The Palimpsest

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CONTENTS

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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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Theodore Roosevelt in Iowa

The turn of the twentieth century ushered in significant changes of wide-spread interest and importance. The panic of 1893 had passed, and prosperity, which had long been "just around the corner", had again come into full view. The age of material advancement and economic wealth was blossoming in splendid promise of abundant fruition. Social legislation was developing apace, while political activities might well have been caricatured as a snorting, bucking broncho with Theodore Roosevelt, reins well in hand and one foot in the stirrup, ready to leap into the saddle.

Prior to the convening of the Republican National Convention at Philadelphia in June, 1900, it was generally conceded that William McKinley would be renominated for a second term as President. Republican newspapers throughout the country, and especially those of Iowa, had

heralded Jonathan P. Dolliver of Fort Dodge as the most likely vice-presidential nominee. At the convention McKinley was endorsed without opposition. The vice-presidential predictions failed of fulfillment, however, when Dolliver withdrew from the race and supported the nomination of Theodore Roosevelt.

Roosevelt was rapidly approaching the heyday of his eventful career. As a young man he had been a member of the New York General Assembly and had lived for a time on a ranch in North Dakota. Later he enhanced his reputation as a United States Civil Service Commissioner. He had been President of the New York City Police Board and had served as Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Navy. At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War he had recruited a volunteer regiment of "Rough Riders", and in the Cuban campaign he won the distinction of being the "Hero of San Juan Hill". Upon his return from military service he was "drafted" by the Republicans to be Governor of New York. In that capacity he instituted numerous reforms and in 1900 he was contemplating an energetic campaign for reëlection.

In 1896 the Democratic party had come under the influence and leadership of the distinguished orator, William Jennings Bryan, renowned for his

famous "Cross of Gold" speech. Early in 1900 it was generally acknowledged that he would again be the Democratic standard bearer and that he would go up and down the land conducting a powerful campaign against the Republican administration. President McKinley would of necessity be confined to the White House by official duties. In this emergency the Republicans needed a vice-presidential candidate who could tour the country Bryan-fashion, arousing popular enthusiasm and counteracting the attack of the opposing candidate.

Theodore Roosevelt was regarded as a popular hero, a candidate who could successfully compete with Bryan in his appeal for the support of the electorate. Accordingly, at the Republican National Convention a wave of unprecedented popularity swept him into the candidacy for the office of Vice President of the United States.

The campaign opened with enthusiasm and advanced with increasing power. The "Great Commoner" of Nebraska toured the country from west to east and from east to west declaring in favor of the free coinage of silver on a basis of 16 to 1, advocating the abandonment of control in the Philippines, and urging voters everywhere to support the principles of the Democratic party. Roosevelt in like manner toured the country by

special train, appealing directly to thousands of eager listeners along the way. He urged the voters to continue to support the gold standard, to retain the Philippines, and to adhere to the "great fundamental principles of Republicanism".

On October 4th the Roosevelt campaigning party moved eastward across the State of Nebraska stopping at the principal cities and closing the day with a great demonstration and rally at Omaha in the evening. October 5th was "Roosevelt Day" in Iowa. According to arrangements the train entered the State at Council Bluffs soon after midnight and travelled eastward over the Illinois Central Railroad. Upon the insistent request of Senator Dolliver, the party stopped at Fort Dodge for breakfast and there the distinguished guests were entertained during the early hours of the day. Thence the train proceeded to Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, West Liberty, and arrived at Davenport late in the evening. The chief celebration was held at Waterloo about noon.

On the evening previous to the arrival of the campaigning party, Julian W. Richards announced that Waterloo was "alarmed". Every indication was for "the biggest attendance ever known to a political gathering in Iowa," and that the people there were "trembling for fear they will be unable to handle the crowds." Large dele-

gations were reported to be coming from all parts of the Commonwealth. Citizens of Des Moines were awakened on the morning of the celebration by the sound of thirteen guns which were fired from the courthouse yard "proclaiming that Governor Roosevelt is in Iowa, and that an excursion train-load of enthusiasts is preparing to leave this city to see him and hear him speak in Waterloo."

