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HISTORY

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OCCGS REFERENCE ONLY

Palo Alto County, Iowa,

B Y

Presented by

J. L. MARTIN.

*for Corner Stone
of
Trinity Church*

As prepared for the
Celebration at Emmetsburg,
July 4, 1876.

ORANGE COUNTY CALIFORNIA
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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1877.

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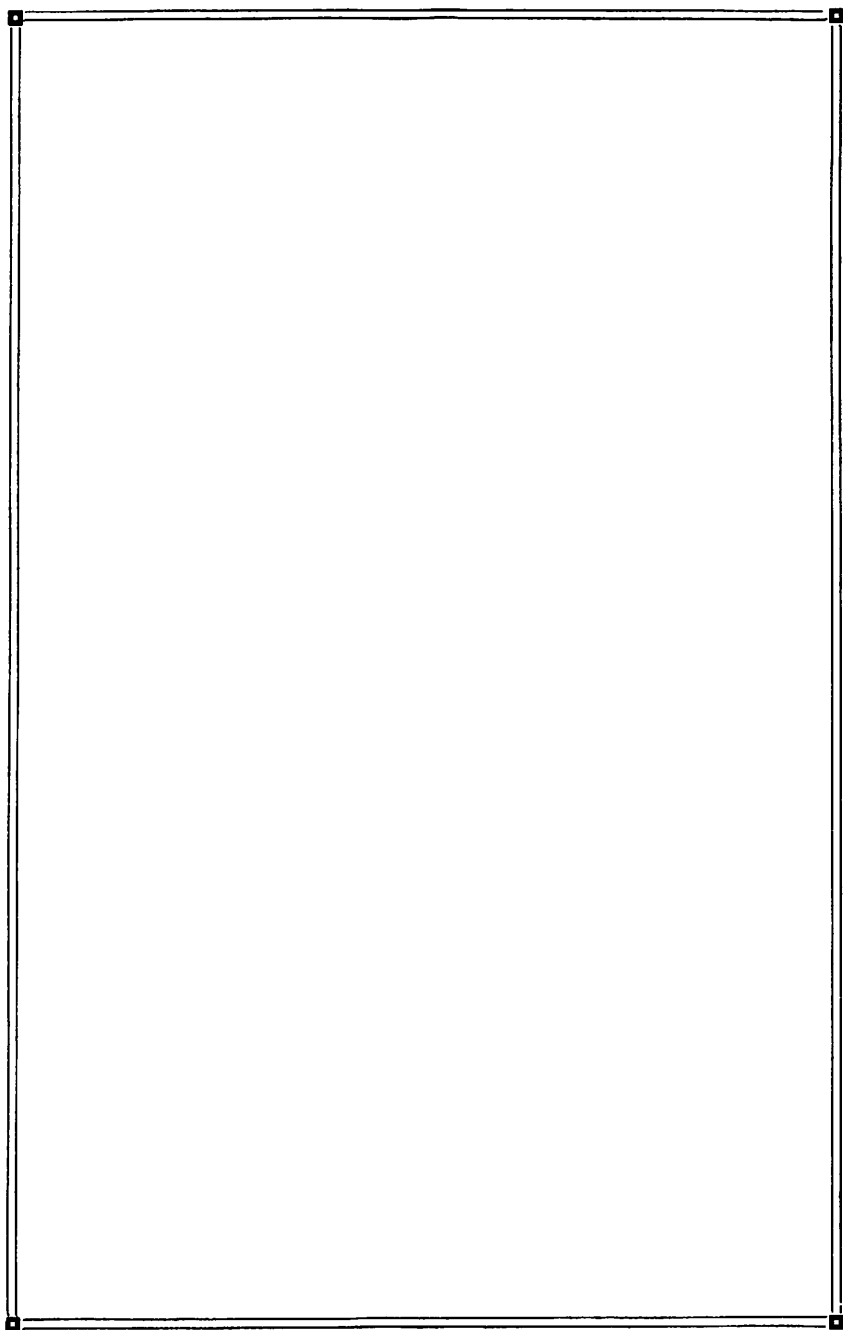
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Prefatory Platitudes.

