The Palimpsest

SEPTEMBER 1929

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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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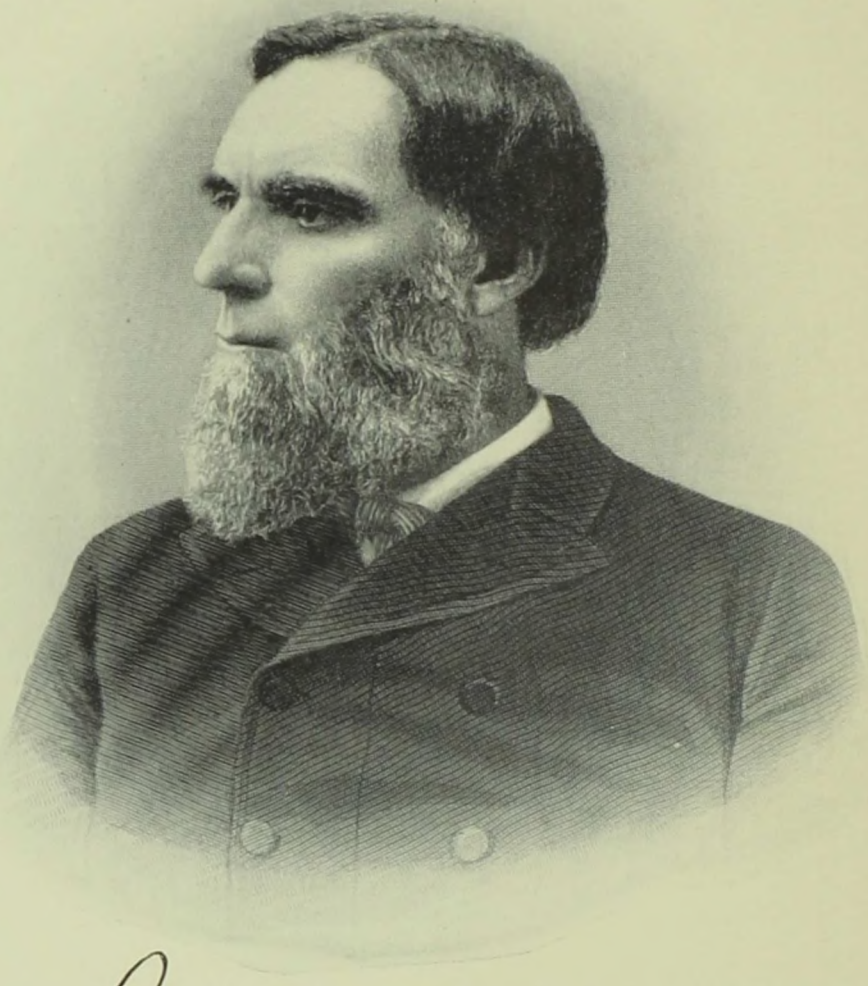

John F. Dillon.

THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY JOHN ELY BRIGGS

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John F. Dillon

In a large brick yard about two miles from Farmington several men shovelled clay and piled brick while the sun blazed down upon them between the low hills. It had been a hot August day. At noon they had eaten ravenously, and in the afternoon consumed great quantities of water. Toward evening a cool refreshing breeze sprang up and, unmindful of their fatigue and of their physical condition, the men sat in the open until they became chilled. Violent attacks of cholera morbus resulted. Post-haste a messenger was dispatched to the village for aid, only to find that both of the older resident doctors were gone. John F. Dillon, scarcely nineteen years of age, was the only physician available.

Dr. Dillon had just come to Farmington and had opened an office in a small dilapidated brick building on the banks of the Des Moines River. He

did not have a horse — that prime essential of the pioneer doctor's equipment. Indeed, he could not ride on horseback because of inguinal hernia, and the roads were almost impassable for vehicle transportation. In the emergency the young physician hastened as quickly as he could on foot to the scene of distress. There he found the men suffering intensely, requiring liberal doses of laudanum and stimulants and his personal attention for several hours. The sun was rising over the eastern hilltops before he returned to the village.

Years afterward, when Dr. Dillon had abandoned the medical profession and had become an eminent jurist, he frequently told of this experience. On one occasion when he had related the story to a group of friends, one of them said to him, "Now that you have told all about this, there is one thing you have not mentioned. Did those men live or die?"

"That question has been asked more than once, but I have always evaded an answer", responded the judge.

Whatever effect his treatment may have had upon the patients, this experience set Dr. Dillon to thinking. The next evening, while walking along the river with a young lawyer friend, Dillon turned to him and said, "Howe, I have made a great mistake. I can not practice medicine in this country without being able to ride on horseback, which I am utterly unable to do. I might as well admit the mistake and turn my mind to something else. I shall read law.

Tell me, what is the first book that a student of the law requires?'' He was advised to read Blackstone's *Commentaries* and the *Iowa Blue Book,* both of which Howe agreed to loan to the aspiring youth.

Thus John F. Dillon abandoned the practice of medicine in the village of Farmington before he was twenty years of age, to become a great jurist, an eminent authority in the law of municipal corporations, a professor of law at Columbia and Yale, attorney for the Jay Gould estate, and counsel for the Union Pacific Railroad — a prominent New York City lawyer with an annual income of a million dollars.

