sam Slick, peddler of Connecticut notions, may first have exercised his ingenuity in New England, but his descendants were to follow the restless frontier into the back-of-beyond of America. Clever inventors, anxious to create and to improve, contributed much to American life during the nineteenth century. Imbued with a combination of curiosity and the creative urge, men toiled in primitive workshops and experimented behind closed doors in order that technological advances might be pushed ever forward. In agricultural mechanics the fruits of their labor swelled the reports of a young United States Patent Office. The first patent statute was approved by George Washington on April 10, 1790, and on July 4, 1836, a report was made to the Congress which formed the basis of the patent system as it still functions.

During the following decade Iowa became a State and in 1847 was already showing signs of becoming a great agricultural center. With an estimated population of about 130,000 persons and with a flood of emigrants moving into the



rich prairie country, the State was becoming vitally interested in mechanical techniques of all types which would aid farmers in producing to capacity, in saving labor, and in becoming more efficient generally. It was only natural, then, that Iowans would not only take advantage of mechanical progress, but would also contribute to the brilliant history of nineteenth-century inventions. Although Iowa inventors were not numerous during the forties they were destined to increase until the State compared favorably with other commonwealths by the time of the Civil War in the number of locally patented inventions.

Among the early inventors of agricultural devices and techniques in Iowa was G. W. C. Gillespie of Burlington who, on September 9, 1851, patented a wheeled cultivating plow. Gillespie hung "one or both of the axles of the wheels to the carriages of cultivator, gangs of ploughs, seed drills, etc., to the frame of the carriage, so as to vibrate the axle or axles," and thus "keep them at right angles to the motion of the ploughs when moving in a direct line." Plows were continually being improved. In 1847 Emanuel Albert had invented a device which would connect the mouldboard and the guard plate but would leave the mouldboard free from the sheath or upright and thus render the plow



stronger and much easier to assemble. Albert's invention could be applied to either right- or left-handed plows.

Few of these agricultural devices, of course, ever were produced and placed upon the market for the actual use of Iowa agrarians. Yet they indicated that the Hawkeye farmer was alert to improvement. Even the household loom was not ignored. In the three years following 1849, for example, several significant contributions were made by Iowans to the household loom. Those were the days when many Iowa families wore clothing fabricated by the skilled hands of the frontier housewife. At Salem, John G. Garretson, Obed King, and Ezra King all made improvements upon the loom and at Clay, Isaac H. Garretson patented a device which simplified the movement of the shuttle. It is interesting to note that while these Iowa inventors were modifying the loom, Isaac M. Singer was making improvements upon the sewing machine.

There were fields, of course, in which residents of Iowa did little or no inventing prior to the Civil War. For example, they made few contributions to the improvement of the steam engine and the gas engine; they did not trouble themselves over much with dyeing and color-making, although they used locally-made dyes which could have



been bettered; they made few improvements to grinding mills although Iowa was a land of mills; and they apparently were none too interested in improving the type of shotgun and rifle with which they hunted. And only rarely did an Iowa physician or dentist seek a patent upon a new surgical device or instrument. The Hawkeye inventor was much more apt to toy with a novel idea for a steam boiler, to design a new type of fence, to patent a machine for cutting barrel heads, or to create a lathe for turning a "fancy" handle.

It seemed almost as if every American town had its village inventor in the expansionist days before the Civil War. Iowa was no exception to this rule. Up and down the State and from the Mississippi to the Missouri, were men anxious to improve upon old methods and to create new machinery, processes, and techniques. The thesis that the frontier was a backwash community isolated from the spirit of the times and contented with slavishly following old customs suffers a severe jolt when an examination is made of the innumerable patents obtained by individuals living in newly settled country. The pioneers, being resourceful, were inevitably inventive. A partial roll call of Iowans who used their wits to develop significant improvements reveals not only excep-



tional talent, but also indicates that the State was not entirely provincial and isolated from the march of progress.

