

## WILLIAM M. STONE

### Iowa's Other Civil War Governor

by Alan M. Schroder

When people refer to "Iowa's Civil War governor," they usually mean Samuel Kirkwood, who was in office when war broke out and who directed the state's enthusiastic response to the war effort in its early years. But, because of the two-term limit that Iowa governors then observed, Kirkwood did not run for reelection in 1863. Instead, the Iowa Republican party nominated William M. Stone and, with the Democratic party's association with the South and rebellion, he easily defeated his Democratic opponent, James M. Tuttle. Stone went on to be reelected in 1865 and served until January 1868.

More of an expert political opportunist than a great statesman or political philosopher, Stone

had a talent for finding out which direction most of the people were moving, then rushing out ahead to lead them. This talent does not produce innovative political philosophies or radical new social movements, but it does provide leadership of a sort, and it can lead to a successful political career.

Until the outbreak of the Civil War, Stone had lived the life of a typical midwestern small-town lawyer and judge in the early nineteenth century. He was born on October 14, 1827 in Jefferson County, New York. A year later the Stone family moved to Lewis County, New York, and five years after that they moved on to Coshocton County, Ohio. Stone grew up on the family farm in Ohio, acquiring only two terms of schooling along the way, then spent two seasons in his teens as a teamster for the

horse-drawn boats on the Ohio Canal. It was while he was serving later as an apprentice in a chairmaker's shop that Stone met James Mathews, who was to be his legal and political mentor for most of his early political career.

Impressed by Stone's aggressive personality, Mathews invited him to read law in his law office, and Stone readily accepted. After studying under a succession of lawyers (the commonly accepted equivalent of a law school education in these years), Stone was admitted to the Ohio bar in 1851 and entered into a partnership with Mathews in Coshocton. In 1854, Stone and his parents and brothers and sisters joined Mathews and his family—and a strongbox containing \$20,000 in gold, the product of Mathews' successful career in Ohio—in their move to Knoxville, Iowa.

Stone continued under Mathews' tutelage in Iowa, and their law practice proved successful. Stone also moved quickly into the arena of Iowa politics. He hauled the press that had been used to publish the *Valley Whig and Keokuk Register* from Keokuk and in October 1855 began publishing the *Knoxville Journal*. Stone established a firm antislavery position in the *Journal's* editorial columns. The slavery question set Iowa politics boiling in the 1850s, and by proclaiming his staunch opposition to the extension of slavery beyond its contemporary boundaries, Stone placed himself in the ranks of the men who would form the nucleus of the Republican party from the remnants of the old Whig party, which was, by the mid-1850s, in disarray.

Stone was, in fact, one of the earliest supporters of the formation of the Republican party in Iowa, and he served as Marion County's delegate to the first state Republican convention, held in Iowa City in February 1856. Then he went on to campaign throughout the state for the Republican ticket in the fall campaign, and he was chosen as a presidential elector by the new party.

Stone's advocacy of the new party in the columns of the *Knoxville Journal* was stilled on March 4, 1856, when a fire destroyed the *Journal's* frame building and all its contents. But the interruption proved only temporary. That fall, George W. Edwards arrived in Knoxville with his own press and type and went into partnership with Stone to reestablish the *Journal*. Stone soon sold his interest to Edwards, however, when his legal career took a new turn.

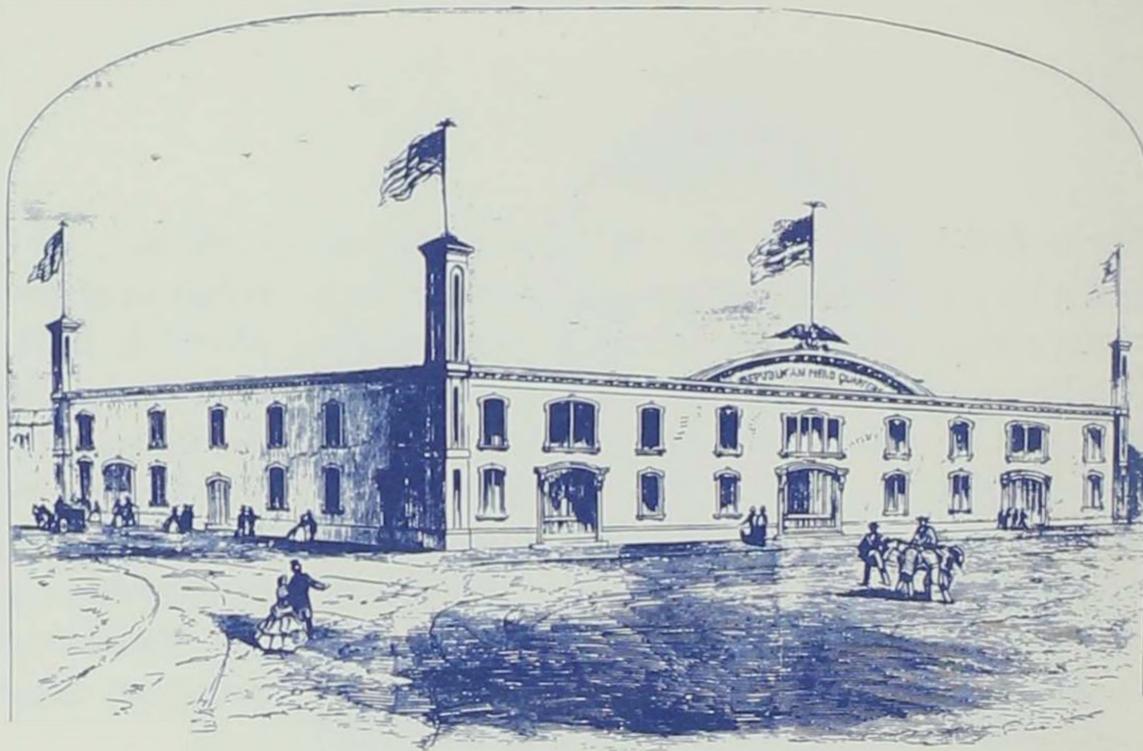
The success of Stone's law practice with James Mathews in Knoxville caused him to be chosen as judge of the eleventh judicial district in 1857 and elected as judge of the sixth judicial district when the new state constitution went into effect in 1858. Iowa was only a few years removed from the frontier period in these years, however, and justice was dispensed in a rough-hewn manner. Stone fit into the system very well. R. B. Graff, in his memoirs written in 1871, recalled an incident in Judge Stone's court in the 1850s:

*In the morning, first business motions. His Honor [Judge Stone] was calling in the usual way. When he came to a motion, Mr. J. D. Templin would rise up on end, and spread himself in an eloquent, long, windy, rambling, scattering speech, while his honor sat patiently, with his legs crossed on the desk. When Templin had finished talking, and sat down, his honor said "Well," as he took down one foot, and let it strike the floor hard. Then the other would go through the same process; and his honor said: "Mr. Templin, I see no beginning, middle, or end to your speech; but hereafter if anything comes up during court, in which you are interested, I will consider your speech as already made."*

Such was the decorum of the Stone court.

Stone's tenure as a judge did not prevent him from continuing his involvement with Republi-

*The Wigwam in Chicago, where Stone impetuously seconded the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for president at the Republican National Convention in 1860.*  
(SHSI)



can politics. He served as a delegate to the Republican state convention in Des Moines in January 1860 and was selected, in turn, as a delegate to the Republican national convention to be held in Chicago in May. He went to Chicago as a dedicated supporter of Abraham Lincoln for the presidency, and in the tumult that followed Lincoln's nomination Stone jumped up and declared, "Mr. President, I rise in the name of two-thirds of the delegation from Iowa to second the nomination of Abraham Lincoln."

Actually, Stone did not speak for the majority of the Iowa delegation. He and the seven other Iowa delegates who were initially committed to Lincoln were entitled to cast a total of only two votes. These were, in fact, the only votes the Iowa delegation cast for Lincoln on the first ballot at the convention; the six remaining votes were divided among four other candidates. Lincoln did receive a majority of the Iowa votes on the second ballot, however, and eventually captured all eight Iowa votes in the balloting. Stone's seconding statement in favor of Lincoln was a good example of his talent for sensing the prevailing political mood, and it left a lasting impression on the future president.

*"By God, I'm going to war!"*

After the Chicago convention, Stone returned to his judicial duties. Then, one day in

April 1861 a messenger rushed into his Washington County courtroom and whispered a message in his ear. Stone rose and said, "Gentlemen, Fort Sumter has been fired upon. This court stands adjourned until this matter is adjusted. By God, I'm going to war!" Stone left the courtroom and took the next stage to Knoxville.

Following the military custom of the time, Stone requested permission from Governor Kirkwood to form an infantry company from the men in the Knoxville area. Receiving this, he drew together the unit that was to become Company B of the Third Iowa Infantry Regiment, and he was elected its captain by the men. The company joined the remainder of the Third Iowa encamped at Keokuk in May, and Stone was appointed major of the regiment in June.

The Third Iowa drilled at Keokuk for about a month, though the men were without military equipment. Later, one of Stone's biographers described the condition of the regiment's troops while they were encamped there:

*It was perhaps the most motley crew of warriors ever assembled on a parade ground. There were no uniforms, no tents, no weapons and little discipline. Officers did their best and finally the soldiers mastered "about face" without falling over each other.*

This accomplished, the Third Iowa was ordered to northern Missouri to guard the rail lines against destruction by Missourians who were sympathetic to the Southern cause. When the regiment finally received its uniforms, they proved to be old, surplus dragoon uniforms and they were grey. Understandably, this caused a degree of confusion when the various companies were spread out in a number of towns to guard the railroads. The men eventually received regulation blue uniforms, but they were still armed with muskets that had been manufactured just after the Mexican War.

Stone and the Third Iowa saw action that August in a skirmish at Kirksville, Missouri and at the battle of Blue Mills in September. Stone was wounded at Blue Mills, and he spent the winter recuperating while the Third Iowa went into winter quarters along the line of the North Missouri Railroad. Stone was back with the regiment the following spring when it was ordered to join General Ulysses S. Grant at Pittsburg Landing in southwestern Tennessee. There, while in command of the Third Iowa in the bloody fighting at Shiloh on April 6 and 7, Stone was taken prisoner and sent to a Southern prison in Selma, Alabama.

The war had been in progress for a year by this time, and the number of prisoners taken by both sides was mounting. While the Northern officers taken prisoner at Shiloh were being held at Selma, they prepared a proposal for an exchange of Northern prisoners taken at Shiloh for Southerners who had been captured earlier in the Union victory at Fort Donelson. General P.G.T. Beauregard approved the plan in May 1862 and granted permission for three officers to go to Washington under a forty-day parole to negotiate the exchange of prisoners. The officers at Selma selected Colonel Stone as one of their representatives, and accompanying him were Colonel Madison Miller of the Eighteenth Missouri and Captain J.M. Gregg of the Fifty-eighth Illinois.