Born of Irish parentage in the State of New York on Christmas, 1831, the boy came with his parents to Davenport when he was only six years old. There he attended the public schools and grew to young manhood. There, too, he not infrequently visited at the home of Hiram Price, for whose daughter Anna he had formed a deep attachment. At the age of seventeen, young Dillon resolved that he would become a doctor and began at once the study of medicine under the direction of E. S. Barrows, then one of the leading physicians at Davenport. To the knowledge thus gained he added a brief course at the Keokuk Medical College, where he graduated in 1850, and located immediately at Farmington.

Six months in the practice of medicine convinced him that he was not suited for that profession. He began the study of law in his little four-dollar-a-

month doctor's office, but he soon returned to Davenport where he was able to utilize his medical knowledge by working in a drug store, while employing his leisure time in reading law.

On November 10, 1853, he and Anna Price were married. The young couple had been schoolmates and childhood friends from the time the Price family had come from Pennsylvania to Iowa in 1844. Mrs. Dillon was dignified, self-reliant, and impressive. In social relations none was her superior and few her equal. Her personal pride raised her above all temptation to do an unworthy act. Gracious and affable, a brilliant conversationalist, particularly adept at repartee, she was a charming hostess.

A year prior to their marriage Mr. Dillon, at the age of twenty-one, had applied for admission to the bar, and upon motion of Austin Corbin he was admitted to practice in the courts of Scott County. His rise in the legal profession was meteoric. Before he had practiced a year he was elected prosecuting attorney for the county. Elected Judge of the Seventh Judicial District in 1858, he served one term and was reëlected, but in 1863 he was elected to the Supreme Court of Iowa. Six years later he was reëlected, but before qualifying for his second term, he was appointed United States Circuit Judge of the Eighth Judicial Circuit, comprising the States of Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska, and Colorado.

Judge Dillon was endowed by nature with the

qualities requisite to a great lawyer. He had a keen mind, a retentive memory, clearness of judgment, capacity for hard work, and the ability to take a common sense view of a case. Whenever preparing a case for argument before the court or for the purpose of rendering a judicial opinion, no detail escaped his attention. His power of concentration and discernment enabled him to grasp the facts clearly and see them in proper perspective.

He was an incessant worker. It is said that during his early career on the bench he devoted so much time to his legal work that Mrs. Dillon feared he was not giving sufficient attention to social affairs. When she asked him why he did not spend more time with his friends and family, the Judge replied simply, "I have a reputation to make." Years later when he had achieved fame and fortune he was again asked the same question. "I have a reputation to keep", was his answer. He always guarded his reputation with scrupulous care, giving to every subject most diligent and careful attention without regard to the size of the fee.

When Dillon became Judge of the District Court he began a systematic study of judicial decisions in Iowa for the purpose of familiarizing himself with the trend of opinions and the prevailing view of the Supreme Court. As his work of analysis and classification advanced, however, he realized that his comments and annotations would be of value to other attorneys and judges. Accordingly, in 1860 he

revised and amplified his notes to produce the first digest of the decisions of the Iowa Supreme Court — Dillon's *Digest,* remarkable for its accuracy and compactness.

Again when Judge Dillon became a member of the Supreme Court he aspired to write a treatise upon some topic which he hoped might be useful to members of his profession. Selecting the subject of municipal corporations, he utilized all of his available leisure in study and research during the intervals between terms of court. Without the aid of a stenographer or typewriter he began an examination, one by one, of the thousands of court reports, commencing with volume one of the State of Maine and continuing through the successive reports of every State in the Union as well as the Federal and English courts. Thus he labored incessantly for a period of more than six years. The result was a monumental work, the first edition of which yielded him a royalty of five thousand dollars. Indeed, the treatise was so popular that a second edition had to be published a year later in 1873.

Meanwhile President Grant had appointed him to the United States Circuit Court — a position which he held for nine years. Both as a jurist and as a publicist Dillon's reputation was secure. Particularly in the field of corporation law he had won international recognition. At the height of his public usefulness and reputation as a judge he resigned his seat on the Federal bench to accept a

position as Professor of Law at Columbia University, and to become counselor for the Union Pacific Railroad.

From the year 1879 until the end of his long career in 1914, Judge Dillon remained a resident of New York City. In his earlier career he had lectured on the subject of medical jurisprudence at the State University of Iowa. At Columbia he taught real estate and equity jurisprudence, and a few years later he lectured on the "Law and Jurisprudence of England and America" at Yale University. While lecturing at Yale he gave utterance to a single sentence which in a large measure sets forth his whole philosophy and attitude toward life and embodies his conception of an ideal judge. "When recently crossing the bay of New York," he said, "the Statue of Liberty with its uplifted torch enlightening the world, suggested to me that the truer ideal of a modern judge was no longer a figure with bandaged eyes, but rather the figure of one who carries in his upraised hand the torch of truth lighted from on high, and who, throughout the arguments of counsel and in the maze and labyrinth of adjudged cases, walks ever with firm step in the illumination of its constant and steady flame."

On account of the rapidly increasing demand for his services as attorney he was obliged to abandon the teaching profession into which he had entered with eminent distinction. As a corporation lawyer he had few if any peers. Within a few years, in

recognition of his ability he was elected President of the American Bar Association.

In the leading cases before the Supreme Court of New York his services were constantly in demand. He also appeared in some of the most important Federal cases. Indeed, during a period of ten years he was reputed to have argued more cases before the Supreme Court of the United States than any other attorney not resident in Washington.