In the following Brief History we have endeavored to condense into a paper not too voluminous for a single reading before a public audience the leading facts and statistics of the Early Settlement, Progress and Present Status of Palo Alto County, aiming at utility rather than embellishment. Since undertaking this labor we have been convinced of the wisdom of writing these things at this time; for many useful and interesting facts of which no record has, or could be obtained, have been carefully gathered and compiled from living witnesses, who were themselves fully conversant with the events here recorded. By this means much has been obtained of our early history that would soon have passed into oblivion. We would also assure our readers, that where any difference of opinion exists regarding events occurring twenty or more years ago, concerning which the memory of individuals, might be cloudy, erroneous or defective, we have carefully analyzed and compared, only accepting such facts as were corroborated by several witnesses.

In our investigations we have been kindly assisted by many of the early pioneers who are still living in the county, among whom are Wm. D. Powers, James Hickey, John McCormick, Jr., Thomas H. Tobin, John Nolan, Miles Mahan, Mrs. J. P. White, Jeremiah Crowley, John T. Laughlin, M. D. Crowley and others. Our thanks are also due to that accommodating Clerk of the Courts, M. H. Bliss, who ransacked the records of Webster County, for facts we could not otherwise obtain.

J. I. M.

History of Palo Alto County.

INTRODUCTION.

During a period of about thirty-two years, from 1788 to 1820, while the vagrant footsteps of the half civilized hunter, and the adventurous house-hold of the hardy pioneer, were gaining a feeble foothold on the west bank of the "father of waters" near the mouth of the Des Moines river, in what had passed under various names but was now know as Wisconsin Territory, and which has since become more widely known as the Commonwealth of Iowa, respectable tradition has it, that the region now constituting Northwestern Iowa, was thought to be a barren waste, in fact a *desert*, part of the great sandy plains known to exist toward the base of the Rocky Mountains.

During the succeeding forty years, the coming civilization spread away to the north and west and up the tempting valley of the Des Moines, steadily approaching the unknown land, till it swept the borders of what is now

PALO ALTO COUNTY.

This county lies on either side of the 43d parallel of north latitude, and has $17\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of west longitude from Washington, or about $94\frac{1}{2}$ degrees from Greenwich. It is bounded on the north by Emmet county, on the east by Kossuth, on the south by Pocahontas and on the west by Clay, and in common with these and many other counties, was, about a quarter of a century ago, attached to Webster county as dependent territory.

From 1850 to 1855 the military line of march between Fort Dodge, in Iowa, and Fort Ridgely, in Minnesota, lay through

this tract of country, and according to the most reliable authority attainable, the soldiers, some of whom had served in Mexico and the borders of Texas, named it PALO ALTO, which name was originally from the Spanish and signifies "tall timber."—On one occasion, when the Government mill was being brought in by the soldiers they could not get through a creek in the southeastern part of the county and were compelled to leave the cylinder there for some time, hence the name—Cylinder Creek. Near another stream on our northern boundary, tradition has it, that a little dog, which accompanied a surveying party, and which was a great favorite with the men, died, while they were in camp near the brook. The little dog's name was "Jack," and through respect to his memory the stream was called Jack's Creek.

In May, 1853, a detachment of Co. "E," 6th U. S. Infantry, commanded by Lieut. J. L. Corley, were compelled to go into camp by reason of a storm and took up their quarters near the west bank of a beautiful lake about the center of what is now Palo Alto county. On leaving the place for Ft. Ridgley, their destination, the soldiers cast lots to determine whether they should call it Storm Lake, Indian Lake or Lake Corley, but finally decided to name it in honor of their commander, *Corley*; but some time after, a party passing through westward, among whom was one Clark, afterward a resident of Kossuth county, coming upon the lake for the first time, named it from its size and situation between the rivers, *Medium* Lake.

In 1854, what is now West Bend and eight other townships, were surveyed by Leech & Bell, and Jesse T. Jarrett, and the remainder of the county in the years immediately following, by other Dept. U. S. Surveyors, paving the way for

EARLY SETTLEMENT,

which took place before the last of their labors was completed.

