

ened, and refused to eat. I watched by him many nights, for I had found him, and called him my brother. When he could no longer speak, he marked upon a piece of bark that, which means something in your language, and gave it to me, together with this flute. He died, and I buried him here. I have shown the bark to many white men since — they would look at it, laugh, and give it to me back again. I could not learn what it said; so, when I grew old, and the white man had bought our lands, I buried it here with his flute.”

“Where is the bark?” said I, eagerly; “let me see it.”

He drew from the scroll a small piece of birch-bark, upon which had been written, evidently with a lead pencil, though much obliterated by handling, the following words: “Erin, an exile bequeaths thee his blessing!”

I translated it into the language of the old Indian, when a smile of satisfaction beamed upon his countenance as he shook me by the hand, and he arose to depart, taking with him the scroll and its contents.

“Come, Shun-ga-rah, come,” said he, “you have seen many moons — Shun-ga-rah, you will never come again, but I will come once more.”

Many years have elapsed since then, but the old man has never returned. The rains have nearly levelled the little mound, while the trembling aspen and the wild-briar grow luxuriantly over the Mysterious Grave.

HISTORY OF LOUISA COUNTY.

BY WILLIAM L. TOOLE.

The readers of the following continued sketches, or history of Louisa county, are requested to read the former article relating thereto,* to keep up the connection, and therein find what may appear in this an omission or imperfectness in his-

*Sketches and Incidents relating to the settlement of Louisa County, page 45, Vol. VI, January, 1868.

tory; and, in this article as in the former, briefness will be adopted, repetition avoided, and recital of all scenes and incidents of early times in the county omitted that would be uninteresting to readers in other counties.

The promise in the other article to continue and complete the same, was based upon the belief that persons in other parts of the county, more competent, would freely assist in completing said sketches; but, after repeated effort to secure that aid, and repeated failures, I come to the conclusion that those persons are fearful that their aid would not be appropriate or useful in said history, and decline giving it. Therefore, to fulfill said promise, I undertake, unaided, to continue and complete said sketches or history of early times in our county, and hope all imperfectness will be overlooked.

The former sketches were mostly confined to the south-east part of the county; this will embrace the whole county in its generalities. Having Des Moines, Henry, Washington, and Muscatine for its adjoining counties, and possessing a soil unexcelled or exceeded in fertility or productiveness, none where nature has been more liberal in its gifts, and none producing a stronger claim as the granary and treasury of Iowa. Its early settlers being mostly farmers, its commercial interests were neglected; but an improvement therein is plainly showing itself, and Louisa county will soon become one of the most enterprising counties of the state.

The north-west part of Louisa county was not occupied or settled upon as soon as the south-east. Mr. Rice was among the first to bring that part into notice, succeeded by Mr. Mortimore, and he by Judge Springer, Mr. Gamble, Mr. Colton, and others. Columbus City, referred to in the other article, is in that part of the county. The south-west part of the county was earlier settled upon and occupied. Among the first there, was J. W. and E. B. Issett, George Keyes, J. Marshall, and others; these had Virginia Grove for their business point, the post office, stores, and shops. The south-east and north-east portions were referred to in former article.

With the Mississippi for its front, and the Iowa river run-

ning diagonally through it, thus giving it a good share of bottom prairie land and bottom timber land, and well supplied with timber along the small streams, and groves in the prairies, our county, at an early day, attracted the attention of stock raisers, who, with other early settlers, soon began to turn into market their horses, cattle, and hogs. It also soon became a grain-producing county, with its surplus finding a market in St. Louis; and, like its adjoining counties, soon began to show that, with its abundant supply of bottom timber and prairie, and adaptedness for stock-raising and all kinds of grain, was also well adapted to the raising of all kinds of fruits and vegetables, in quantities and quality equal to any in the state. In fact, the eagerness with which the first settlers took hold of all the more desirable locations, and of the Indian reserve on the Iowa river, referred to in former article,— a strip of land ten miles in width and about forty miles in length, embracing Keokuk and Black Hawk villages, near mouth of Iowa river; also, Wapello village, where our county seat now is, Kishkosh village, where Fredonia is, and Poweshiek village, near where is now Iowa City;— I say, the eagerness shown in taking possession of these locations two or three years before the government surveys of this district, is sufficient evidence of its adaptedness for agricultural purposes, and the wisdom of their choice or selection of location for a home in Iowa is more and more developed as time progresses, and the present prosperous and healthy condition of affairs therein, shows plainly that those pioneers were not mistaken in their opinion of the same, and have reaped the benefit thereof.