Charles A. Robbins, for example, was one of the earliest residents of Iowa City to make application for a patent. On September 7, 1852, the government guaranteed his right to control the use of an air-tight mail bag which he and Harvey Allen had designed in order to protect mail from both dust and water. Mail bags were commonly piled on top of stage coaches where their contents either were soiled with dirt or reduced to sodden masses from heavy rains. Even when mail was carried in the boot of the coach there was no assurance that it could be kept dry. Robbins crimped in the elastic material of the bag, thus effectively sealing its contents. In 1854, Robbins also patented a ditching and excavating plow said to be especially effective in turning prairie sod.

At Burlington, during the fifties, John C. Fletcher, Luther Wentworth, Ephraim Parker, and Denzlow Burhaus were designing radiators for stoves, lathes for turning fancy handles, machines for making clothes pins, and machines for cutting pasteboard. C. A. Mills was the outstanding Dubuque inventor in 1856. He secured patents for a stone sawing-mill and for head rests for chairs. Other Dubuque residents in correspond-



ence with the patent office were John L. Harvey who received a patent on a paper clip on July 1, 1856, and Henry Hanner who developed a new process for making white lead. At Davenport, Harvey T. Hughes and D. Christian Raub were experimenting with brick presses and coal stoves.

Probably the most prominent inventor of Osceola was James Mitchell who in 1857 received patents on a locomotive cow catcher, a railroad car brake, and a digging machine. In 1855, William S. Smith, of Cedar Rapids, devised a current wheel, and in the following year August Hengstenberg, of Muscatine, patented a candlemould machine. At Fairfield, George Craine developed a new method of feeding and sawing shingles, while at Columbus City Robert Wilson was tinkering with a heating apparatus which would also feed water to steam boilers.

The average Iowa resident, however, was not an inventor even though the march of mechanical progress was conditioning his way of life. Most emigrants who came to Iowa were interested primarily in turning the rich prairie sod, in driving a straight furrow, and in harvesting abundant crops. Nevertheless the farmers of the State were much interested in the improvement of agricultural implements. The United States Patent Office, in the days before 1870, showed its interest in agri-



cultural affairs by issuing the annual reports in two parts — the first devoted to mechanical advances and the second to agricultural procedures.

During the fifties, for example, farmers from Lee, Scott, Jefferson, and Marion counties regularly reported the condition of crops as well as farm practices to the Commissioner of Patents. Their comments offer a revealing picture of rural conditions in Iowa. That the Patent Office recognized the importance of farming is attested by a statement of Dr. D. Lee who wrote in 1849 that "Every one that eats bread or wears cloth made of wool, cotton, or flax, has a direct personal interest in the results of tillage and farm economy." It was for this reason that successive Commissioners of Patents devoted abundant attention to the rural scene. Each year they sent circulars to postmasters throughout the nation with the request that these questionnaires be handed to responsible farmers who were to fill them out and return them to the Patent Office.

In 1850, one of these circulars was handed to Edward Johnstone, a farmer living near Fort Madison. Johnstone's reply was a mine of information concerning agricultural practices in southeastern Iowa. Although seven types of wheat were being sowed in the community, the red-chaff bearded was considered best as it was a sure crop



in sod and produced an average of about eighteen bushels per acre. A few farmers were preparing their wheat for sowing by steeping it in strong brine and then rolling it in lime. It was thought that wheat thus prepared was not so liable to be injured by the fly and that this type of preparation acted as a fertilizer. It is interesting to note too that few Lee County farmers rotated their crops although they sometimes endeavored to put in corn after small grain and were beginning to use clover "for the purpose of manure". Yellow corn was favored because it ripened sooner than the white, but yielded only about forty-five bushels to the acre while white corn yielded about fifty-five bushels. Johnstone also noted that Merino sheep were becoming increasingly popular and that the Poland-China hog was replacing the Berkshire. By 1852, the best breed was said to be a mixture of the Poland-China with the Byfield, Irish Grazer, or some other large breed. Durham cattle were also increasing. In 1851, Daniel McCreedy, another Lee County farmer, reported that much plowing was done by steers. "Steers," he said, "when yoked first, are put on the tongue of a wagon, or the hindmost yoke in a prairie plough; then put on an old yoke before them, and they generally soon give up."