On the 29th day of May, 1855, Wm. Carter, from Indiana,

and Jeremiah Evans, from Ohio, arrived in what is now West Bend, and became the first permanent settlers of Palo Alto county. Samuel McClelland and six young men came with them but did not remain; Hannah Evans and Elizabeth J. Carter who came on the same date, were the first white women in Palo Alto. The first crop was 5 acres of corn planted by these families June 2, 1855. April 9, 1856, James Lynn and Wm. D. Powers joined the little band. In May they were joined by Samuel McClelland, and Adam P. Shigley and his family, and between that time and the 4th of July came Daniel Howl and wife and John McCormick, Sr., and his son Robert.

In the summer or fall of 1856 the Shippy family moved into what is now Fern Valley, and in the same season James Lynch, civil engineer, Thomas Cahill and James Hickey came to see the country, and Mr. Hickey and his family made permanent settlement, where they still live, in Great Oak. One of the earliest dwellings was a log house built by Wm. Carter, at West Bend.

Those resolute and industrious pioneers had to construct habitations of such material as was at hand, such as logs, hay, sod, bark, etc. In the latter part of the year 1856 the first shingled roof ever laid in Palo Alto was placed by John P. Bickell upon the log house built by John McCormick, Jr., and in which he still lives. In the same year a settlement was made near the central part of the county, by a colony from Kane county, Ills., composed principally of Irish farmers, among whom were James Nolan, Edward Mahan, Thomas Downey, John Neary, John Nolan, Martin Loughlin and Oren Sylvester with their families, and Thomas Loughlin and Patrick Jackman, both single. They arrived at their destination July 5, and settled in what was called "the Patch," in the shelter of a beautiful grove near the south-east corner of section 14, 96, 33, where several houses were erected, and among them one by Thomas Downey,

the remains of which are still extant on the premises of Daniel Kane. Here they gathered from their various pursuits and spent the first winter, sharing privations and what few comforts they had with each other cheerfully. Such of those early pioneers as are still living and here, are celebrating the Centennial to-day, and also spending their twenty-first Fourth of July in Palo Alto.

THE INDIANS

were frequent visitors to the houses of the early settlers, and the old chief, Inkpahdulah, and his band made themselves quite at home in the southern settlement.

Early in the following spring, March 3, 1857, one or more of those same Indians together with a savage band from the northwest, perpetrated a horrible massacre on the settlers of Spirit Lake, and seriously threatened the settlements in this county. Those of the men who could be spared, arming themselves as best they could, rallied to the support of their brethren on the northern frontier. The Indians having fled, and been dispersed, they returned to their homes, but *fearing daily* for the safety of their families, for which fear they had many good reasons, they at last became discouraged, and taking their oxen and wagons gathered up their families, and a few effects, and abandoned their new-found homes to make their way to Fort Dodge, then a military post, where they might expect protection.

Arriving at Cylinder Creek about April 1st they found it impassable by reason of high water, and camped over night. So inclement was the season that they burned an ox yoke for fuel, and next morning pushed their wagons across the stream on the ice.

Owing to their desire to secure a foothold in this then wild but beautiful region, and being reassured by their friends, most of the poor fugitives returned to their homes in due time, where they remained in peace, except occasional alarms, till 1862, when an

extensive massacre on the borders spread dismay through the settlements again, but this time they prepared for battle and did not depart. The first death in the infant colony occurred in the latter part of June 1856. It was that of Mrs. Esbrina L. Shigley, who according to some authorities died from having her hands inoculated with strychnine, while preparing corn to destroy the blackbirds, that sorely infested their little fields, while others maintain that she took the draught that caused her death by mistake in medicine, but that she died of poison in the cabin of Jer. Evans on the farm where James Johnston now lives, about the last of June, 1856, all agree. The second was that of Robert McCormick, who, with his brother, got into an altercation with the Shippy brothers about a piece of timber, when becoming greatly enraged they exchanged shots, when Gavitt Shippy was wounded, and McCormick *killed* by him June 30th, 1858. The shots were fired across the river. Thus, through the foolish rage of the passions of men, was sacrificed a fine young man, whom the little colony at that time, and much more, the *near* and *dear ones* could illy spare.