When this delegation and others similar to it began to arrive in the convention city, it was apparent that the committee had exercised good judgment in preparing for the immense crowd. Between the hours of eight and eleven o'clock in the forenoon of October 5th, the three railroads through Waterloo brought to the city thirty-one heavily loaded passenger trains.

The event of the morning was the arrival of a special train bearing Governor Roosevelt and his party. It was reported that "fully forty thousand" people awaited the arrival of this company and that at least ten thousand people crowded the station and the nearby streets. From all parts of the State enthusiastic supporters had come to greet the vigorous champion of Republicanism "with a mighty roar of cheers" as he was escorted from the train to make one of his great political campaign speeches.

Waterloo was appropriately decorated for the

occasion. Old Glory was everywhere apparent — waving from flagstaffs, doorways, and verandas. Windows were gayly bedecked with posters and streamers and pennants. McKinley-Roosevelt caps, buttons, and badges were displayed by enthusiastic partisans who waved banners and yelled, "We want Teddy".

Few men in all the land were more popular in those days than "Teddy" Roosevelt. In Iowa as elsewhere thousands of people hoped he would be victorious at the polls. Jonathan P. Dolliver — always a loyal supporter of the Republican cause — declared that the reception given to the vice-presidential candidate in Waterloo was the "greatest political demonstration ever held in Iowa."

The parade which started shortly after noon moved in compact form over the principal streets of the city. Visiting delegations made up of marching clubs and Rough Rider organizations numbered more than five thousand people. Des Moines Republicans, two thousand strong, with their State Military Band, together with the Tippecanoe Veterans' Club, the Full Dinner Pail Brigade, and the Fremonters of the State — the veteran Republicans who had voted for John C. Fremont for President in 1856 — had the honor of leading the parade. Dubuque was represented by two thousand or more loyal Republican

"shouters", and Marshalltown "swelled the list with another thousand". Besides these, marching clubs were in line from Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, Iowa Falls, Independence, Grinnell, Newton, and other cities and towns. Mounted "Rough Riders" rode into the county seat from nearly every township in Black Hawk County.

It was, indeed, a gala day for the Republicans of Iowa, and it was a gala day for Teddy. He smiled and showed his teeth. He raised his hat, waved his hand, bowed to the right and to the left, greeted and saluted mounted Rough Riders and thousands of pedestrians along the way, and in the midst of it all he declared "This is bully!"

Governor Roosevelt's voice was not as clear as it might have been. He had been called upon to speak almost continually for nearly a month, and his voice had lost some of its resonance. Accordingly, after the parade when he arrived at the platform to address the crowd in an east side park, he talked for only fifteen or twenty minutes, but during that time he made an enthusiastic appeal for Iowans to support the Republican party at the November election.

By way of introduction he said that he had come to Iowa not to teach but to learn. "You are fortunate enough", he said, "in having a state

from which we draw inspiration in other states. . . . I wish that Iowa's Republicanism were catching, and that it could bite one or two other states." He expressed the hope not only that President McKinley might be reëlected, but that Colonel David B. Henderson of Iowa might again be chosen as Speaker of the national House of Representatives.

After this complimentary introduction he launched forth upon a discussion of the issues of the campaign. In outlining the policy for the government in the Philippine Islands he pointed to the fact that ninety-seven years before Thomas Jefferson had been criticised for his policy of expansion in negotiating the Louisiana Purchase. Moreover, he said, "Lincoln — patient, kindly Lincoln — as he toiled and suffered for the people, was accused of trying to build an empire and make himself an emperor". In like manner, Governor Roosevelt said that President McKinley was being criticised. He referred to these critics, however, as "weaklings", and declared that "the men who desire us to leave the Philippines, to abandon our duty, desire us to do so because they lack faith."