In the case of John Jacob Astor *v.* Arcade Railway Company he appeared in the New York Supreme Court for the property owners who brought action to restrain the defendants from constructing a railway beneath certain streets of New York City. The court decided in accordance with the view expressed by Mr. Dillon, holding that the act under which the company claimed authority to construct the railway was unconstitutional. In arguing for the defendant in the case of United States *v.* Trans-Missouri Freight Association in 1896, Mr. Dillon presented the view that the Sherman Anti-trust Act was intended to apply only to contracts in restraint of interstate commerce in which the restraint is unreasonable. The court did not accept Mr. Dillon's view at that time, but fifteen years later the Supreme Court of the United States adopted the rule so ably presented by him in the earlier years. Thus he was shown to be not only accurate in his analysis of a case but progressive as well — not always agreeing with the courts but sometimes anticipating

rules of construction which if followed would improve the law.

In 1911 Mr. Dillon undertook the preparation of the fifth edition of his *Commentaries on the Law of Municipal Corporations,* the four previous editions having been exhausted. Nearly forty years had passed since the publication of the first edition. Thus the work, as the author expressed it, was "not only a child, but the companion, of the far greater part of a prolonged professional career." It is not strange therefore that there was a solemn note if not a touch of sadness in his reflection that in the fifth edition he was taking "final leave of a work which is intimately incorporate with the studies, lucubrations, and labors" of his professional life. "My chief pride and satisfaction in the work", he continued, "consist in the fact that it constitutes the largest and certainly the last payment I shall be able to make on the *Baconian* debt which I acknowledge myself owing to the great profession of the law, to which without distraction, diversion, intermission or other ambitions I have given fifty-nine years — the whole of my active life."

The first four editions of this treatise had produced royalties in excess of fifty thousand dollars, and the indirect benefits accruing to the author were of inestimable value to him. The authorship of these volumes, perhaps more than anything else, had served as the stepping stone to his success and national eminence. It had made him an outstanding

authority in the law of municipal government and finance. Municipal bonds were scarcely marketable in New York City without his approval, while with his endorsement they were readily salable at face value in any market. For a single client Mr. Dillon approved more than fifty million dollars worth of bonds, not one of which was ever contested in the courts. Railroad corporations sought his service and the wealthy clientele of New York asked his advice about enormous financial transactions and entrusted him with the settlement of their estates. A lawyer for millionaires he himself became a multi-millionaire.

Throughout his years of prosperity, fortune, and fame, Judge Dillon never forgot his intimate relations with Iowa. When the Davenport Free Public Library was erected in 1904 he returned to participate in the dedication services. "From early boyhood Davenport was my home," he said, in an address delivered at that time. " 'The mystic chords of memory' here bind me to the past by the sweetest and the saddest of ties. Other days and scenes involuntarily rise before me. I see the little town of 1838 with its few hundred people, without schools, without libraries, without many of the comforts and with few of the luxuries of modern life, when the Indians were thicker than white men, when packs of wolves coming out on the ice from the island below the town were a familiar sight and their long, dismal howl a familiar sound."

In a letter to the editor of the Davenport *Democrat,* he wrote, "Yes; you are right! I am a Davenporter and always expect to be in my memories, my sentiments and my affections. It was my home and my only home for the long period of forty-one years — from early boyhood to beyond the meridian of life. Though absent, it is and will ever remain to me the city of the heart."

When Mrs. Dillon and their daughter were lost at sea in 1898 a monument in their honor was erected at Davenport. And finally in 1914 when Judge Dillon's career was closed his body was brought to Davenport to repose on the banks of the Father of Waters where life had been sweetest and dearest to him.

J. A. Swisher

The Normal Academy of Music

Long before the State University established a summer session, Iowa City boasted a summer school of another kind, so unique and excellent that it attracted attendance from far and near. On June 9, 1866, the Iowa State Normal Academy of Music was organized by a group of townspeople and incorporated under the laws of Iowa. It was the "design of some of the corporators" that this academy be so engrafted "into the University that it should eventually and at all times be recognized as one of the essential branches of that institution."

This dream was not fully realized, but at a time when singing schools and musical conventions were common the Normal Academy of Music was a significant and ambitious response to the artistic needs of the people. It would not have been in harmony "with the young, thriving, go-ahead state of Iowa" if an effort had not been made to "partake somewhat of the spirit of the times in regard to music culture."

In July, 1867, the local newspaper announced that the "Iowa State Normal Academy of Music will open in this city on August 6th, and close September 13th. This Institution is in charge of Profs. H. S. and J. E. Perkins, of Boston. These gentlemen have a national reputation as teachers of music, and the

mere mention of their names is sufficient to secure for the Academy here a liberal support."

Professor H. S. Perkins, of the Northern New York Normal Academy of Music, was engaged as the Principal of the Academy for a period of five years. He was promised a minimum of "seventy-five scholarships, of fifteen dollars each, for each annual session of six weeks." Professor Perkins was assisted by his brother Jule who was "a distinguished Basso and Pianist", Mr. A. T. Smith, and Miss Hattie C. Lindsey.

One hundred and five students enrolled for the first session, which was held in one of the upper chambers of the Old Stone Capitol. Several weeks of practice culminated in a concert at Metropolitan Hall. The room was packed at thirty-five cents per ticket. No wonder a great crowd turned out, for the newspaper had promised them an entertainment which would "range through the whole field of solos, duets, trios, quartettes and choruses, with many new, unique, amusing, gay, grave, lively and profound presentations." Nor was the audience disappointed. Several of the numbers were composed by the Perkins brothers, including W. O. Perkins, then a musician of note in Boston.