Our present limits of time and space will merely permit us to touch upon the more prominent events, as a full statement of the incidents of interest, and various vicissitudes and trials of these days would require a large volume, hence we must omit many details of privation and suffering and loss by swollen streams, long journeys, daily dangers and great difficulties in obtaining even the absolute necessities of life. A few brief selections will serve to illustrate the difficulty of obtaining even trifles. Miss Belle McCormick, now Mrs. Ira D. Stone, when writing to a friend in New Jersey, excused any defect that might appear in her letter, by saying they had no glass for windows, but she had placed a rude table near a chink in the wall, which served to admit the light by which she was writing. On another occasion her brother Thomas excused his long delay in writing in answer

to a friend by saying that the frost had burst his ink bottle and to procure another would necessitate a journey of fifty miles.

The winter of 1857 was a severe one, there being very deep snow and intense cold, when S. McClelland, R. F. Carter, A. B. Carter, D. Howl, W. D. Powers and Jas. Lynn started over the snows in Indian file with handsleds attached to their waists by ropes to haul provisions from Dakota. On their return with 100 pounds of flour and 50 pounds of pork, they got lost in a snow storm and were out all night some having taken the river and others to the prairie.

As late as the last days of February, 1867, John K. Martin (a brother of the writer) and Charles Hastings, traveled with two teams by way of Springvale (now Humboldt) and Linn to Belmond, in Wright County, making a round trip of 180 miles to procure a load of flour and oats for each. They could only procure at Belmond a sack of shorts and some oats for their teams, but fortunately, on their return to Springvale there was some flour in the mill and they got it all—and shouldered it through creeks and sloughs and broken ice several times on the way home, to save it from getting wet on their sleighs. In crossing 20 miles of wild prairie in Wright county against a cutting blast, they froze their faces considerably in spite of their best efforts to save them.

Though many of the first settlers found pleasure and profit in hunting and trapping, they early turned their attention to the cultivation of the

SOIL.

at least in so much as to raise corn and potatoes for their own use. Geologically considered, the soil is a drift formation, except the river bottoms, which are mainly alluvial deposits.

The high and gently rolling prairie, constituting the greater portion of the County, is generally composed of due proportions of clay, sand and rich prairie loam, constituting a species of the

most agreeable and productive arable land, while the rich alluvial bottoms were such as to allure the hunter from his chosen occupation into stock raising, and tempt the most unwilling to follow his example. This was early discovered by speculators, and large tracts were purchased even before the first settlers had secured their titles.

The earliest entry we can find of record was made on the E. half of the S. W. quarter of Sec. 31, 94, 34, May 4th 1857, by Freeman Cornish; the earliest recorded deed was given in September, 1858, and the earliest recorded patent is dated April 1st, 1859. Not only is the soil productive but adapted to all the various

PRODUCTS,

usually grown in this latitude, among which we may name, corn, oats, barley, rye, wheat, sorghum, broomcorn, potatoes, buck-wheat, clover, timothy and millet. Among the fruits that can be raised successfully and in most cases abundantly are apples, in all their varieties, plums, grapes, gooseberries, strawberries, currants, etc., etc., many of these growing wild in profusion. To the production of all sorts of roots, and what are ordinarily termed *vegetables*, the soil seems specially adapted. While those engaged in agriculture, (which is the greater portion of our citizens,) share the vicissitudes common to all climates, we seldom or never fail to get a good crop of two out of the four staples, wheat, oats, corn and potatoes, and frequently have an abundant crop of all, as in 1875.

But the summer of 1873 will long be remembered as an exception to this rule, when favorable (to us unfavorable) wind and weather swept across our borders an all-devouring host of grasshoppers from the sandy deserts of the West, destroying the major portion of our crops, and leaving their progeny behind them to serve us in like manner the following summer.