Referring to the Democratic candidate for President, and his position on the money question, Governor Roosevelt said: "Now we hear again

from men some excuse to justify themselves and their own conscience for supporting Mr. Bryan. We hear from them that Mr. Bryan could not do much damage, if elected, because the Republican senate would not let him. Think of a man who makes that argument!"

In continuing this attack, Mr. Roosevelt desired "no better campaign argument than that of our opponent four years ago. He told you that unless you had free silver, you would have four years more of harder times. The circulation per capita would decrease, but in every case, instead of going down, the thing mentioned has gone up. There was but one instance where he said things would go up. He said the amount of mortgages would increase, and they are the only thing where there has been a falling off. They have decreased about 30 per cent."

In concluding his address, Governor Roosevelt asked the people "to stand with us for the sake of liberty, to stand with us for the sake of that policy which we have always pursued, that no man may, where the American flag has once been hoisted in honor, haul it down in dishonor."

Hundreds of delegates who could not hear the Governor were nevertheless "delighted" to see him and witness the enthusiasm with which he conducted his campaign. H. O. Weaver com-

menting upon the Waterloo meeting, and upon Governor Roosevelt's popularity, said: "Perhaps never in Iowa has there been such an out-pouring of the people before. They came from everywhere and this, in fact may truthfully be said to be a great republican state meeting. The people came to see all the embodiment of Americanism. They look upon Governor Roosevelt as the representative of that Americanism which believes in American honesty and American enterprise. The people came to see such a man and were not disappointed. Anyone listening to the cheers and seeing the crowds rush to touch the hand of the man who is the ideal American cannot but feel that this has been one of the greatest days in Iowa history".

General Curtis Guild of Boston, Massachusetts, Governor Leslie M. Shaw, and Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver, all of whom were members of the Governor's party, followed Roosevelt with brief addresses. Other distinguished guests of the day included William B. Allison, David B. Henderson, Robert G. Cousins, and a number of prominent State officers. It seems significant that several of the Iowans who accompanied Roosevelt that day, later occupied positions of national leadership in his administration.

About the middle of the afternoon the "Roose-

velt Special" prepared to leave for Cedar Rapids. It was travelling men's day at the carnival there and a large number of salesmen in red and white shirts and white trousers and caps met the political campaigners at the Rock Island station. They formed a double line between which the campaigning party marched on the way to the speakers' stand. With a dozen officers surrounding him, Governor Roosevelt was hurried through the crowd, hat in hand, bowing and saluting and smiling as he went.

One of the interesting features of the meeting at Cedar Rapids was the presence of almost two hundred students from the State University, and other large groups from Coe College and Cornell. A good-natured rivalry among the students in giving their college yells served as wholesome entertainment for the crowd while it awaited the arrival of the special train. When Governor Roosevelt appeared, he was given many lusty cheers by the students, and he seemed to be a boy again "as he showed his famous teeth, and doubled up his face in a smile suggestive of the Republican policy of expansion".

Colonel W. G. Dows acted as chairman of the Cedar Rapids meeting, where brief addresses were made by Governor Roosevelt, General Guild, and Senator Dolliver. The visit in Cedar

Rapids was, however, of short duration, and the campaigning party was soon on its way again. While Governor Roosevelt and his party were being escorted to the train, and as the train pulled out from the station, cheer after cheer went up in honor of "the next Vice President of the United States". After a brief stop at West Liberty, the campaign special went directly to Davenport for the final meeting within the State of Iowa.

The delegations at Davenport were not as numerous nor as large as those at Waterloo, but there was nevertheless a large crowd. Trains coming into the city, particularly those from the west, were loaded with enthusiastic delegates. The excursion train from Des Moines was well filled before it arrived at Iowa City and when Davenport was announced the passengers were so numerous that "they fairly hung out of the window". Davenport, like Waterloo and Cedar Rapids, "was in her campaign clothes" with Old Glory hanging from housetop and window. Hon. Joseph R. Lane, Congressman from the Davenport district, introduced Governor Roosevelt.