The three men were unsuccessful in their negotiations, however, and they returned to Richmond, honoring the terms of their parole. But Confederate president Jefferson Davis still considered an exchange possible, so he sent them back to Washington on a fifteen-day parole to work for a general prisoner exchange. This time the officers were successful, and that fall thousands of prisoners on both sides returned home.

As a result of the successful negotiations, Stone and Miller secured their own release immediately and returned home. The third officer, J.M. Gregg, returned to the group of captured officers from which the three had been selected. Gregg located them at a prison camp in Madison, Georgia, and he brought with him a supply of clothing and a month's pay in gold for each officer. He was eventually paroled along with the rest of the group in the general exchange that fall.

Meanwhile, Stone returned to Knoxville, and in August 1862 Governor Kirkwood appointed him colonel of the Twenty-second Iowa Infantry, a new regiment that was to be organized at Camp Pope near Iowa City. From Iowa City, Stone's regiment moved to Rolla in northern Missouri to guard Union supplies stored in the area. In January 1863, Stone was made commander of a brigade consisting of the Twenty-first, Twenty-second, and Twenty-third Iowa regiments and the Eleventh Missouri regiment. In March his command was ordered south to join the forces that were being collected at Milliken's Bend, Louisiana in preparation for the assault on the Confederate stronghold at Vicksburg. There, he was attached to the Fourteenth Division of General John A. McClernand's Thirteenth Army Corps.

Stone took part in the actions leading up to the actual assault on Vicksburg, most notably the battle of Port Gibson. None of the actions was particularly serious, however, until a

Southern threat to relieve Vicksburg caused General Grant to order a general attack for May 22 on the works that the Confederates had constructed around the rear of the city. In this assault, Stone's Twenty-second Iowa led a column of troops attacking Fort Beauregard, one of the Confederate strongpoints. Because of the strength of the Southern defenses, the assault proved a bloody failure, but General Grant, when writing about the Vicksburg campaign, noted that: "No troops succeeded in entering any of the enemy's works, with the exception of Sergeant Griffiths, of the 22d Regiment of Iowa Volunteers, and some eleven privates of the same regiment. Of these, none returned except the Sergeant, and one man." Stone was wounded in the right forearm early in the attack, and he turned command of the regiment over to Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey Graham.

The assault on the Vicksburg defenses on May 22 proved to be Stone's last military action. His wound was serious enough to cause him to be sent home for recuperation, and his career now turned from military command to political leadership.

When Stone arrived back in Knoxville, the Iowa political climate was beginning to heat up in anticipation of the gubernatorial campaign that fall. The first major event in the campaign was the Republican state convention in June. Stone's part in negotiating the prisoner exchange and his command of the Twenty-second Iowa at Vicksburg in May had made him into something of a war hero in the public eye, and he was selected as one of the speakers at a political rally in Des Moines on the night of June 16, just before the Republican convention was scheduled to begin.

The two main candidates for the gubernatorial nomination were General Fitz Henry Warren and Iowa Secretary of State Elijah Sells. Stone's name had been mentioned in the early political maneuvering, but he had collected



*Stone, in command of the Twenty-second Iowa, was wounded in the bloody assault on the citadel of Vicksburg on May 22, 1863. (SHSI)*

only a few supporters. Warren spoke first at the rally. He was an accomplished political orator, but he made the mistake of making some slighting remarks about his main opponent, Sells. This angered Sells' supporters and stirred an undertone of resentment in the hall where the rally was being held. Sells was no public speaker, and he was not scheduled to address the rally.

Into this dissension stepped Colonel Stone, ever the opportunist, in his blue uniform and with his arm in a sling. He must have known as he strode to the podium that he was about to deliver the speech that could make or break his political career. But as he began, it became clear that it was not to be an overtly political speech. Stone's hopes rested on only a very narrow political base at this time, with support from only a few of the convention delegates;

most of the remainder were virulent backers of either Warren or Sells. Stone did not make the mistake of attacking either of the major candidates, as the first speaker had done. Instead, he wrapped himself in the flag, blasting out a classic example of patriotic oratory. As Iowa historian Benjamin Gue later wrote, Stone "brought a message from the army before Vicksburg. Paying an eloquent tribute to the Iowa soldiers and their glorious deeds on the battle-field, he continued in glowing terms to eulogize the National and State Administrations under Republican rule, the superb loyalty of the people, their sacrifices and devotion to their country during the long and bloody war."

Stone's speech on the night of June 16 was not, strictly speaking, a convention speech, but it might as well have been. When he was introduced to the convention the next day, his appearance was greeted with tremendous applause. As the balloting began, it became clear that Warren's speech of the night before had irretrievably alienated Sells' delegates, but that Sells himself had little chance for victory. As a result, the delegates who had been committed to Sells gradually switched over to Stone in the successive ballots. By the eighth ballot, Stone had received a clear majority of the delegate votes, and Warren withdrew his name from consideration. Stone had gained the nomination by seizing the political opportunity at the right moment.

In the campaign that followed, the war was, of course, the only real issue, and there was little doubt that the state would vote Republican in the election in October. Stone's Democratic opponent for governor, General James M. Tuttle, had a fine war record himself, and he was more popular among the troops in the field than was Stone. As one Iowa soldier wrote home from his encampment at Columbus, Kentucky: "If Tuttle had come out Independent he would have had a good chance for the soldiers' vote. As it is, nothing but those that have been Democrats without the possibility of

change will vote for him. I presume he is just as good as Stone but being in bad company is what we don't like."