As the "Grand Closing Concert" for that year the Academy presented Josef Haydn's *The Creation.* This was a difficult undertaking, but the "zeal and enthusiasm with which the students composing the chorus class of the Academy entered into the

study, even of the most difficult choruses, together with the successful rendering of the entire oratorio", gave the principal much encouragement in his "arduous labors". The evening was "pronounced a decided success — exceeding the expectations of the most hopeful."

But it was impossible to please everybody. The newspaper published a letter from a "man with a deaf ear" who complained that though the chants, choruses and operatic selections were grand, and that "harmony, concord, and all the splendors of sound" trembled in every note, there was not enough variety in the selections. He observed that "the public is not a musician, and while he, she or it may tremble and turn pale at the first burst of a storm of sweet sounds, there soon arises a longing for a change in the bill. A simple ditty — something with a dash of humor — 'something familiar in our ears as household words,' would relieve the strained nerves and prepare the public for another diapason."

The Perkins Music School, as it was familiarly called, sang merrily on for a period of five years. It became an accepted institution in the city, an occasion to be anticipated with enthusiasm by local music lovers. Aspiring young vocalists and teachers flocked in from out of town, willing to pay room and board and to toil through the hot August days for the privilege of receiving instruction from the Perkins brothers. The number of pupils ranged

from a hundred to a hundred and thirty, and during the summer of 1870 the counties of Muscatine, Scott, Cedar, Lee, Davis, Appanoose, Mahaska, Marion, Warren, Madison, Poweshiek, Story, Tama, Benton, Linn, Jones, Clinton, Buchanan, and Iowa were represented.

Besides the Perkins brothers a staff of two or three "assistant gentlemen teachers" and one or two "lady soloists" came out from Boston to assist in instruction. In 1869 the faculty consisted of Professors H. S. and Jule E. Perkins, J. A. Doane, M. Z. Tinker, and W. F. Heath, assisted by Miss Mary E. Gibbs, soprano soloist, and Mrs. J. A. Doane, alto, all of Boston. In 1870 Professor Perkins had "associated with him an efficient corps of teachers in the persons of J. J. Kimball, W. F. Heath, L. A. Phelps (formerly of Grinnell), and Miss Delia Ekins, of Galesburg, Illinois.

The Academy was housed in several different buildings. During the first year or two a "concord of sweet sounds" issued from the chapel of the University and from the Senate Chamber of the Old Capitol. Later Metropolitan Hall and Market Hall were the scenes of the "chords and dischords". The former was located on the southwest corner of Washington and Dubuque streets, where the Hotel Jefferson now stands, and the latter was on the southeast corner of Dubuque Street and Iowa Avenue. It was properly named Burr's Hall, but since there was a meat market on the first floor people

fell into the habit of calling it by the more descriptive name.

One of the most successful sessions of the Iowa State Normal Academy of Music was opened on August 3, 1870, with an address by the Reverend Miss A. J. Chapin on the subject, "The Aesthetical and Educational in Music". The editor of the Iowa City *Press* felt "confident that those of our citizens who wish a rare literary and musical treat" would not fail to be present, and bespoke "a crowded house to witness the exercises" which he trusted would "inaugurate the most successful session of the Academy".

Classes started with precision. First the students' voices were tested to see whether they should sing soprano or alto, tenor or bass, and then the work began in earnest. Elementary classes were organized for those who had just learned how to carry a tune but who could not read the notes, while those whose voices had nearly reached the perfection of a flute or cello were placed in advanced groups. The daily schedule opened at half past eight with devotional exercises followed by fifteen minutes of physical exercises. At nine the first and second harmony classes met, the ten o'clock hour was devoted to first and second vocalizing, and second notation occupied the final morning period. No classes were scheduled in the afternoon. First notation completed the program at seven in the evening.

Public concerts which were given at intervals throughout the term united the school in a common interest, for the soloist in an oratorio must be sustained by the background of a perfect chorus. Usually the teachers carried the leading parts, but capable pupils were also given plenty of opportunity to display their talent.

The song book most used was *The Nightingale*, but it was supplemented by considerable study of other compositions. Professor Perkins's "new and neatly gotten up" *College Hymn and Tune Book* had been adopted by the University "for the use of all of the Students at Chapel exercises." He had another song book in preparation for the use of the common schools, to be called the *Musical Echo*, which a local editor prophesied would "doubtless prove a success which has been the case with all of his books and publications."

Though his compositions were of high order, Professor Perkins's best talent lay in his ability to organize and direct, and to endear himself in the hearts of his pupils. That he was unusual along this line can be judged by the glowing reports of any of the "closing concerts". When the final session of the Academy was closed with Mendelssohn's "great and popular" oratorio, *Elijah*, the editor heralded the event with as much sincerity as eloquence. "This sublime Oratorio," he wrote, "has never been sung west of Chicago, and we think not in that city. It is a Herculean task to prepare it,

and no one with less energy, ambition and masterly skill than Prof. H. S. Perkins could have accomplished what has been done by the Academy of Music in preparing it for a public performance. The choruses are grand in a superlative degree; the solos are many and magnificent, especially those for the Basso, which will be rendered in a masterly manner by Prof. Jule E. Perkins, who is equal to any task of this kind. He will make the words of *Elijah* a 'living reality.' The Soprano Solos will be artistically sung by Miss Mary E. Gibbs and the Tenor by Prof. H. S. Perkins, who is always ready with his voice as well as with the magnetic *baton,* which never fails to move the choruses of voices with great precision, accuracy and delicacy."