Senator Augustus Caesar Dodge sent a patent



office questionnaire to Laurel Summers, a Scott County farmer, in 1852. Summers reported that Hedge Row wheat was extensively grown in his vicinity and that the most popular type of corn grown in Scott, Clinton, and adjoining counties was the Yellow Dent. A Jefferson County resident indicated that the red-chaff, bearded wheat was the favorite variety and said that the Mediterranean did not stand the Iowa winters. Practically all reports emphasized the fact that Iowa soil was so rich that manure, guano, or any other type of fertilizer was absolutely unnecessary. "Wheat", said a Kaneshville farmer, "is produced through this section of the country without the aid of any kind of manures." Other Iowans took obvious pride in commenting upon the abundance of native pasturage. They pointed out that cattle could fatten all winter on the extensive beds of rushes which grew along all the large streams and then "in the summer our broad prairies produce an abundance of fine rich grass, which fatten stock much quicker than the tame grasses." In Marion County, sheep-growers waxed enthusiastic over natural pasturage which offered fodder to the flocks of Merinos for nothing.

It was only natural, of course, that the Patent Office would also be interested in the development of societies for the promotion of agricultural inter-



ests. In 1857, the Patent Office pointed out the benefit of agricultural associations and economical societies and the following year submitted a detailed report for the several States. At that time Iowa had sixty-six agricultural societies, one horticultural society, and seven agricultural and mechanical associations. The Iowa State Agricultural Society had been organized in June, 1854, and the bulk of the local societies had been formed during the same decade. Among these were the Kossuth County Agricultural Society, Linn County Agricultural and Mechanical Society, and the Dubuque County Agricultural Association. The Farmers' and Mechanics' Benevolent Reform Association was organized in Marshall County on January 30, 1857, and was dedicated to "benevolence and reform in the fullest sense of the duties of life, drawing attention to the necessity of cleanliness of person and the laws of health in general, economy of means and time, and everything that tends to the elevation of the masses, morally and socially."

The Polk County Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Association, organized on May 28, 1853, had a membership of 295 five years later and boasted of owning thirty-five and a half acres of ground within the corporate limits of Des Moines. This land cost \$3550 and was "about



half paid for". In Wright County, an agricultural society had a membership of about forty-five, but most of these were said to be farmers of small means and were unable to guide the association with energy. "Something must be done", said a report to the Patent Office, "to inspire them with more confidence in their own skill, and in the importance of a Society of this kind."

As the fabulous fifties merged in the stirring, troublesome decade of the Civil War, the Patent Office continued to operate, to extend a helping hand to Iowa jacks-of-all-trades, inventors, and farmers. The roll of Hawkeye patents continued to swell, but it was the two decades prior to the war which witnessed the beginning and growth not only of Iowa's inventive genius, but also of the aid which a benevolent Patent Office offered the State's early settlers.

PHILIP D. JORDAN



## Clinton Politics in 1903

When Councilman James Peterson made a business trip to the Pacific Coast in the summer of 1903, he was unaware of the political complications that were to spring from his absence. He was one of five Republicans on the city council of nine members. After his departure, the partisan balance was even, but Mayor W. B. Farver, a labor union man, had Democratic sympathies. Presently his actions convinced the four remaining Republicans that the absence of their colleague was to be converted into a Democratic advantage, and so they began to play a game of obstruction, stalling for time until Peterson should return.

Underlying the furor aroused by these events were hot political and municipal rivalries. Party lines were sharply drawn in local elections at that time. The Republican councilmen who had been elected in March, 1902, were W. L. Callender, C. S. Cone, T. J. Litster, James Peterson, and H. S. Wilson; the Democrats were T. W. Hall, S. C. Hamilton, M. D. Madden, and L. C. Moeszinger. While national politics were inapplicable to most city problems, the members of the council were often influenced by party allegiance.