In his address the Governor emphasized a characteristic idea. "Fundamentally", he declared, "what we need in a nation are just the same qualities that we need in an individual. First of all needed is honesty. . . . One

form of honesty is paying 100 cents on a dollar, with a dollar worth 100 cents." Again, he said, a nation as well as an individual must have courage to perform the duties of government. Indeed, "a nation ceases to be great when it ceases to do its duty as that duty arises". As a third quality of success, Mr. Roosevelt said that both an individual and a nation must have "the saving grace of common sense". He was emphatic in declaring that "no amount of oratory and no amount of enthusiasm will take the place of hard headed, kindly, shrewd common sense in dealing with the problems by which we are surrounded". These three qualities of greatness, he stoutly maintained, were principles of the Republican party.

When, at length, the program at Davenport was ended and the "Roosevelt Special" moved eastward across the Mississippi, the Republicans of Iowa felt that they had spent a busy, enjoyable, and profitable day in the interest of their party. From early morning until late in the evening the din of political excitement had not ceased. Iowa was honored that day in receiving and saluting and being saluted by Theodore Roosevelt, citizen, soldier, statesman, hero of San Juan Hill, and worthy aspirant to the high office of Vice President of the United States.

J. A. SWISHER

The Great Ridge Road

The roads between pioneer settlements tended to follow the ridges. Thus marshes were avoided, the floods of spring were of less concern, and the wind swept away the winter snow. That vantage also gave a view to the far horizon — perhaps to the traveller's destination. Though the old ridge roads had common features, each possessed distinctive traits that gave them individuality. Curving out of Denison and winding away over the hills toward the northwest — to the German settlement and beyond — runs an old highway. A vivid description of the personality of this "great ridge road" by F. W. Meyers is reprinted from his history of Crawford County. — THE EDITOR.

There are many beautiful drives in Crawford County, but somehow none of them appeals to our imagination more vividly than does the old ridge road northwest of Denison. It is a bleak, lonely, wind-beaten old road. Way back in the days of our youth it led into a far-off unknown land called the "German settlement". It used to

be a great mystery to us, coming over the houseless prairies so many miles.

The old ridge road differs from other roads in many ways. It speaks not so much of the present generation as of the past. It was the first pioneer who laid out the ridge road, or perhaps it was the Indian or the buffalo. At any rate it was laid out to follow the path of least resistance. It sweeps gracefully about the hilltops, clinging ever to the summits. It avoids the steep places, skirts the hollows, dodges the corners and looks down on all the country round with supreme arrogance.

The ridge road is the ridge road from the time it leaves Main Street and debouches — that is the proper word for a ridge road — into the valley. Man may gravel it as he will and toy with it and grade it and otherwise abuse it, but the ridge road is the ridge road still.

Let it be distinctly understood that the ridge road does not follow the fences or the telephone poles. The poles and the fences follow the ridge road. The ridge road is no respecter of persons. It had much rather go through a field than around it, and it will run right up to your back yard as soon as to your front one if your house does not have sense enough to meet the situation and face itself about.

Then, too, the superciliousness with which the

ridge road greets the poor, little straight-laced, orthodox section line roads. How it looks at them out of the tail of its eye and flings a flirtatious curve at them from out of its many windings.

It seems to say, "I am the great ridge road. See how I disdain all confines. See how I ride the prairies as the good ship rides the waves. Poor little section roads, I pity you, with your bridges, your culverts, your banks of snow, your wash-outs, your ups and downs. The rain runs off my back in summer and winds are my servants to sweep me clean in winter. I am the great ridge road."

As the ever winding river told the Lady of Shalott all the happenings, sad and gay, of the little world below, so the ridge road tells its tale of sorrow and joy.