At the close of another concert the paper reported that the "programme was all classical, or music of a high order," and that one commendable change which had occurred in the minds and taste of the people was "the present ability to appreciate the better class of music as compared with the condition of things before the organization of the Academy. Without the Academy we could not have the opportunity of listening to the compositions of the old classic writers, nor could we even *with* the School without a conductor at the head with that breadth of musical culture, appreciation, taste, tact and ability which is absolutely necessary to grapple with, and master the difficulties which stand in the way, and so often intimidate the majority of men."

During the "Grand Concert" of 1870 the members of the school took the opportunity to show their affection in a more concrete manner. "The Hall was filled to overflowing with one of the most appreciative audiences" ever assembled in Iowa City. "As the time arrived for opening the Concert, Professor Perkins was first annoyed because his *baton* could not be found. He, in the twinkling of an eye improvised a *stick,* which, however, some member of the class endeavored unsuccessfully to take from him. He did not 'see the point' until Captain A. B. Cree stepped forward and presented the Conductor with a very fine gold tipped baton, in behalf of the Academy, and accompanied the presentation with short but appropriate remarks." Silver cake baskets and a gold pen and pencil were presented by several prominent students to the other members of the faculty.

Mozart's *Twelfth Mass* was then "finely performed by a splendid chorus numbering some 75", with the solo parts sustained by Miss Delia Ekins, Miss Ida M. Kimball, Miss Hattie Glenn, Mr. H. S. Perkins, Mr. J. J. Kimball, and Mr. W. F. Heath. The entire work had been prepared in a little over six regular evenings of rehearsal, a feat which was considered just short of a miracle.

In addition to the oratorio, Mr. Phelps rendered a "Grand Etude Galop" upon the "fine Mathushek piano". Miss Lucy Smith sang the cavatina, "O luce di quest' anima", by Donizetti, with much

credit to herself and teacher. Mr. George Smith then made his début in the Academy with the solo, "Friend of the Brave". He was reported to have a "mammoth voice" for one of his stature. Professor Otto Schmidt played a fantasia on his violin and then the audience demanded "The Mocking Bird" which he performed in such inimitable style that some who heard him were convinced that none but he could improve upon himself, for he seemed to be "without a peer upon the instrument of his choice".

Professor Heath sang "Rock Me Ye Billows", and Mr. Phelps, with the Messrs. Perkins and Kimball in the chorus, pleased the votaries of music with the beautiful song, "Under the Snow". Professor Kimball favored his listeners with "There's Peace on the Deep", a piece composed by Professor Perkins. The cavatina, "Ah! non credea mirarti", from *Sonnambula* afforded Miss Ekins an opportunity to display to good advantage "her high, flexible voice". The concert closed with the side-splitting "Laughing Trio" by Messrs. Perkins, Heath, and Kimball, which "left the audience in the best of spirits although they had been in the Hall for nearly three hours."

Quite naturally many of the students in the Academy lived in Iowa City. Among these were Macon Holmes, Lizzie Osmond, Addie Nixon, Minnie Kimball, Elizabeth Irish, George Starr, Chan Kimball, Horace Kimball, Blanche Lee, Carrie Wetherby,

Lucia Cole, Fannie Dunlap, Lizzie Clark, Nellie V. Hutchinson, Lucy Smith, Ida May Kimball, and Hattie Glenn.

The last two had probably the finest voices ever trained by the school. Miss Kimball came from a family of musicians. She first participated in a concert when but fourteen or fifteen years of age, appearing in a scarlet costume and singing "Robin Redbreast". From that time her success was assured, and she rapidly developed into one of the best vocalists in the State. Instead of seeking a musical career, however, she married Dr. R. W. Pryce of Iowa City and became one of the most prominent women in the city.

Hattie Glenn's father had a hardware store on the northeast corner of Clinton and Washington streets, where Whetstone's drug store is now located. Miss Glenn possessed a rich contralto voice and, after receiving considerable training at the Academy, an uncle in Chicago decided to further her musical education by giving her the opportunity to study in the East and in Europe. She appeared in opera for a time, and had the honor of singing before Queen Victoria. For public purposes her name was changed to Hope Glenn. It is reported that she was tall and graceful, with dark hair and eyes, and made a very striking appearance on the stage.

Miss Glenn appeared in Iowa City just after her return from Europe. She did not wish her parents to know that she was one of the troupe, but of course

the news got out, and when she stepped on the platform she was confronted by her whole family lined up on the first row. The effect so unnerved her that for the first time in her life she nearly collapsed with stage fright.

With such unusually fine talent at their disposal, it was no wonder that the Perkins brothers felt a special affection for Iowa City. They rented a house on South Linn Street and entered into the life of the town with more than a visitor's interest. On the occasion of graduation exercises they lent their musical talent to the University, often the proceeds of their concerts went to charity.

Professor Perkins was the leading figure in suggesting and organizing the First Music Teachers and Musicians Convention in Iowa. The gathering was to be conducted somewhat like a singing school, with the teachers as pupils, and several public concerts given at intervals.

Probably his most helpful contribution occurred in 1870. According to a "Liberal Plan", Professor Perkins offered a scholarship to "each county in the Commonwealth", whereby two students — "either ladies or gentlemen" — would be admitted free of tuition to all the class departments of the Academy of Music. The candidates from each county were to receive their appointment or be recommended by the county superintendent of public instruction. It was suggested that so far as practicable these selections should be made from the public school teachers, for

in so doing the cause of music would be more directly benefited, as the teachers would be better prepared to give correct vocal instruction.