Political passions were intensified by intramural jealousies. Although the old town of Lyons was legally a part of Clinton, the north and south sections of the city had been joined in a union of convenience rather than affection. On many questions of public policy the interests of the two sections of town were in conflict. On this occasion the atmosphere was charged more highly because the Republican councilmen were south-side men while the Democrats and the mayor came from the north or Lyons side.

As might be expected, the two newspapers, one Republican and the other Democratic, reflected the political feeling of their constituents. Indeed, the editors were more bitterly partisan than the councilmen, particularly when the principal cause of the controversy was the allocation of the public printing. The Clinton *Herald*, Republican, was managed by A. D. Dailey whom the *Daily Advertiser*, the Democratic champion, called "idiotic". According to the *Herald*, Lewis E. Fay of the *Advertiser* "led the mayor around by the nose".

In this accumulation of combustible ill will only slight friction was needed to touch off an explosion. On April 14, 1903, the public printing for the year was given to the *Advertiser*. Peterson being absent, the mayor's vote to break the tie between the four Democrats and four Republicans



on the council decided the issue. The chagrined Republicans argued that the mayor had no authority to vote on money bills. There was also a moral question involved. Farver had broken his promise to Peterson, who was out of town for the day, not to allow the printing matter to come up at this meeting. Nevertheless, the action was official and effective.

The Republicans, of course, being normally in the majority, were unhappy. They thirsted for revenge and awaited an opportunity to turn the tables on their Democratic opponents. On June 9th the council, on motion of Peterson, voted to rescind the action on printing that was taken in April. But the mayor vetoed this resolution a week later. Some said Fay had cracked the whip during the interval. Obviously the Republicans could not muster the two-thirds vote necessary to override a veto.

A climax was reached on the night of June 16th when the council meeting ended in a strange manner. After long argument about the printing allocation and the mayor's arbitrary conduct, Callender moved to adjourn and reconvene as a board of health. This parliamentary maneuver was promptly ruled out of order. As a protest against what they considered an effort to prolong the meeting unnecessarily, the mayor and the



Democratic councilmen sauntered out of the chamber. When Mayor Farver returned, the Republicans were gone. The session thus broke up without adjournment, and so the council technically remained in continuous session for over a month. The *Herald* censured the Democrats, advising the Republicans to adopt a dilatory policy until the unholy alliance between Fay and Farver was dissolved.

By this time Peterson had gone to the Pacific Coast on business that would keep him out of town most of the summer. Under these circumstances the Republicans were fearful that their foes would seize the opportunity to press through other distasteful legislation. A council meeting on July 14th failed to produce a quorum, for as the *Herald* had prophesied, the Republicans did not appear. This "rump" council nevertheless instructed the mayor to draw warrants compelling the insurgents to attend on July 16th. The next day Mayor Farver issued a proclamation warning the absentees to be present unless they preferred compulsion. When this threat was ignored he changed his method from command to enticement. No political questions would be raised to embarrass them, he promised, but urgent business had to be transacted — the authorization of the city payroll and the renewal of some sixty saloon



licenses. In comparison with these matters the mayor thought the printing question was petty.

The *Herald* looked at the affair in a different light. The issue, according to Editor Dailey, went far beyond public printing, although that matter was significant as an indication of the trend of events. The real problem was "that two-men power, Fay and Farver, in the affairs of the city shall come to a close, even if all city legislation ceases". The business men of Clinton were supporting the Republicans, for every one recognized how, in the absence of Peterson, "they would be made the objects of unjust treatment on the part of the mayor".

On July 16th, the *Herald* again accurately predicted there would be no meeting. The Democrats convened in a crowded council chamber. The mayor issued a warrant to Police Chief O. H. Rundgren, but the chief returned at 8:45 reporting his failure to locate the four missing councilmen. Thereupon the rump council voted to remain in session until the absentees were apprehended, and another meeting was set for July 18th. The *Advertiser* next day commented that boys will be boys, and "occasionally men are elected to public positions who are more at home in a kindergarten than anywhere else".