But 'tis past, and our fertile prairies continue to bloom as a garden, and we have reason to thank our kind Father that greater calamities are spared us. The Colorado potato bug gave us a passing call, but the chinch bug, the army worm, the weevil, the plague and the fire and the flood that have laid waste the health and substance of those in less favored localities, have never entered our fair domain.

The first settlers received yearly a few accessions to their numbers, but for several years the increase was small.

Miss Maggie Hickey, born Oct. 14th, 1856, was the first white native citizen of Palo Alto County. The

POPULATION

In 1859 was 131, and in 1875 was 2728 and may now be safely estimated at 3100.

In due process of time the early settlers became tired of having their seat of County government 60 miles away, and manifested to the proper authority their desire for the

ORGANIZATION

Of their own County as an independent political power. Accordingly a precept was issued on the 23d day of September, 1858, by Luther L. Pease, County Judge of Webster County, ordering an election to be held in the county of Palo Alto on the 2nd day of Oct., 1858, for the purpose of electing County officers, James Hickey, James Nolan and Washington Reed being appointed judges of the election, which was to be held at the house of Thomas Downey.

The judges of election having failed to canvass the votes or return the names of candidates voted for, the election was declared void.

Nov. 22nd a petition signed by James Nolan, Jason R. Simmons, Richard M. J. McFarland, Thomas Downey, John Nolan, W. M. Walters and G. S. Ringland, was presented to the

County Judge of Webster County asking for another order for an election in Palo Alto County, which order was made on the same day, the election to be held on the 20th day of December, 1858, same judges of election and place as before. A new precinct was also established consisting of Townships 94 and 95 Range 31. James McCormick, Wm. Carter and Wm. D. Powers appointed judges of election for said precinct, and the first election to be held at the house of Wm. Carter; Washington Reed was by the court directed to post up notices of the same in Palo Alto and Cylinder precincts 15 days before the election. At this election held Dec. 20th, 1858, the votes being duly canvassed by the proper officers of Webster County Dec. 24th, 1858, the following officers were duly elected: James Hickey, County Judge; Felix McCosker, Clerk, D. C.; John M. Mulroney, Treasurer and Recorder; John Shea, Drainage Commissioner; James McCosker, County Surveyor; Oren Sylvester, Coroner, and Thos. H. Tobin, Sheriff.

In 1859 another change was made in the precincts or civil townships, and three subdivisions were mapped out and named respectively West Bend, Nevada, and Palo Alto, the latter which was the most northerly, was afterwards changed to *Emmetsburg* Township. On Dec. 31st, 1858, the County Seat was established at Paoli on N. half of Section 6, 95, 32, by C. C. Carpenter, John Straight and Wm. P. Pollock, Commissioners appointed for that purpose by C. J. McFarland, Judge of the 5th Dist.

Like all pioneers, the people had to attend to their physical wants exclusively for a time, but they did not long neglect the mental, but proceeded to provide means of

EDUCATION.

In June, 1859, the People volunteered to build a school house, which they did, constructing it of logs on Daniel Howl's claim, and Thomas Campbell covered it with bark, but no material

but the earth could be found for a floor. The first County Superintendent of Schools was John McCormick, Jr., who was elected on the 6th day of Nov., 1860. It does not appear who (if any one) taught in this house during that season and the first school of which we have any authentic record was taught on Sec. 34, 97, 33, just north of Martin Loughlin's residence, in the spring of 1861; a few days later a school was commenced by Miss Mary Matthews at West Bend township in the house first referred to. In 1870 there were 14 schools in the county, 11 school houses, 6 log and 5 frame, 24 teachers examined, and 420 persons of school age. And in the year 1875, there were 74 teachers examined, 53 school houses, all framed, 63 schools, and 1180 pupils.

The total amount expended for educational purposes in 1870 was about \$3,300, and in 1875 it was \$15,618, nearly.

The first marriage in the County was that of Thos. H. Tobin to Miss Ellen Loughlin, Jany. 7th, 1860.

The first law suit was S. B. Olney vs. Washington Reed, May 3d, 1859.