It was along its windings that the first pioneers struck out across the prairies. It was along this trail that the German emigrant, tired with the confusion of a new land, choked with the dust of trains, drew his first full breath of prairie air and disappeared, swallowed up in that mysterious German settlement, to return so soon indeed a full-fledged American citizen.

It was on the old ridge road that the long train of wagons came out of the mist, long before the sun rose, each wagon a torture pen to sleek, fat

swine, whose piteous shrieks and squeals and grunts punctuated each rut and declivity in the road, while stolid drivers strode along, beating their arms for warmth or enlivening the way by merry shouts and calls and glad "Good mornings", or a catch of some old German song.

Have you ever seen the ridge road on a circus day? Even the horses are glad when they come out of the everlasting hills, and with a swagger and a swing show their best paces as they strike the ridge. Father relaxes and gives himself up to the luxury of his pipe. There is no need of driving on the ridge road. Mother sits back and nestles baby closer and smiles her greetings to the neighbors. The girls, in white, be-sashed and be-ribboned like so many rainbows. The boys, with shining, apple cheeks, eyes tingling with excitement, fingers counting over the change that is soon to be metamorphosed into red lemonade and peanuts. My, but it is a happy crowd, a pretty picture.

"Good morning! Are you going to the show?" Such a silly, senseless question, but so neighborly and kind, it would be a shame not to evoke the glad reply, "Yes, of course. Are you?" And so they go swinging down the ridge road into town.

There is a cloud of dust at the roadside, a spanking team goes dashing by. It is a brand

new buggy, just as shiny and black as paint and varnish and hard scrubbing can make it.

There is a flutter of a kerchief and a merry shout as Mary and her beau rush by. Father grunts contentedly, the youngsters snigger, and mother, well, mother knows, and mother sighs. Last year Mary rode to the circus with the family and it seems such a little while ago when she was the baby and rode in mother's arms. But there, this is a day of gladness and of joy. See the long line of teams winding on ahead and down into the valley and up the hill to town. We hope none of them will be late for the parade.

The ridge road could tell many stories if it wished. It could tell of slow processions with a big black wagon on ahead. It could tell of rapid flights for doctors needed in the night, of tired farmers peering into the darkness for the bright gleam of home, of little travellers, dinner pail in hand, plucking the wild flowers on their way to school.

But for ourselves we must admit that the gladdest sight has been the lights of Denison gleaming from its home among the hills. Now straight in front, now to the right, now to the left, but gleaming ever like a diamond brooch on the breast of mother earth. What if the winds be sweeping o'er the ridge, what if the rain be cold, what if the

night be dark — it only makes the lights gleam brighter.

There is your journey's end; there await comfort and light and warmth and food; and there await those loving hearts: the wifely kiss, the childish voice. There at your journey's end is all that makes life worth living. Yes, there is no road like the great ridge road as it winds among the hills. It is bleak and drear, but it tells of cheer at the end of your journey's ills. It is vast like life, and its tortuous course tells the tale of mortal toil with its turns and twists and windings, drawing ever near the goal. Out betwixt the stars and the prairies, with God on every hand, there is something about the great ridge road that appeals to the best in a man.

F. W. MEYERS

Gunda's Coffee Pot

The roots of American society run deep into European soil. Even in the days of Benjamin Franklin, he explained to Europeans that thousands of English, Irish, Scotch, and Scandinavian people were coming to America, where no one asked about their birth or breeding, but rather, "What can you do"? In America they could soon become land owners, which would better their condition at once, for the over-crowded European countries had no land left for the poor man. The large land owners kept the huge estates in their own families from generation to generation. The natural desire to own a home, coupled with the trend toward an improved economic position for all the people under a democracy, was the main spring behind the exodus to America.

Far back in the days when the nobility of Norway had many retainers, whose families and descendants were attached to the soil, there lived near Christiana a peasant woman named Gunda Johnson. The estate upon which Gunda and her industrious husband, Olaf, lived belonged to the Queen's aunt, an elderly countess, whose kindliness and interest in her people were unusual.