The Perkins brothers conducted short "Musical Conventions" during different parts of the season, and their engagements were reported in the Iowa City papers with much interest. Such towns as Marengo, Nevada, Wapello, Tipton, Clinton, Grinnell, Marshalltown, and Muscatine were among the number so fortunate as to secure their services. It was averred that Professor H. S. Perkins had "probably conducted more conventions than any other western man," and it was urged that cities or counties wishing to form a convention which would "result favorably to the cause of music" could not do better than to secure his services.

For several years he conducted conventions or academies in southern Wisconsin and in Kansas. The Leavenworth paper reported that "rarely, in these ends of the earth, are we regaled with the beauties of song, as was the large and fashionable audience at Odd Fellows Hall. And rarely have we seen such enthusiasm as was created by the superb rendering of the chaste and classical programme of the evening."

The younger brother did not always accompany the other on his journeys into the far country. Nor did he often help with the teaching, but he made innumerable friends, and lent his voice graciously on many occasions. It was often said that his magnifi-

cent singing alone was sufficient to attract an audience of music loving and educated people. Professor Jule E. Perkins had "one of the most superb bass voices in this or in any other country, and his four years' experience in Europe, studying and singing in Italian opera" had made him an artist indeed. In 1869 he was the "only American Primo Basso in Italian Opera, making his début in March at Milan. That first appearance was a "trying scene" before a critical and exacting public, but one through which he passed successfully. It was small wonder that one admirer wrote that "the West will hope long to associate this pale singer with the coming triumphs of music."

But the brothers Perkins were not long associated with Iowa City. In the year 1871 the last chorus was sung and the last annual picnic was held. The Iowa State Normal Academy of Music died the death of all institutions which the times have outgrown. Yet the results of the awakened interest in good music and the fine classical training, which was an opportunity for even the most promising pupils, were influences not to be soon forgotten. For many years the tradition of music was sustained in Iowa City by men and women of talent. Even yet a few persons survive for whom the mention of the Academy brings a host of happy memories and a feeling of pride at having participated in those "up and coming" days.

Pauline Grahame

The Estes House Hospital

Keokuk rode the high tide of a municipal boom in 1856. Town lots were sold profitably, new business enterprises were started, and companies were organized — mostly in terms of paper money. In the spring of 1857, Rufus Wilsey and a few others who had faith in the future of Keokuk invested all the money they could borrow in a quarter of a block on Main Street and there began to erect a magnificent hotel. Equities in real estate were traded for lumber, brick, and labor. Construction proceeded rapidly. On June 29th the cornerstone was laid with appropriate ceremony by J. C. Estes, a prominent citizen of Keokuk. Within two months came the financial panic of 1857, resources dwindled, and the building had to be sold at auction before the upper floors were finished.

Designed for a hotel, the Estes House was transformed into a hospital early in the dark days of 1862, the largest of the five buildings utilized for that purpose in Keokuk. Situated in the very heart of the business district, it sheltered hundreds of wounded men, brought by steamboat from the southern battle fields. From its doors wound a daily procession to the burial plot just west of the city, which became Iowa's only National Cemetery.

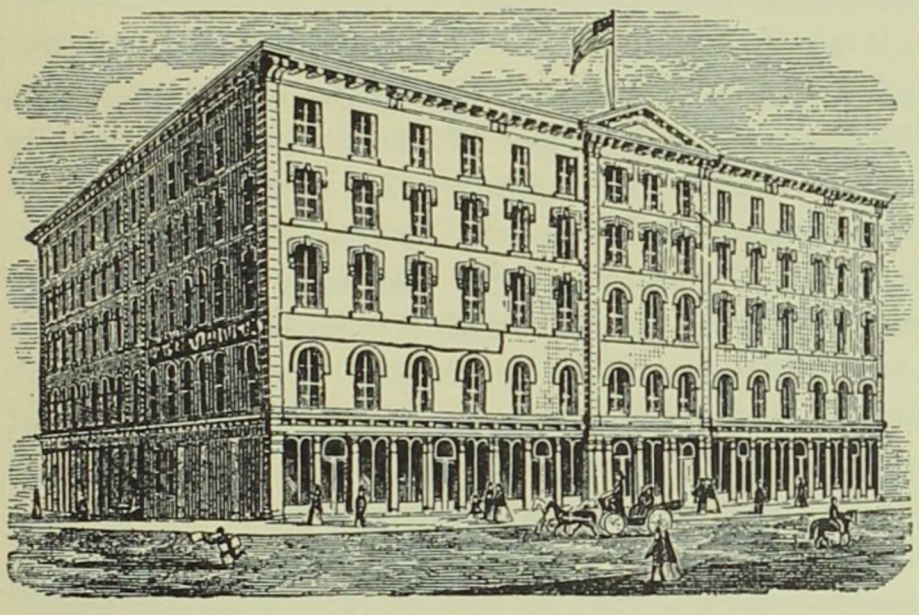
On April 17, 1861, the citizens of Keokuk assem-

bled in Verandah Hall and, "casting aside all party differences", pledged themselves with all the means in their power "to support the government and flag of the United States, henceforth and until the present conflict is ended," recognizing in the "present crisis but two parties, patriots and traitors". Two days later it was announced that Keokuk would be the rendezvous for the first Iowa regiments. Immediately the city prepared to welcome the troops and to coöperate wholeheartedly with the Federal authorities. Before the end of the summer, sick and wounded soldiers were being sent north to improvised hospitals. Keokuk, conveniently located in Iowa on the Mississippi River, was naturally selected as a rehabilitation base.