The Democratic party was considered to be "bad company" by Iowa voters in general. Even though many Iowa Democrats—the War Democrats—supported the Union cause, the Democratic party could too easily be labelled the party of Copperheads, Southern sympathizers, and outright traitors. Stone resigned his commission in the Army and campaigned vigorously throughout the state, and he was aided by an extensive speaking tour by Governor Kirkwood. In the fall election, Stone polled a total of 85,896 votes to Tuttle's 56,169.

When Governor Stone took office in January 1864, it was clear that war-related issues would dominate his administration. Three issues in particular captured his attention: Iowa's response to the military draft calls, the threat of raids by Confederate guerillas along Iowa's southern boundary, and the more general menace of disloyalty that came under the label of Copperhead activities.

Stone took the Copperhead menace much more seriously than did many Iowans by 1864. He was convinced that two-thirds of the Iowa Democrats were disloyal, for example, and that secret Copperhead societies still claimed thousands of members in Iowa. He denounced the Copperhead protests at violations of their civil rights, declaring that Lincoln's expanded war powers were necessary to preserve the Union and the Constitution. To restrict the President in wartime to "the mere letter of his civil authority," Stone declared, "is to deprive him of the very means of discharging that high duty, and make the Constitution, thereby, the weapon of its own destruction." Throughout his first year of office, Governor Stone took very great care to assure that no Copperheads slipped into the ranks of either Iowa's military organization or its civilian government on any level.

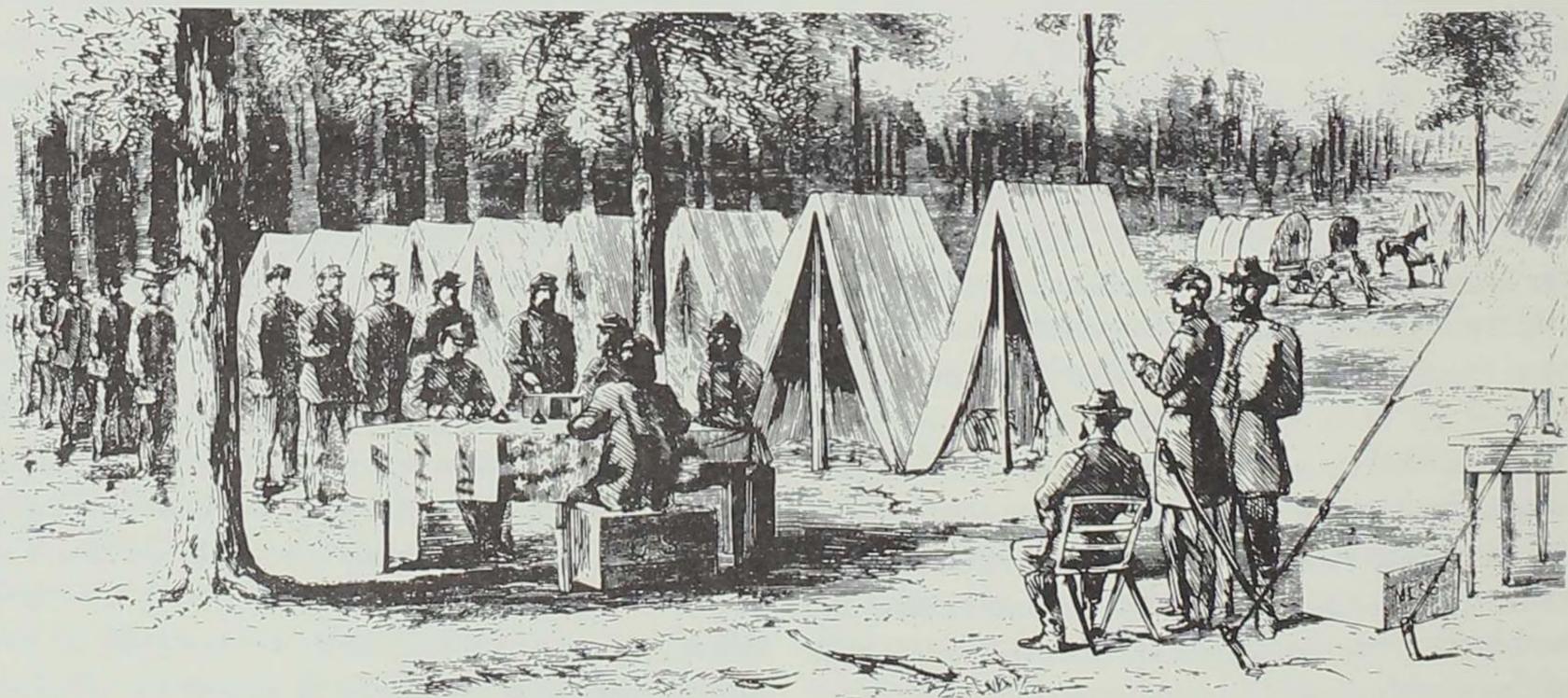
Stone saw an equally grave threat to the state from outside its borders. Believing that Missourians were responsible for various crimes being committed in Iowa's southern counties, he strongly reinforced the Southern Border Brigade, which Governor Kirkwood had created in 1862 in response to similar fears early in the war. Actually, the Brigade was never a very effective military force. When a band of guerillas crossed into Iowa in the fall of 1864, they were able to terrorize the rural areas of Davis County for twelve hours and recross the border without suffering any harassment from the Border Brigade.