Now Gunda, though presumably most favorably situated, had dreams reaching far across the Atlantic — even unto the heart of the fabled land of America. Her lot in Norway was not unpleasant. Did she not always have employment under the countess, whose special ward she had been?

Ah yes, Gunda's mother had been one of the most tried and trusted servants of this same countess. Upon the death of the mother, her three small daughters had been well trained and well cared for by the countess. Now each of these three daughters had a comfortable cottage on the estate, the husband of each was given employment upon the land. And yet, here was Gunda — not satisfied!

This dynamic woman had ambitions that would not lie dormant. Letters came from relatives who had migrated to America, and who lived at Princeton, Illinois. These letters always told of the freedom in America, where all men had the right "to have and to hold" their own land, where no man was responsible to king or overlord. "Heigh ho for America", sighed Gunda. Many a family council was held, and the steady-going husband, Olaf, thought Gunda must be losing her wits, so much did she harp upon the impossible movement. "How will you get there?" was his question, and Gunda, it must be admitted, found

no answer. But one day, when they had talked and talked and there seemed no way to earn the necessary funds, Gunda's eyes rested upon her coffee pot. "I have it," she cried. "I am going to make coffee and sell it and earn the money!"

The energetic Gunda was as good as her word. At every sale or auction the fragrant aroma of her delicious coffee so tantalized the buyers that they patronized her generously. Ere long she showed Olaf a purse, growing fatter each week. "And it will take us to America", she chuckled.

By this time Olaf caught some of her enthusiasm, declaring that he would work in America and pay it all back, while twelve-year-old Carrie, the oldest daughter, had visions of remarkable achievements when she got to America. She told the five younger children that they were soon to cross the monstrous ocean. There was much hustle and hurry around the cottage. The neighbors heard of the plans, and soon the tale reached the ears of the countess who promptly sent for Gunda to find out what these wild rumors meant.

Gunda's determination had grown stronger each week, and her boundless enthusiasm quite swept away the objections of the countess. After listening awhile, she decided that opposition was futile, so she said, "Go, if you must, and here is a purse of gold. May you do well with it!"

Ah — the good countess! What a fairy she had been with her purse of gold! Gunda and Olaf left Christiana with their six children as quickly as possible. Carrie took great care of the younger children, especially the baby whose first birthday anniversary found him coming to America.

But that ocean — it seemed endless! Six long weeks were required to cross it. Though powerful engines in modern ships now make it possible to cross in less than six days, in 1854, when the Johnsons came over, it took six weary weeks. Even stout-hearted Gunda became tired of the ocean and questioned her ambition. But they finally landed at Boston, and there they took the west-bound train.

This new method of travel was most exciting, but the novelty soon wore off and Gunda and Carrie had much to do to keep all the children comfortable. They had expected Chicago to be a great city, rivalling Christiana. But the Chicago of 1854, though a most welcome sight indeed to the weary travellers, was disappointingly crude and straggling, and bore little evidence of becoming a great metropolis.

The family reached Princeton, Illinois, in safety and was welcomed by relatives already in homes of their own. There was much joy at the

reunion. How every one marveled at Gunda's raising the money by selling coffee, and also at the great generosity of the countess! But the funds could not last forever. When the family arrived in Princeton they had just three cents left!

It was not long, however, until they were comfortably situated. Willing hands found work to do. Carrie learned American ways and language very rapidly and her services were much in demand. As a young woman of seventeen, she was employed at Cooley's Hotel, in Toulon, Illinois, during the presidential campaign of 1860. Cooley, the proprietor, was a Democrat and Carrie did not like his talk nor the pro-slavery sentiment of his Democratic followers. No European immigrant, ambitious to earn a living and own some land, could endure the principles of slavery. All her sympathy was for Abraham Lincoln of whom she had heard so much, whose life had been along the road of toil which she and her people knew so well. Across the road in Toulon was another hotel whose proprietor was a Republican. How Carrie longed to go there to work! How she hated to be associated with that "old democrat hotel".