Connection of events requiring it, I must be excused for a little digression in turning to matters referring to myself. Very little of the district now composing this county was occupied in 1835. An estimable citizen, Levi Thornton, who became a member of the legislature, resided in the north-east part of it, and, on a visit to him, extended my rambling up the Mississippi to the remaining shanties of an old, abandoned Indian trading post, which, in 1836, became occupied by Mr. Vanatta and Mr. Casey, who put up two or three log cabins

there, and did a little trading with the remaining Indians and the new immigrants, which gave, as a name to the location, "Casey Landing," and, in 1837, other persons located there, and Casey Landing, beginning to attract attention, a town was laid off with the name of Bloomington, which, in a few years, was changed to Muscatine, a corruption of the Indian name Musquakeen, the Indian name of the large island below, a large part of which is in Louisa county. It was while on this footing from Mr. Thornton's to this Indian trading shanty that I had my adventure with some ten or twelve young drunken Musquawkee Indian warriors on their ponies, who met me near there, and dismounted and surrounded me, I suppose, partly for the purpose of trying my courage, or to be amused at my fears. Their hand-shaking and crowding around me ceased to be interesting to me, and I feared would end seriously; but, fortunately for me, one of them, apparently having authority, recognized in me one who had rendered him a slight favor, and who, much to my relief, at once ordered all away from me and put in a lengthy excuse for them, that they had been indulging too freely in Illinois whiskey. The most amusing part was, that he showed evidence of having indulged quite as freely as the rest; however, they all obeyed him in his orders to approach and apologize for their rudeness, and give a friendly shake of the hand. They then re-mounted their ponies, gave a friendly bow, and then, with an Indian whoop, went on their way for the villages of Musquawkeens. These Musquawkee Indians were of the Black Hawk tribe, the remnant of which were located in western Kansas, there to become extinct as a tribe or nation.

I also extended my rambling then to mouth of Cedar river, and there, also, found the abandoned remains of log shanties, or old Indian trading place, and Kishkakosh village. An estimable citizen, Mr. George Storm, was the first to locate a claim near there, and, in 1836, the Clark family located there, and soon after started the town of Fredonia.

A peep into old dockets of justices of the peace hereabouts will show that in the days of squatterism they had an eye to

law. Among the cases is,—Shuck *versus* Denison, and Denison *versus* Shuck; Ruffner *versus* Shuck, and Shuck *versus* Ruffner; Roarer attorney for Shuck, whether plaintiff or defendant. And in the district court of early days these same parties litigated, Roarer always appearing for Shuck. And so it is shown they had a Roarer in those days, and one who proposed new rules and orders in justices' courts,—muscular force instead of slow progress, and wives, sons, or relatives for deputies, &c. They had attorneys Grimes, Thomas, Starr, and others in those days, who were not confined to one family in their practice, but for, or against, as might suit the parties to engage them. Many amusing scenes could be narrated of trials before justices in those days, showing the independence or stubbornness of litigants, but we will let it be buried with them.

In my first article I gave the names of some of our early pioneers, and names of some of the early towns of our county; in connection therewith, I will here state that the first ferry established across the Iowa river was Mitchell's ferry, now Toolsboro, and the first ferrying from there to Upper Yellow Bank, Illinois (now New Boston), was in Indian canoes; soon after in a small flat-boat, then by horse-boat, from New Boston, Illinois, then a small, steam ferry-boat, and now the steamer Lansing. The next ferries established across the Iowa were at Wapello, by Mr. Milligan and Mr. Brewer, and at Fredonia, by Mr. Clark.

While on the subject of ferries I will again digress a little, so show the troubles and trials in traveling in those early days, and refer to some trouble and trials of Judge Charles Mason and F. Gehon (Marshal). In those early days Indian trails were the thoroughfares, and, if not on foot, Indian ponies instead of iron horses for conveyance; and, instead of carpet-bags, saddle-bags were used for baggage. Early in the spring of 1837, Judge Mason and Marshal Gehon started out on their ponies from Dubuque for Burlington. A previous knowledge of the route by the Marshal was of particular worth to the journeyists in the crossing of larger and smaller streams, par-