To prevent a general infiltration into Iowa of "refugees from the rebel army, guerillas, and

governor—the military draft—was more concrete than the nebulous rumors of Copperhead activities or the threat of a major invasion from the south. The first time Governor Stone encountered the problem was in February 1864. On February 1, President Lincoln issued a call

*"We are coming, Father Abraham, with 500,000 more."*

for 500,000 men, with a draft to begin on March 10 to fill any quotas not met by volunteers. Iowa had never needed to resort to a draft to fill its quota, and in response to Lincoln's call Adjutant General Nathaniel Baker telegraphed Lincoln: "There will be no draft in Iowa. You



*Iowa soldiers in the field voted strongly for Stone for governor in 1863, considering his opponent Tuttle to be, as one soldier said, "in bad company" as a Democrat. (SHSI)*

bushwackers" from Missouri, Stone issued a proclamation on August 20, 1864 commanding peace officers and officers of the state militia in the southern tiers of counties to stop "all suspected persons" who arrived in Iowa from the south and detain them until they could satisfy the officers that they had a lawful purpose in entering the state. Clearly, Stone took the threat from Missouri very seriously.

The third major issue of Stone's term as a war

shall have our quota without it. We are coming, Father Abraham, with 500,000 more."

Iowa did, in fact, meet its share—6,000 men—without a draft. But the state's enthusiasm was beginning to wear thin after three years of war, and some Iowans were reported to be preparing to depart for the West, preferring the gold fields to the battlefields. In response, Governor Stone issued a proclamation forbidding any Iowa citizen to leave the state before

March 10, when the draft would begin, if it proved necessary. He instructed provost marshals and military commanders on Iowa's western border to stop anyone from leaving the state who did not have a valid pass from the provost marshal of the district where he lived. Though Iowa did not have enough troops to enforce such an order, Stone's proclamation did serve as a warning to draft evaders and as an indicator of the stresses that repeated calls for troops were creating.

That spring, Governor Stone was again able to report Iowa's success in meeting a call for volunteers—this one a call for 200,000 men by April 15—and a second call in April for another 100,000 men. The latter call was not part of the regular recruitment of troops for extended enlistments. Instead, it called for men to serve for 100 days in newly created regiments that were to perform guard duty in fortifications and military bases and along the nation's borders in order to free combat veterans for the summer campaign of 1864. Along with the other new units created by this call was a unit called the "University Company," Company D of the Forty-fourth Iowa. The company was composed of about ninety men, all of whom were from the State University of Iowa, Western College, and Coe College. Frank Horack, an early Iowa City historian, concluded that the formation of the University Company "left the State University deserted almost to a man." Apparently, the 100-day enlistments were considered a reasonable way of passing the University's summer term.

Iowa was finally forced to resort to the draft in the summer of 1864. On July 18, Lincoln called for an additional 500,000 men to hasten the end of the war. Iowa's quota was 15,784 men, but this number was reduced to 5,749 by credits allowed the state for an excess of volunteers on previous calls. Even though many Iowa towns increased the bounties they paid men to enlist, and thus help fill their quota, the state was eventually required to draft 1,862

men. This was, however, the last time Iowa would be required to canvass the state for enlistments. A readjustment of the credit allowed the state from previous calls meant that no new troops were needed for Lincoln's final call, for 300,000 men on December 19, 1864.

Although he was preoccupied with the state's internal involvement with the war effort, Governor Stone also played a role in national affairs during his first term. President Lincoln called the governor to Washington shortly after Stone's inauguration in 1864, apparently remembering the support Stone had given him at the Republican convention in 1860, and Stone often returned to Washington during the remainder of the war for confer-

*continued page 116*

#### Note on Sources

Major sources consulted for this article included *The Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, ed. by Benjamin F. Shambaugh, vol. 3 (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1903); Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa*, vols. 2 and 3 (New York: Century History Co., 1903); and biographical articles in the *Knoxville Journal*, September 25, 1930. Other works consulted included: John E. Briggs, "The Enlistment of Iowa Troops During the Civil War," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 15 (July 1917): 323-92; E. M. Vanduzee, "Incidents of Prison Life in 1862," *Annals of Iowa*, 1st ser., 6 (April and July 1868): 92-104, 220-33; Mildred Throne, ed., "Iowans in Southern Prisons, 1862," *Iowa Journal of History* 54 (January 1956): 67-88; and G. Galin Berrier, "The Negro Suffrage Issue in Iowa—1865-1868," *Annals of Iowa*, 3d ser., 39 (Spring 1968): 241-61.

Information on the Copperheads in Iowa came from the *Tipton Advertiser* and the *Muscatine Daily Courier* for 1863 and from the following published works: Hubert H. Wubben, *Civil War Iowa and the Copperhead Movement* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1980); Frank C. Arena, "Southern Sympathizers in Iowa During Civil War Days," *Annals of Iowa*, 3d ser., 30 (January 1951): 486-583; Frank L. Klement, *The Copperheads in the Middle West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) and "Rumors of Golden Circle Activity in Iowa during the Civil War Years," *Annals of Iowa*, 3d ser., 37 (Winter 1965): 523-36. A discussion of the methods historians use in verifying documents can be found in Robin Winks' book, *The Historian as Detective* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

Many of the illustrations in this article came from the following sources: *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*; *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Famous Leaders and Battle Scenes of the Civil War* (New York: Mrs. Frank Leslie, Publisher, 1896); *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War* (Chicago: Puritan Press, 1894); and *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (New York: Century Co., 1887).