While noting the progress of our people from the trials and struggles of the early time up to so respectable a position as they now assume among the highly civilized people of Iowa, it may not be amiss to take a glance at their

POLITICAL HISTORY

Which, to those concerned, was always full of interest, and may be of some interest to us to-day. At the first election there were 44 ballots cast, a number too small to be missed from our more ponderous but no more exciting elections of to-day. We would naturally suppose this to be too limited a number in which to get up any divisions, or out of which to construct any factions, but we have both recorded evidence and evidence of living witnesses, that there *was* division, and one of the most bitter contests ever waged within the sacred precincts of Palo Alto swept every citizen into

its giddy vortex on one of those occasions. Such is the strange power of politics to excite the people. We find no record of the cause of division but the vote stood distinctly on every man and measure proposed 17 to 27, with the exception of Thos. H. Tobin who, according to the records had no opposition, and was unanimously and triumphantly "elected High Sheriff of Palo Alto County."

The first contested election was brought to trial Oct. 17th, 1861, John M. Mulroney contestant and John Nolan, James Nolan and Thomas McCormick, incumbents, but what might have been the cause of action, or the nature of the defense, history fails to record.

Of the 47 ballots cast Oct. 11th, 1859, Samuel J. Kirkwood (Rep) for Governor received 3, and A. C. Dodge 44.

Of 34 ballots cast Nov. 8th, 1864, George B. McClellan had 33, and Abraham Lincoln 1.

Of 624 ballots cast on the 12th day of October, 1875, the Samuel J. Kirkwood above named, had, for Governor, 324 votes and Shepherd Leffler had 300.

But we will return more directly to our local home government, which though showing some extravagances and errors—and what government does not?—has been such as to lead the careful historian, in most of even the blamable cases, to look at least with charity, upon the acts of those inexperience young statesmen, who had everything to provide, and much to endure, and in the following list of county officers from its organization to the present time, will be found dozens of men whose private word was a faultless bond.

The following are the names, including the present incumbents, of the County officers, in chronological order from its organization to the present day:

Treasurers: John M. Mulroney, James P. White and M. L. Brown.

County Judges: James Hickey, Thomas McCormick, Patrick Mulroney, Daniel Kane and John M. Hefley.

Clerk of the Courts: Felix McCosker, Thomas Maher, Michael Hickey, Thomas McCormick, Lott Loughlin, John Pendergast, Wm. E. Cullen, James Hickey, J. H. Underwood, Robt. Shea and Thomas J. Prouty.

Drainage Commissioners: John Shea, Jeremiah Crowley and Hiram Hall.

County Auditors: John M. Hefley, Wm. E. Cullen, Wm. H. H. Booth, Wm. H. Shea, and Benjamin Franklin.

County Surveyors: James McCosker, Andrew Hood, Michael Hickey, John Neary, Benjamin Franklin, Geo. S. Anderson, T. W. Harrison, Geo. H. Pendelbury and Le Roy Grout.

Sheriffs: Thomas H. Tobin, A. B. Carter, John Nolan, Patrick Lynch, Thomas Campbell, Patrick Nolan, John McCormick, John M. Hefley, M. D. Daniels, P. C. Nolan and J. E. King.

Coroners: Oren Sylvester, R. F. Carter, John McCormick, Sr., J. H. Underwood, Michael Kirby, Milo Gardner, W. K. Mulroney and T. E. McMurtrie.

Superintendents of Schools: John McCormick, Jr., William Carter, Daniel Kane, J. H. Underwood, David Spaulding, J. L. Martin, John J. Robins, Albert L. Day, Matthew Kean and John C. Bennett.

County Supervisors: John Nolan, Thomas Dawson, James Nolan, Samuel McClelland, A. B. Carter, Joseph T. Mulroney, J. H. Underwood, H. L. Joiner, Martin Coonan, E. Randall, James Johnston, Thomas H. Tobin, M. Kirby, O. D. Rider, R. M. J. McFarland, Alexander Younie, John A. Anthony, Charles Gibbs, Philo Sanford, Matthew Ryan, Thomas Eagan and John Doran—The present Board being, Charles Gibbs, chairman, R. M. J. McFarland, Matthew Ryan, Thomas Eagan and John Doran.