Where were the four councilmen? The mys-



tery was easy to solve. After learning of the mayor's intentions, they had walked across the Clinton high bridge and were safely picnicking at the popular resort, Stony Point. The *Advertiser* insinuated that the "quartet now famous as artists in the good old-fashioned game of hide and seek" might be hiding out in the bushes a few miles north of Clinton, but everybody knew that the insurgents were enjoying a leisurely vacation just across the river where they were safe from search warrants. They kept in communication with Clinton, supplies were sent over by boat, and their families visited them. The four were prepared to stay, not all summer like General Grant, but "all winter if necessary". When one of the Democrats telephoned across to learn how they were faring, the reply was, "I am up in heaven having a good time. St. Peter wants to know how Tom Hall is and if he is coming up here before long."

City affairs were almost at a standstill. Even the baseball team had to take second place to this novel attraction which drew newspaper reporters from Chicago. The *Advertiser* lamented the serious effects of the quarrel upon civic business. City employees had not received their wages, merchants were suffering, public works were stopped, the renewal of saloon licenses was being delayed — all because of Republican obstinacy.



Why didn't the rebels have the good sense to admit defeat?

On July 18th the Republicans offered a compromise, with former Mayor George D. McDaid acting as mediator. They were willing to attend a special meeting of the council to allow bills and to act on saloon permits. There was to be no other council meeting before August 11th if Peterson did not return before then. Councilman Hall was the only Democrat to sign the proposition, so the rump meetings of July 18th and 20th were repeat performances in which the Republicans did not participate. The Democrats were furious because the Republicans could now blame them for hindering civic progress by refusing to compromise.

By this time the play was running out and the actors themselves were bored. The insurgents were tiring of their vacation, while the Democrats, being in Clinton, had to listen to the criticisms of the public as well as worried city employees and saloon keepers. On July 22nd the quartet returned, after having reached an understanding on the same terms that were offered four days earlier. Peace prevailed in the crowded council hall. "They say there is much joy at the repentance of one sinner, but when they came in four at a time the joy was unbounded." After striking a printing item from the agenda, the council set business



moving again by allowing accumulated claims and issuing saloon permits.

In order to eliminate the principal cause of friction, nothing was said about the public printing. But behind the scenes an agreement was being formulated which ultimately proved satisfactory to all concerned. Instead of all the business being given to one newspaper, the work was to be shared by both, and other printing companies in Clinton were given some special jobs. This *modus vivendi* was apparently in operation during the remainder of the year. On January 12, 1904, the council adopted a formal resolution governing the publication of ordinances and other public acts in the newspapers. This must have guaranteed that the readers of either the *Herald* or the *Advertiser* would be informed of the official acts of the council, for on March 8, 1904, the council authorized certain claims, among them being items providing for the payment of \$134.50 to the Clinton Herald Company and \$130.75 to Fay Brothers. In other words, the cost of publishing matter which required publicity was divided equally between the two newspapers.

The quarrel in 1903 served a useful purpose. The people of Clinton decided to purge the city administration of politics. In the spring of 1904 two coalition tickets, composed of both Republi-



cans and Democrats, were proposed for the March election. Among the names presented for the Citizens' ticket by the nominating committee, of which Fay of the *Advertiser* was a member, were those of three of the insurgents of the previous summer, Callender, Cone, and Wilson. Obviously the *Advertiser* had forgotten how during the height of the controversy it had predicted that none of the Republican councilmen would ever again be elected to public office. In addition to the three named above, Peterson was the Citizens' candidate for mayor, and Democratic councilmen Hall, Moeszinger, and Madden were recommended to retain their seats. The Peoples' ticket was composed of men who had not been associated with the previous administration.

When the votes were counted after the election of March 28th, it was revealed that the Citizens' ticket had won a striking victory. Only in the fourth ward where W. H. Poston ran for alderman on the Citizens' ticket against P. J. Melvin was the Peoples' candidate successful. Thus did political passions cool and harmony reign again in the council chamber where only a few months before cantankerous hostility had prevailed.

CARL B. CONE



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