# COPPERHEADS IN IOWA

Ipslow July 28<sup>th</sup> A.D. 1863

We the Undersigned do hereby agree  
to form ourselves into an Independent Military  
Company of Mounted Riflemen for the purpose  
of assisting the proper authorities in enforcing  
the laws of this Government upholding  
and supporting the Constitution of the  
United States and of the State of Iowa  
and for the further purpose of protecting the  
rights of Citizens, preserving order and  
quietness in the Community.

There exists "a faction, in the Northern States, which has persistently opposed the action of our Government in its efforts to subdue the Rebellion, and clamored for peace upon any terms. While professing to be loyal, the members of this faction have given strength and courage to traitors, and by their conduct proved themselves the most insidious and dangerous foes of the Union."

Governor William M. Stone, January 14, 1864

"Although various Iowa officials and Republican newspaper editors contended that a subversive society operated in their state, not a shred of unimpeachable evidence substantiates those contentions."

Frank L. Klement, *Annals of Iowa*, Winter 1965

As the statements by Governor Stone and historian Frank Klement indicate, there has been some disagreement about even the existence of a Copperhead movement in Iowa during the Civil War. The State Historical Society manuscript collection contains a document that may shed some light on this subject. It is the membership list of the Independent Military Company of Mounted Riflemen of Cedar County, dated July 28, 1863, the introductory statement of which is shown above.

The activities associated with the Copperhead movement in the Midwest reached a frenzied pace in late 1862 and early 1863. The term "Copperhead" was the epithet given to Peace Democrats in the North. The Peace Democrats spoke out vehemently against the war policies of the Lincoln administration. Their motto was "the Constitution as it is, the Union as it was!" The antiwar faction of the Democrats was also comprised of men who sought peace at any price, including the dissolution of the Union, and men who adamantly rejected any other than the Democratic ticket.

Copperhead sentiment was apparent in Iowa

in the 1860s. Iowa Copperheads were charged with discouraging enlistment in the Union army and encouraging desertion, denouncing conscription, and resisting federal tax collection. Iowa Copperheads included Democratic officeholders and party members, as well as outspoken newspaper editors. Among the most fervent critics of the Lincoln administration were editors Dennis A. Mahony of the *Dubuque Herald* and Daniel Sheward of the *Fairfield Constitution and Union*. In the autumn of 1862, Mahony was arrested by United States Marshall H.M. Hoxie and taken to the Old Capitol prison in Washington, D.C.

With Copperhead activity increasing, Northern war hysteria manifested itself in a surge of potent rumors. The Copperhead menace was said to include a highly organized network of secret societies, known by such titles as "The Order of the Star," "The Circle of Honor," and "The Order of American Knights." The most prominent of the alleged secret societies was "The Knights of the Golden Circle." The KGC, as it came to be called, was supposedly a nationally organized subversive

society. Rumors of KGC infiltration made headlines in the Iowa papers. In February 1863, the KGC was reported to have 42,000 members and branches in every township in the state. The Republican press in Chicago and New York picked up on the KGC rumors in Iowa and gave them a degree of public credibility by reprinting them. The growing alarm about KGC penetration in Iowa was exploited by Republican officials who zealously smeared Democratic candidates in the 1862 elections with accusations of terrorism and who defended the arbitrary arrests and denial of civil liberties to Copperhead editors such as Mahony by charging them with KGC connections.

How does the membership list of the Independent Military Company of Mounted Riflemen fit into this uproar over the Copperhead menace? The introductory statement appears to proclaim the patriotism of the organization. But Judge John T. Moffit of Tipton, who donated the document to the Society in July 1917, claimed that it was the original membership list of the Knights of the Golden Circle of Cedar County. The question is whether the membership list really is an indication of Copperhead activity in Iowa.

The evidence is contradictory. Arguing against the document's authenticity is the fact that many of the signatures were apparently written in the same hand. Also, at least three of the men who signed the document were members of the Union army at the time, and this was before Iowa had resorted to the draft.

Arguing in favor of the document is the fact that Iowa newspapers reported Copperhead activity in Cedar County in 1863. A notice published in the *Tipton Advertiser*, a Republican newspaper, on August 13, 1863 reported that

*The Cops. have organized a company of "Hoss Marines," numbering about 180 horses and men, and were out on parade last Saturday evening. The object of this company is as near as we can learn: 1st, To keep a vigilant eye on "them ar' guns" belonging to Uncle Sam 2d, To enforce the laws 3d, Keep down the Abolitionists*

*4th, Not to assist in enforcing the draft. Ab. Piatt is Captain.*

Abner Piatt is the ninth name on the membership list.

On August 21, 1863 the *Muscatine Daily Courier*, a Democratic paper, printed a letter from a "Light Horse Rifleman" from nearby Rochester who suggested that people "take a squint at Cedar County." The county, he continued, "boasts a democratic prowess, which may be defeated, but never can be conquered." He went on to declare that,

*We have reached a memorable point in our political history; this point almost amounts to a distinction of races, placing the Democratic Caucasian party on a basis by itself, and the different hordes of political mongrelism in a blessed and unenviable paradise by themselves.*

The Light Horse Rifleman's flagrant racism repeats the Copperhead determination to "Keep down the Abolitionists" mentioned in the *Tipton Advertiser*.