ticularly the Wapsie; the different watering places and places of mixed waters would be reached, although sometimes behind time, for the corn bread and bacon, owing to pelting snows, unsafe crossing of streams on the ice, and slippery roads, and, of course, while waiting for the bread and bacon in the shanties of fur traders, and, being much fatigued, would have to revive their fatigued bodies before partaking of the solid food, and, if coffee was scarce, would use the common reviver. But, to their credit, their ponies were always first properly attended to before their own comforts were sought for. At last, after repeated troubles, and trials, and difficulties, in slippery places, so common in early March, they arrived at the Iowa river; it had just taken a rise of several feet, and the ice still thereon, and presented a difficulty not to be easily overcome, for Mitchell's ferry-boat could not be used; and the ice appearing too weak for crossing the ponies thereon, the only apparent course to adopt appeared to be to leave the ponies with ferryman Mitchell, and perform the balance of their journey on foot, with saddle-bags on their backs instead of the ponies' backs. But, after a search by myself and one or two others for a crossing place for the ponies, one was found that, with proper care and caution, and our assistance, the ponies were led across on the ice safely, and the Judge and Marshal, after thanking us for aiding them in overcoming this apparently insurmountable difficulty, and, after being refreshed at the cabin of friend Creighton, went on their way cheerfully, and reached Burlington safely, where our account of their difficult journey ends, and their rejoicing and reinvigorating was left for them to report.

Being partly in connection, I will refer to my former article for origin of names of locations and rivers, particularly of origin of proper name of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers; viz: Masso-sepo (Big river), and Masso-reah-sepo (Big Yellow river), and Nec-a-tosh (Cedar river).

Louisa county, like other counties was first occupied by a population who considered all unclaimed public land theirs by occupancy, until public land sales, and all that was needed

was to find such a tract and occupy it, and find protection under the claim law. The territory of Iowa, at an early day, passed laws favoring such occupancy, and protecting the claimant until such public land sales, the same as if he had a right from the government, provided said claim did not exceed a half section, and the boundaries plainly shown by stakes in prairie, and tree marks in the timber, and had made the improvements thereon required by the so-called claim laws of that district. Contentions in regard to those claims and boundaries of claims were of frequent occurrence, but usually decided by the neighbors. These claim laws were strictly adhered to, and no one allowed to interfere with the claim of another, and all were united against land speculation at the public land sales, previous to which all disputes would be settled through a jury or committee chosen from among themselves, and strictly adhered to; with such an advantage, and the pre-emption law, they would go to the sales sure of securing their homes. Those claims would be regularly registered by a person selected for that purpose, and at the sale, he being well posted, would be the bidder for that district, and the owners of the claims, in a body, stand ready to oppose any opposing bid, and woe to the person who would undertake to bid against him; thus these sales would usually pass off quietly and satisfactorily. I was the register and bidder for this district.

As stated in former article, our county has no large or commercial metropolis; and, not that it would be interesting, but in connection with its early history, will here state that in its early days it had a full share of speculative or prospective cities, in the eyes of the proprietors, that are now dead or extinct towns, and embraced in boundaries of cornfields; viz: Beginning at mouth of Iowa river, it had, first, Cuba City, next, Sterling, Tecumseh, Yellow Bank, Iowa Town, Florence, Harrison, Pittsburgh, and Catteese, all on the Iowa river. Those of the now living and more promising towns are named in a former article, among which is Wapello, the county seat, and bids fair to become the emporium and commercial point of the

county; it certainly will, when our western railroad passes through it. It had its troubles, trials, and difficulties in its early days, having then three divisions claiming the ascendancy; viz: Upper, Lower, and Middle Wapello, the proprietors of each division striving for the county buildings; Mr. Rinearson, Mr. Gilliland, Mr. Isett, Mr. Minton, and Mr. Ives among the contending parties. Middle Wapello was finally successful, and the county commissioners decided upon having the court house therein. The three towns finally united into one. It had its troubles also regarding the ferry, which was first at Lower, and then at Upper, but finally, permanently established at Middle Wapello.

