

An Iowa Anecdote

A RIGHT SMART HOSTILRY

One of the "characters" in early times at Mount Pleasant was Martin Tucker. Rough, uncouth, and uneducated, he yet possessed a large amount of native wit, natural talent, and good sense and became known for many miles beyond the limits of the county. About 1837 he erected a wooden building on the north side of West Monroe Street, on the west half of block four, and he called it a "hotel".

Except the sills and plates which were hewn timber, it was framed from saplings flattened on two sides or of timber split out like rails and "weather boarded" with boards rived or split with a frow — a tool not now known to fashionable industry. The boards in front were painted a pokeberry red.

In commenting upon the character of his future edifice to a crowd of bystanders, he said: "Gentlemen, I want you fellers to understand that afore court begins my building is agoin' to be done. It's agoin' to be a hotel, and none of your one-horse taverns. I am agoin' to have a pizarro run clean around it, and a revenue runnin' clean through

the middle, and a pecalow on top, and when she's done, I calculate to detain travelers in a more hostile manner than any hotel in this Territory!"

At another time, he was brought up before a magistrate, charged with some misdemeanor. It was at the time when the Territorial laws were temporarily published in newspapers and to many old settlers this method of publishing the laws was entirely new. The statute in his case was read to him by the justice of the peace out of a newspaper.

"Squire," said Tucker, "I'm a law abidin' man. I am in favor of the Territory and General Harrison, but I'll be d——d if I am agoin' to be tried by any of your newspaper laws!"

T. A. BEREMAN

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