Certainly the newspaper accounts in the *Muscatine Daily Courier* and the *Tipton Advertiser* support Governor Stone's apprehensions about Copperhead activity. But, while Iowa Copperhead activity may have occurred in 1863, there remains a question about the authenticity of this document. The document's connection with KGC activity was not made until a half century later, when Judge Moffit donated it to the State Historical Society. Still, the existence of the membership list speaks in a voice more resonant than wartime gossip. Just as a document need not be a forgery to be misleading, a rumor need not be based on falsehood. One must keep in mind that there is a past which remains ever immutable, and there is history as we know it, which is relative to the beholder. Manuscripts such as the membership list provide us with a means of examining events. Our interpretations are ever changing.—Kathy Krafka

ences with Lincoln or with Secretary of War Edwin Stanton.

Shortly before the Republican national convention at Baltimore in June 1864, at which Stone was to head the Iowa delegation, Lincoln selected him as one of a small number of influential delegates he asked to press for the nomination of a Union Democrat as the vice-presidential nominee for his second term. Lincoln was not opposed to his current vice-president, Hannibal Hamlin, who was a Republican, but he told Stone that he believed that the nomination of a prominent Union Democrat would help to calm Southern fears about the future of the South if the federal government were dominated by the Radical Republican faction. A bipartisan ticket would signal Lincoln's intention to pursue a mild reconstruction policy after the war and thus help to reunite the nation. Though he named several Democrats who might fill the position, Lincoln did not single out any particular man in his talk with Stone. Stone himself favored Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, who was attracting a growing following as the convention neared.

When the nominations for president began at the Republican convention in Baltimore the next day, Simon Cameron, a Radical Republican from Pennsylvania, immediately rose to renominate Lincoln for president and Hamlin for vice-president. By uniting Lincoln and Hamlin in the same resolution, Cameron apparently sought to make any opposition to Hamlin seem to be an attack on Lincoln himself. This, Stone later maintained, left the convention delegates stunned. Stone, however, climbing onto his chair in the rear of the hall, shouted a motion that the Cameron resolution be tabled in order to allow the convention to consider other nominees.

An uproar immediately broke out between the supporters and opponents of Hamlin's candidacy, but when a vote was finally taken on Stone's motion, it was carried almost unanimously. With this vote, the momentum

changed. Lincoln was nominated for president in a separate resolution and it passed, of course, by acclamation. Andrew Johnson's name was then placed in nomination for vice-president, and he triumphed on the second ballot. As he had in 1860 and in 1863, Stone again proved himself to be a master of the political mechanics and psychology of a nominating convention.

Considering the strengths of Governor Stone's ties to President Lincoln, it is perhaps appropriate that Stone was in the audience at Ford's Theater the night that Lincoln was assassinated. When he heard the shot and saw John Wilkes Booth jump down to the stage, Stone rushed to the president's box. He aided in moving Lincoln to the boardinghouse across from the theater and remained at his bedside until Lincoln died the following morning. Stone was named as one of the pallbearers in the funeral cortege, and he rode on the train that carried Lincoln's body home to Springfield, Illinois.

With the close of the war in April 1865, the old wartime issues no longer consumed either the governor's or the state's energies. But now a new issue arose in both national and state politics: the issue of Negro suffrage. In Iowa, the question revolved around a provision of the Iowa Constitution of 1857 that limited suffrage to white males. At the Republican state convention in June, the Negro suffrage issue sharply divided the party. A resolution that would strike the word "white" from the suffrage section of the Iowa Constitution produced a bitter fight. In the end, the resolution passed by a vote of 513 to 242. Though he was not without opposition in the party, Stone was nominated for reelection as governor by acclamation.

Iowa Democratic leaders in the summer of 1865 realized that the Democratic party had been made synonymous with treachery during the war and that the Republican party had be-

come the party of loyalty, Union, and victory. They concluded that their only chance for success in the fall election was to draw votes away from the dominant Republican party by playing on the racism among the electorate at large that lay beneath the liberal call for Negro suffrage. The result was their creation of a new Anti-Negro Suffrage party and the calling of a "Soldier's Convention" in August. The convention denounced proposals for Negro suffrage and nominated General Thomas Hart Benton, Jr. (a nephew of the famous senator from Missouri) as the new party's standard bearer in the gubernatorial race. When the formal Democratic convention met, the delegates voted to support the "Soldier's Ticket."

During the campaign, Stone and other Republicans tried to play down the whole issue of Negro suffrage, declaring that they had not intended anything so radical as actual racial equality. As a campaign issue, they turned to the tactic that would come to be known as "waving the bloody shirt," stressing the old Democratic ties to rebellion and treason during the war years. The Democrats, meanwhile, in the guise of the Soldier's Ticket, stirred the old pre-war fears of an influx of vast hordes of Negroes into the state. Iowa had always been more of an antislavery than an abolitionist state, so it was not difficult for a campaign speaker in 1865 to conjure up the image of Negro suffrage as simply the first crack in the dam holding back a floodtide of Negroes.