When the news of the bloody battle of Shiloh reached Keokuk, preparations were made at once to provide additional hospital facilities. On April 17, 1862, under orders from headquarters of the Department of the Mississippi to receive three hundred wounded soldiers, Lieutenant J. C. Ball and Mayor Robert P. Creel took possession of the Estes House. Men and women volunteered to clean up the rooms, some of which had not been used since they were plastered. The government spent over a thousand dollars in repairs on the building. Innumerable difficulties were encountered in converting the five-story hotel into a hospital, and some things had to be neglected. But by the time the patients arrived most of the two hundred rooms were in readiness

and efficient organization gradually dissipated the preliminary noise and confusion.

At first the government bargained to pay $160 a month rent for the Estes House but this was later increased to $200. Still J. Edgar Thompson, President of the Pennsylvania Railroad, who held mortgages on the property, was dissatisfied and de-



THE OLD ESTES HOUSE

manded $8000 a year. Much correspondence ensued. Finally, on January 30, 1864, the sum of $300 a month from the date of occupancy was agreed upon. During the last four months the building was used as a hospital, however, the rent was reduced to $166.66.

Two weeks after the hotel was converted into a hospital, records showed 293 patients in the Estes

House. Thirty-seven deaths had occurred. By July of 1862 there were 1500 patients in all of the hospitals of Keokuk, attended by two hundred doctors, nurses, and guards. By the end of the following year, 7396 patients had been admitted, of which number 617 had died. By far the largest number of patients were in the Estes House Hospital which contained over 650 beds.

One of the volunteer watchers at the hospital soon after it was established was unfavorably impressed by the noise and bustle. It seemed to him that "any man of half sense" should know that "perfect quiet and rest are as necessary as proper medical treatment." People who "can not walk without raking their heels on the floor with a noise akin to that of a saw mill" ought to be required "to lay off their boots and use slippers." One hospital attendant particularly "went rushing through the halls as if he had just received a dispatch announcing the end of the world, and was desirous of communicating it to the whole house in the shortest possible time." The squeak of his "blatant boots" was like "a cross between a John Chinaman's gong and the bleat of a distressed calf".

It had never been the fortune of the editor of the Keokuk *Gate City* to see "so many emaciated forms, fevered and pain racked bodies," as filled the Estes House. Yet by the middle of June most of the two hundred and eighty patients seemed on the way to recovery. The building, he thought, was "admirably

adapted to hospital uses" on account of its spacious and airy rooms, and the patients had cause to be thankful for the "unexceptionable accommodations".

The citizens of Keokuk were called upon to furnish supplies and bedding. Sheets, pillows, comforts, quilts, blankets, bandages, dressing gowns, towels, handkerchiefs, shirts, and drawers were contributed by the women of the city. Provisions for the commissary were also collected. A newspaper of that time tells of the replenishing of the hospital kitchens with crackers, eggs, butter, dried fruits, jellies, cordials, sugar, dried beef, green tea, mustard, tapioca, nutmegs, sage, corn starch, farina, and solidified milk. Farmers living near Keokuk donated hundreds of wagon loads of stove wood. During one cold winter the Estes House Hospital consumed five hundred cords.

By way of making the hospitals more homelike and cheerful, the chief surgeon and chaplains solicited contributions of flowering plants, "native and exotic, potted or boxed," from the patriotic ladies of Keokuk and vicinity. Conservatories were to be established in all of the well-lighted halls and large rooms.

In this connection the work of the Soldiers' Aid Societies of Iowa Ladies was particularly important. After the battle of Shiloh, Mrs. Ann E. Harlan procured a pass from the Secretary of War to visit the battle field and minister to the wounded.

It was she who induced the authorities to send a steamer load of the more seriously injured soldiers to Keokuk. Later she was prominent in effecting a State organization of local aid societies. Mrs. I. K. Fuller, wife of the chaplain of an Iowa regiment, accompanied her husband in the field and became the first army nurse appointed from Iowa. Probably the most popular army nurse was "Aunt Becky" Young. First to visit the army hospitals and minister to the sick was Mrs. J. T. Fales, while to Mrs. Annie Wittenmyer of Keokuk belongs the credit for correcting the diet of the soldiers in the hospitals. Appointed State Sanitary Agent by Governor Kirkwood, she became one of the most efficient and energetic leaders in the cause of alleviating the suffering and satisfying the wants of the soldiers in camps and hospitals.

Keokuk, situated on the border between Iowa and Missouri where northern and southern sympathies clashed, was the scene of one of the most dramatic incidents of hospital life early in 1863. Convalescent soldiers, incensed at what they deemed a disloyal thrust at their country, staged a violent attack on the Keokuk *Constitution,* took possession of the office, "broke up the presses and threw them, together with cases of type and all other contents of the building into the street." Two drays were pressed into service to haul the type and presses to the river where they were dumped into the water. The riot "took everybody by surprise, but the num-

bers were so formidable that no opposition was made until the contents of the office were in ruins. Lieutenant C. J. Ball, commandant of the post, finally marshaled the provost guard and sufficient reinforcements to quell the disorder.

Several days before the raid, a hundred and fifty convalescent soldiers signed a statement in justification of their contemplated action.