In providing for the organization of counties, the first legislature enacted that three commissioners should attend to all county matters and county business, one to be elected annually, after the first election of three. The first three elected for our county were Wright Williams, Wm. L. Toole, and J. W. Isett; John Gilliland was elected clerk, and Jacob Rinearson, recorder. This was in the early days of Judge Joseph Williams, and when the shade of an elm tree and river bank was the jurors' rooms, a small log cabin the court room, and a big box the clerk's and attorneys' table; and when, at Minton's tavern of one story, twenty by thirty feet, and a small kitchen adjoining, was the only public room in town, and in which would congregate judge, sheriff, clerk, jurors, belligerents, and witnesses; and in the room where Judge Williams so successfully exercised his skill in ventriloquism, by imitating the noise of prairie wolves near the house, and thus drawing the crowd from the only stove in the house, and he and those friends, in the secret, taking possession of the stove while the crowd were hunting the wolves. The Judge had some celebrity in those days in jokes of this kind, none more amusing than of the two self-admired, conceited lawyers searching their rooms for a crying infant; and of the two young ladies hunting among their surplus trail dresses for the little lap-dog thereunder barking. The Judge made it all quiet at the right time in each case.

And in connection with these early occurrences in which I took a part, by referring to records of our first legislature of territory and state, political conventions, and asking Congress for a state government, name thereof, &c., and first convention for framing constitution for Iowa, and many other conventions, my name will be found. In those days I had vigor, strength, and health, but now nearly seventy, and for a number of years entirely withdrawn from my former business, merchandising and general trading, I leave those busy matters in the hands of those at present more competent; and will be pleased if some one more competent will review, revise, and perfect these sketches.

As before stated, the first occupancy of our county was in the south-east part, and by those persons then named; then that part around the forks or junction of Iowa and Cedar rivers attracted the attention of early settlers in 1836, among whom was Mr. George Storm and family, and Mr. A. Clark and family, and two brothers. Mr. Clark settled upon the tract at said river junction, and started the town of Fredonia in 1837, permitting himself to be flattered with the idea that his town would become an emporium; but a stronger company opposed his hopes, by beginning the town of Catteese, on the point of land between the Iowa and Cedar rivers, opposite his town, and, with great display and show through large hand-bills, had a fixed day for public sale of lots in Catteese, at which the Catteese company became the prominent bidders, and afterwards made some show in putting up buildings, having a tavern started, a store, blacksmith shop, &c., &c., and inducing settlers to buy and locate and improve lots by aiding them, and in selling them goods on a long credit. The Fredonians, in the meantime, making extraordinary efforts to keep their town ahead, and the two towns struggled and strove and worked against each other, until their end was like the Kilkenny cats. Catteese proving a complete failure and abandoned; and Fredonia remaining unnoticed for several years, and until it was selected as the crossing place of a railroad, which revived it up again into a lively business town, with the

prospect of so continuing ; the junction of said railroads near it still adding to its prospects and notice of the business public. Situated in the center of a district unsurpassed in richness of soil, and productiveness of all kinds of grain, fruits, and vegetables, and for raising stock, and a district wherein industry and thrift strongly predominate, Fredonia, with proper management of its present citizens, may become, as before said, the business center of that part of our county. Wapello became the emporium or main commercial center, and Toolsboro strove to become the business point of the south-east part thereof.

Louisa county was in the first purchase of land in Iowa from the Indians, known as the Black Hawk purchase, and so called or known until organized into Iowa territory ; thus it is shown that our county can claim an important connection with the early history of the state. In those early days stone coal was discovered in two or three ravines near the mouth of Iowa river, but not in quantities sufficient to encourage a thorough search for it; but it may yet engage the attention and thorough searching of some one who may find coal in quantities sufficient to make it profitable.

As I have aimed to be brief, and avoid being tiresome, I shall omit accounts relating to our first schools, first churches, first sermons preached, names of preachers, teachers, merchants, and jurors, and may omit some matter and occurrences, and give imperfect sketches of some parts of our county, but the subject can be continued by those discovering these faults and corrected, they first giving a thorough examination to first article.

Louisa county, like some other counties of the state, has unmistakable evidences of antediluvian occupancy, through the ancient mounds and fort at Toolsboro, a particular description of which is given in my other article. These, and similar evidences are on the most elligible points, and extensive tracts of fertile lands, and where the traces of a numerous population are usually found, and of a people having a knowledge of the arts and sciences, as they have left us perfect specimens of circles, squares, octagons, and parallels, on a grand and no-