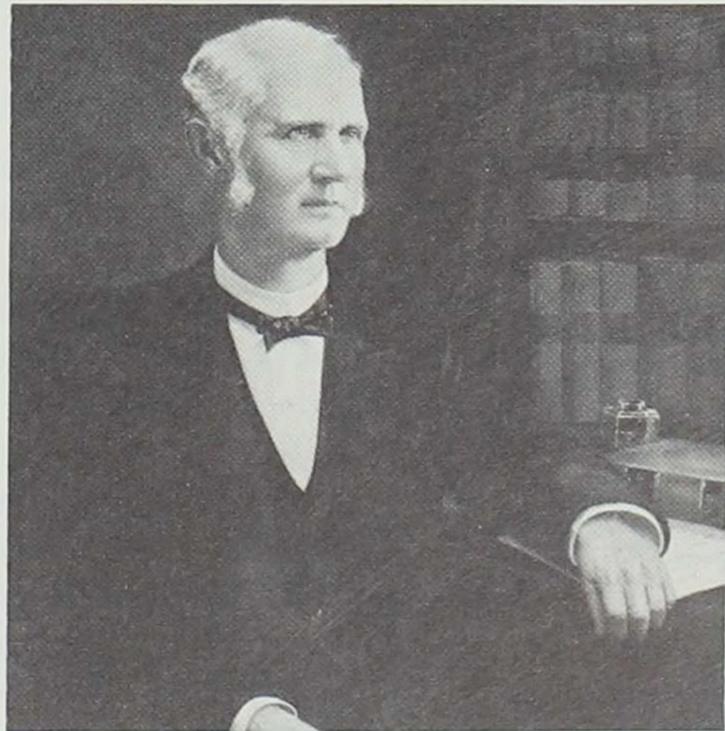
In the election, Stone triumphed over Benton by a vote of 70,445 to 54,070. This was a substantial margin, but not as great as those the Republicans had gained in the wartime elections, and in total votes the Republicans brought out 18,521 fewer voters than they had in 1864, while their opponents brought out 4,484 more.

Governor Stone had been reelected essentially on the Negro suffrage question, and he devoted a major part of his second inaugural address, on January 11, 1866, to a call for pas-

sage of a constitutional amendment by the state legislature that would delete the word "white" from the Constitution of 1857 and for submission of the amendment to the people for ratification. He stressed the military role that Negroes had played in the Civil War, particularly the seven hundred who had filled part of Iowa's quota of troops.

In truth, however, while Stone's call for Negro suffrage in his inaugural address rang with phrases that would warm the heart of the most vehement Radical Republican orator, Stone himself was no leader in the fight for Negro suffrage. His main interest in seeing the measure safely enacted and approved by popular vote was to remove the suffrage issue from the political arena. The real leader of the Negro suffrage campaign was Edward Russell, the editor of the *Davenport Gazette*. Russell had been a staunch abolitionist before the war, and he led the fight for suffrage in the Republican convention in 1865, in the campaign that followed, and now in the voting in the state legislature and in the popular referendum.

Voting on the issue in the Iowa General As-



*After he left office in 1868, Stone returned to his law practice in Knoxville and went on to be appointed Commissioner of the General Land Office by President Benjamin Harrison. (Division of Historical Museum and Archives)*

sembly was almost completely along party lines. In 1866 the Eleventh General Assembly approved an amendment that struck all racial restrictions from the Iowa constitution, and in 1868 the Twelfth General Assembly gave the necessary second approval. The constitutional amendment was included in the ballot in the general elections in the fall of 1868, and it won a 56.5 percent majority of the votes cast. Negro suffrage had become law in Iowa.

Apart from the Negro suffrage issue, Governor Stone's second term proved to be largely uneventful. Late in his administration, a scandal arose concerning his secretary's theft of money from the proceeds of federal swamp land warrants. The secretary, a man named Orwig, endorsed the warrants with the governor's signature, cashed them at a Des Moines bank, and used the funds to invest in real estate. The state was eventually reimbursed from the sale of the land holdings, and Orwig was never prosecuted. Governor Stone was not implicated in the scandal. Like the scandals that were later to plague the Grant administration in Washington, Stone was considered to be guilty of a poor choice of associates, but he was not accused of corruption himself.

When Stone completed his second term in January 1868, he returned to Knoxville to practice law in partnership with his brother-in-law, O.B. Ayres. John B. White, who read law in the offices of Stone & Ayres in the 1870s, later recalled that Ayres—whom he described as “a painstaking, hard working, sound lawyer”—conducted most of the office work. Stone, he recalled, “would often sit with a kind of far off look as if he were dreaming, and would often start up, don his plug hat, take his cane and go down on the street to mingle with the ‘boys.’ ”

Stone continued to practice law for most of the next twenty years, though he lived for a time in Marshalltown, Boston, Pueblo, Colorado, and finally Des Moines. By 1886 he was

back in Knoxville. Except for a period as a Greenbacker from 1870 to about 1875, Stone remained a loyal Republican, serving one term in the state legislature. He also served as an elector for the Harrison ticket in 1888 and was selected to carry the official Iowa returns to Washington in February 1889. Ever the political opportunist, Stone returned from his Washington trip with a position as assistant commissioner of the General Land Office. When the current commissioner resigned, Stone replaced him and served until the new Democratic administration of Grover Cleveland awarded the patronage plum to a replacement in 1893.

Stone then moved to a farm he had purchased near Oklahoma City, hoping to establish a law practice there with his son, William A. Stone. But he had been a victim of Bright's disease for several years by this time, and he grew progressively weaker. He died on July 18, 1893 and was buried in Graceland Cemetery in Knoxville.

As they listened to the eulogies delivered after Stone's death, Iowans who thought back on his career could not really have concluded that they had lost a great statesman or a political philosopher or even, truthfully, a great war hero. What Stone had been was an expert politician, a politician with a talent for seizing the political moment. When he tied himself to the rising star of the Republican party in 1856, when he jumped up to second the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for president in 1860, when he strode to the podium in the 1863 rally that brought him the gubernatorial nomination, and when he played a part in the 1864 Republican national convention, Stone was simply displaying a talent for gauging the political mood in a turbulent situation and placing himself in a position to benefit from it and to lead it. William M. Stone was a politician, nothing more, but nothing less. □