> We, the undersigned soldiers of the U. S. army, being fully convinced that the influence of a paper published in this city called "The Constitution," edited by Thos. Clagett, has exerted and is exerting a treasonable influence, (inexcusable by us as soldiers) against the Government for which we have staked our all, in the present crisis. We, therefore, consider it a duty we owe to ourselves, our brethren in the field, our families at home, our Government and our God, to demolish and cast into the Mississippi river, the press and machinery used for the publication of the aforesaid paper, and any person or persons that interfere, SO HELP US GOD.

The affair caused a military inquiry. At the close of the investigation in July the court martial reported that Lieutenant Ball had been acquitted of "any wrong in connection with the destruction of the Constitution newspaper plant". On July 21st, at the Deming House, a banquet was served in his honor at which he was presented with a sword and a brace of pistols. In justice to Editor Clagett it should be stated that saner times and more mature judgment absolved him from the charge of disloy-

alty. The *Constitution* resumed publication on September 1st, after a suspension of nearly six months "through the force of circumstances and other forces".

Some of the soldiers became much attached to their temporary home and a spirit of mild rivalry developed between the inmates of the different hospitals. In August, 1863, the patients of the Estes House Hospital unfurled a five foot flag over the building. An artist in one of the consignments of wounded men, E. C. Cobb, Company I, Twelfth Iowa Infantry, made some sketches of the old hospital which, declared a writer in the *Gate City,* presented "a fair appearance" and would "render our hospital more noted at Washington, and serve to secure to it a full supply of patients, during the continuation of the war, and all needed advantages for conducting it."

At the time of the national election in 1864, soldiers in the Estes House voted strongly for President Lincoln, expressing splendid faith in their Commander-in-Chief. Lincoln received five hundred and thirty votes, while McClellan polled only thirteen.

The task of evacuating the hospitals began early in the summer of 1865. On August 16th, the Surgeon-General directed that all of the hospitals in Keokuk be closed and the patients transferred to Davenport. And so, on October 1st, the Estes House resumed its peace-time function of hotel and office

building. But from the day that the last invalid was discharged, some of the rooms on the fifth floor of the old building stood undisturbed, just as they were left after serving three years as hospital wards.

For years after the war the Estes House served the community as a hotel. The United States court with its attendant officers was also housed there. In later years it fell into disrepair and, except for the first floor and a few rooms on the second floor, it was vacant. High wire walkers who performed at old-fashioned street fairs used the upper floors of the building for dressing rooms whence they stepped out upon the narrow strand of wire and walked across the chasm of the street to thrill the crowd below.

The G. A. R. posts occupied the hall on the second floor, where veterans were wont to assemble within the walls of the old hospital and fight over the stirring days of the rebellion. When the fifty-second encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic met in Keokuk in 1926, the veterans were keenly interested in the old structure. As they marched by in their parade they saluted it with old-time fervor.

But now the Estes House is gone. For years it survived the attacks of time, of fire and the elements; it weathered periodic storms of aldermanic reform, while public safety demanded that the structure be condemned. But at last it succumbed to the march of progress and was razed to make room for

a modern business structure. All that is left of the building, save its many memories, is the old cornerstone, which has been preserved. On October 1, 1929, it will be placed in its final resting place in the National Cemetery. At the same time a permanent bronze marker will be attached to the new building to tell the story of the old. Upon the glass-encased cornerstone in Iowa's little Arlington a bronze tablet will bear this inscription approved by the Quartermaster General:

> Cornerstone of the old Estes House, Fifth and Main, Keokuk, Iowa. Site of Army Hospital, April, 1862—October 1, 1865. Erected to the memory of the soldiers who died in the old General Hospital at Keokuk and are buried in the National Cemetery.

And thus the memory of those brave days will be perpetuated in the preservation of this relic among the graves of the men to whom the old hospital was a haven of mercy and relief from the pain of the battle field.

FREDERIC C. SMITH

Comment by the Editor

BRONZE MARKS THE SPOT

> Go, stranger, and tell the Lacedæmonians
> that we here died in obedience to their laws.

At the Pass of Thermopylae a marble column bore this heroic message of Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans; that whosoever travelled that ancient road might be reminded of their brave defense of Greece against the Persians and spread the story of their sacrifice.

As the Greeks perpetuated the memory of their achievements in arms and other exploits, so it has been customary from time immemorial among civilized people everywhere to mark the sites of splendid deeds, of national triumphs, and the earthly abodes of deities and men. It is altogether fitting that they should do this, for the commemoration of noble lives is one of the most effective ways of preserving and cherishing the heritage of the past. Whether by means of imposing tombs or by simple tablets of bronze, the motive is the same. Deep-rooted in human nature is a universal respect for the accomplishments of mankind, ancient as well as modern. Perhaps this devotion to ancestral careers is merely an expression of the rather materialistic trait of admiration for success, but the result is none the

less desirable on that account. Is there any one who is not thrilled to be where great events transpired or stand where great men stood?

That future generations may know more about the history of Iowa, it is important that the dwelling-places of pioneers, statesmen, and poets, the scenes of memorable events, and the location of historic buildings should be appropriately marked. Visible reminders of the work of our illustrious citizens will tend to cultivate a historical sense and to inspire reverence for the fortitude, energy, and wisdom of the men and women who laid the foundations of this Commonwealth. A true appreciation of the past is essential for a proper evaluation of the present. Since everybody goes motoring now, he who rides may read, if the record is carved in stone or written on bronze by the wayside.

J. E. B.

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