Then, one day, a great crowd came down the main street of Toulon. Men were laughing and shouting — noise and confusion everywhere —

what could it mean? Carrie ran to the door. The procession was coming past and, lo, it stopped at the hotel across the way! The throng centered about a wagon on which was a load of rails, and there, sitting on the rails, was the very man whom she most wished to see — Abraham Lincoln! Men shouted and waved their hats, and when he rose and began talking, "there was such yelling and screaming and patting the logs that I could not hear him, and the crowd was so thick, I could scarcely see his face. And that face — it was the kindest face I ever saw." This is her version of the occasion as she, now a woman of ninety years, remembers it.

In 1860 Carrie Johnson married George Ely at Toulon. He was a man who sympathized so intensely with the cause of the Union that in 1862 he left his home, wife, and small son, to enlist in Company F of the 112th Illinois Infantry. He was immediately sent South. Soon afterward he became ill in a camp called Nichollsville near Lexington, Kentucky. From there he was transferred to an invalid camp at Jeffersonville, Indiana. Mrs. Ely took her baby and hastened to the camp where she went to work, nursing not only her husband but all others who needed her assistance. Though her husband recovered, he was never able to make long marches again.

She remained in the camp two months. Between times of caring for her babe and the sick soldiers, she sewed straps on uniforms for sergeants and orderlies. The camp contained about three hundred tents. Upon recovery, the inmates were transferred to guard duty at arsenals or whatever service they were able to perform. Mr. Ely finished his term of enlistment at guard duty and was honorably discharged at the end of the war in 1865.

Upon his return to Stark County, Illinois, he decided that it would be wise to invest his soldier's pay in land, of which there was an abundance ready to be homesteaded out in Iowa. He told his wife he wished to visit Iowa and get some land, stating that she might go with him if she wished or wait until he located a home, when he would return and bring her to the new abode. But the courage of Gunda was not wanting in her daughter. "I'm going too", she said. "Where you go, I am willing to go."

Thus, with household goods and the children packed into ox-drawn covered wagons, George and Carrie Ely, together with her parents, Gunda and Olaf Johnson, began the long and tedious journey to Iowa. Having crossed the Mississippi River at Dubuque, they made their way westward on the road leading through Waterloo and Cedar

Falls, on toward Fort Dodge. Many reports had come to them of the fertility of Iowa land in that region, and there the ex-soldier hoped to find good land which he might preëmpt for himself and his father-in-law. The modern paved highway, No. 20, over which the automobiles skim so easily nowadays, was a mere prairie trail in 1865. In some places it was a path of mud and mire, while deep sloughs made wide detours necessary.

At length the migrant family reached the eastern edge of Hamilton County and felt that they were not far from the end of their journey. They camped for the night near Hawley, a small settlement near what is now Blairsburg, and were assured that Fort Dodge might be reached by nightfall the next day, if they rose early and travelled steadily. They came west over what we now call the old Hawkeye Highway, which runs past Kendall Young Park and crosses White Fox Creek, thence into Webster City.

As they drove along, they found a man plowing in a field which is just west of the Hamilton County poor farm, but which at that time was unfenced open prairie. An oak grove lay to the south and a new house was being constructed therein. A hearty hail came from the tall, sandy-haired young farmer, who paused from his labors, and came to the road with cordial greeting to the

new comers. "Where are you planning to settle?" he inquired.

Upon learning that their objective was Fort Dodge, he said, "I think the best land around there has all been taken. It has been advertised too much. I believe that I know what you want, and it is right here in this county."