ble scale. These and other evidences strongly establishing their antediluvian origin ; none more strongly than the innumerable mounds, the sepulchres of antediluvians, presenting the sublimest monuments which any people could raise over the bodies of their departed friends, and calculated to continue while the world itself shall continue, unless destroyed by the sacriligious hand of man. The most able and pious writers differ in their conclusions relative to these matters, and should any writer contend that the continent of America is the old world, instead of as it is usually called, the new world, and that it is the land of origin of the human race, and had its millions of millions of the human family before the flood, and encourage the belief that from the time the flood bore up the ark, and was carried from this continent by the winds while the deluge lasted, and all written records and traces of these countless millions nothing is left but these antediluvian works, there would be no harm in such teaching. Certainly, and seriously, there is no part of the world where there is such scope and such material for observation as ours to strengthen these teachings, and to encourage the enquiries which of the quarters of the world were first peopled by the people of our land in antediluvian times, and what was their knowledge of arts and sciences, and of their religious and political observances and institutions ; these are, indeed, worthy the investigation of all teachers, all historiographers, and all searchers into antediluvian matters. This subject has had the attention of many able searchers of antiquities, and is deserving the close attention and searchings of all able and learned antiquarians.

Antediluvian evidences of various kinds are found in buried cities, in works of art, tools, and utensils, &c., buried at a great depth, evidently by alluvion of the flood, strongly showing that our continent was occupied by millions of millions previous to the great deluge. Discoveries have been made and are continuing to be made all over our continent strengthening this position, say, from the lakes of North America, through the valley of the Mississippi, and through Mexico, to the isthmus of Darien, then from the bay of Maracaibo, through

the valley of Amazon, to the Andes valley of Patagonia. By whom and when were these erected, are questions on which the learned and profound antiquarian should ponder; and, in absence of deluge-destroyed written records and history, find evidence of antediluvian history through these silent works of art of those untold ages. And who can say that the discoveries on the Nile, and of Ninevah, Babylon, and Thebes, are more ancient than those of Uxmel, Patagonia, Cholula, and valley of the Mississippi? And who can say that on this continent there have not been cities counting their millions? The immense ruins of pyramids, palaces, and temples are silent and lasting evidences and memorials of ancient greatness, of skill, of human art, although all written evidences were destroyed by the flood. And who can say that these evidences are not sufficient to denote ours the old instead of the new world?

And let those who believe that there were different races of men, reflect on those facts of the similarity of those ancient works all over the world, and let them learn wisdom from the searchings and conclusions of able and learned antiquarians relative to these antediluvian matters, and let the antiquarian, the geologist, the historian, the learned divine, continue their ponderings thereon.

I would like to have the readers of this read my first article, particularly that part relating to the fort and mounds at Toolsboro.

In conclusion, I will say, our county, in addition to the two railroads now passing through it, and in hailing distance to the one now to New Boston, Illinois, has the prospect of one from mouth of Iowa river, or Toolsboro, westwardly through Wapello, Crawfordsville, Brighton, Richland, and Oskaloosa to Council Bluffs, or Wapello, Washington, Sigourney, and Oskaloosa to Council Bluffs. Either route would be of easy and light grades, and easily constructed, and the citizens along the route will, no doubt, take hold and complete it to Council Bluffs. For, at the present time, any people away from a railroad and its conveniences and advantages are subjected to

a great loss ; and all efforts to build up towns away from railroads are perfectly futile. But the opposite of this is shown along the line of all railroads, in the increased price of farms, and in the rapid increase in growth of towns, and prices of property. This is but a natural and unavoidable result ; for the necessary and acquired business of the road itself produces life and stir at all their stations, attracting and drawing there, and making therein the center of all mechanical, mercantile, manufacturing, and grain and stock dealing operations of that vicinity. Therefore, the people being watchful of their interest, will take immediate steps for the making of said railroad, even if it should require half their real estate to do it ; for, one-half with the road, will be worth more than all without, and the attention of capitalists seek opportunities for investment and business, through this new channel and convenience for freighting by railroad and river, and Louisa county go on to prosper, and be prospering.

(To be continued.)

SQUATTERS AND SPECULATORS AT THE FIRST LAND SALES.

BY HAWKINS TAYLOR.

Previous to the survey of lands in Iowa, even to the survey of the base and township lines, what was known as the Black Hawk purchase (as described in a former number of your paper), was mainly taken up and settled upon by what was then designated as "squatters." There were then no homestead laws, as now, not *even pre-emption laws*. The settlers had to be a law unto themselves, to protect their own homes and fire-sides. To do this previous to the lands being offered for sale, the settlers in each township met and adopted their own by-laws, by which each settler was allowed to hold three hun-

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.