The man was so convincing in his straightforwardness, that Mr. Ely altered his purpose and concluded that at least a casual inspection of Hamilton County land could do no harm. Furthermore, their new acquaintance promised that, if they would follow the road to Webster City and stay over night there, he would meet them at the courthouse the next day and go with them to locate the land they might wish to claim. All agreed that this was a most feasible plan, and so the family of Ely jolted over the hill, forded the White Fox, and came into Webster City. In this community they have ever since been at home.

The next day they went to the land office and, being advised by their new friends as to what lands were most reliable, they drove up to the northern edge of what is now Fremont Township, and there Mr. Ely and Mr. Johnson preempted the land for their Iowa homes. Thus, by the chance meeting with a citizen who knew the lay of the land and who was willing to give the

glad hand to strangers, even at the expense of a day's work in his own field, the Ely family settled in Hamilton County instead of Webster.

They and their descendants have helped to build this community. Mrs. Carrie Johnson Ely is now past ninety years of age; her husband has passed on, but her children and grandchildren rise up to call her blessed, and to rejoice that the courageous spirit of Gunda, her mother, was transmitted to her in such generous measure.

With great enthusiasm she told me this story. And it was of especial interest to me because the man who acted as their guide and counsellor was my father, J. N. Lyon, whose friendship was theirs throughout the period of their lives.

From the castle in Christiana to the land in Fremont Township is a long, long distance. The labor of a young woman in Cooley's Tavern — the sight of the "kindest face in the world" — the nursing of sick soldiers — the stitching of straps on soldiers' suits by hand — the brave words, "Where you go I am going too" — a life of motherhood — all these are typical experiences in the lives of Iowa pioneers.

Oh, Gunda's Coffee Pot! What a libation thou hast poured upon the altar of good citizenship!

BESSIE L. LYON

Comment by the Editor

THE ARITHMETIC OF A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The strategy of winning an election to the Presidency of the United States lies in carrying the States in which the strength of the two major parties is relatively equal. Success depends upon securing a majority of the presidential electors, not necessarily a majority of the voters. In eight of the elections from Lincoln to Hoover, the successful candidate received the endorsement of less than half of the people who voted. During the whole period of seventy years no Democrat polled a popular majority, though Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson each held the office two terms. The object is to carry several of the populous States — the twelve largest, only one-fourth of the whole number, is more than enough. And the Democratic candidate who can depend upon the electors from the "Solid South" needs to carry only five other States.

When William Jennings Bryan ran for the Presidency in 1900, he might have counted among his political resources 112 votes from the South and 60 votes from the eleven other States he car-

ried in 1896. He needed only 52 additional electors. The most likely prospects were in the States where he had previously polled between forty-five and fifty per cent of the popular vote. These States — Oregon and California on the Pacific Coast and the four Ohio Valley States of West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana — would yield seventy presidential electors. And there the battle lines were drawn, though brisk skirmishing prevailed in the Upper Mississippi States where agrarian discontent was rife, for Bryan was also commander-in-chief of the Populist forces.

The Republican plan was to hold the ten States that had never voted for a Democratic President since the Civil War — all of New England except Connecticut, and the north central States of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and Iowa, with a total of 124 electors. Such a nucleus, combined with the adjacent normally Republican States of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin would produce a majority in the electoral college.

According to Bryan and Roosevelt, who made strenuous speaking tours in the contested area, the crucial issues were imperialism and prosperity. Each candidate aroused tremendous partisan enthusiasm and no doubt heartened his friends, but the fact that the price of corn had doubled and

pork trebled since 1896 probably influenced the voting as much as campaign oratory.

Of the four pivotal States in the Ohio Valley, Bryan won only Kentucky, and retained four western States in which the Populist sentiment still survived; while McKinley carried the entire industrial and agricultural North as well as the Pacific States. In the midwest, the Democrats registered a slight gain only in Illinois. Iowa returns showed that forty per cent of the voters had supported Bryan just as in 1896, with this difference — he carried seventeen counties then but only six in 1900.

In political arithmetic the whole may be greater or less than the sum of its parts, but it is seldom the same and always uncertain.

J. E. B.

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