County Recorders : John M. Mulroney, A. B. Carter, Wm. D. Powers, William E. Cullen and J. L. Martin.

It may not now be amiss to take a rapid survey of our

FINANCIAL STATUS.

At the time of the organization of the County, in 1858, the amount of taxable property was almost insignificant, and as late as 1865, it could not have exceeded \$150,000. Thus the people had no means to carry on their county government, and money was needed at every step, and the only chance left them, save one, the sale of the swamp lands, was to draw on the future and the credit of the County, and issue "warrants," or orders on the County Treasury, and sell them at what they would bring. This they concluded to do and the first order issued was dated Dec. 29, 1858, drawn in favor of Luse & Wilson for \$165.40, for County books. In view of the great need of some public improvements, and the fact that the County had, or was to have through an Act of Congress passed in 1850 and thence through an Act of the Legislature of 1853, about 75,000 acres of swamp lands, and one William E. Clark, of Baltimore, having offered to build two bridges on the Des Moines, build a brick court house and school house, and put in a steam mill at Paoli, the County seat, the people, by unanimous vote for the above and some other sundry considerations, bargained and sold the above lands, except such as might be reclaimed (not being swamp) valued at \$95,000 to said Clark, who, afterward, assigned his contract to John M. Stockdale, of Webster County, to whom a deed was made Dec. 29, 1860.

Subsequently, a grant of land was made to the Des Moines River Improvment Company, which on their failure was transferred to the Des Moines Valley R. R. Co.—also about 75,000 acres, and still later another grant to the McGregor & Western, now McGregor & Mo. R. R. Co. of about 50,000 acres. In the mean time, large amounts of warrants, at depreciated values,

were being issued for current expenses, and very little revenue obtained. In 1863, ten thousand dollars in warrants were sold at 25 cts. to 45 cts. on the dollar to raise bounty for volunteers or substitutes, so that in the early part of 1872 about 200,000 acres of our best lands (aside from school and college grants) had been disposed of for public improvements, for which \$15,000 had never been realized, and the County had, including interest due, about \$50,000 outstanding indebtedness.

About this time the people began to see where they were drifting and called a halt, and so great was the revulsion, that some cried "repudiate!"—"repudiate the debt!" But to the honor of Palo Alto be it said, the popular voice demanded that the debt be paid. Since that time there has been a general effort to retrieve the credit of the County, and it has been in a great measure accomplished, though there is much yet to be done. In this connection a brief mention of a potent agency in every good work should be made, namely,

THE PRESS.

The first weekly paper published in the County was the Palo Alto *Democrat*, established by James P. White, and the first number issued about Dec. 4th, 1869. It was suspended in 1873. Next came the Palo Alto *Advance*, established by McCarty & Hartshorn and Burnell & Harrison, known at that time as H. L. Burnell & Co. Its first issue was in June, 1870, and it was published until August, 1873, when O. C. Bates bought the Company out, brought the first printing press into the County and established the Palo Alto *Patriot*, which was purchased by the Palo Alto Printing Company in May, 1874, and the Palo Alto *Pilot* first made its appearance on the 11th of June following, and is still extant and prosperous. In the years 1873-4 a monthly paper known as the *Enterprise* was published by Burnham, Ormsby & Co. In June, 1875, the Palo Alto

Reporter was established by Henry Jenkins, with a complete new press and outfit, the second in the County, and is still living and prosperous.

Having taken this rapid review of our peoples progress in pursuit of wealth and worldly refinement, and in the midst of which many of them have passed off the stage of action, it may be well to inquire if they have had any thoughts of a future existence, and what have been their

RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS AND STANDING.

The first public worship in the County was held at the house of James Hickey in 1861, by Rev. Father Elwood. The visits of clergymen were few and far between for the first twelve or fourteen years, during which time a bi-monthly, or semi-annual, or annual visit of a dispenser of the mysteries of the Gospel was something hailed with pleasure by those piously inclined. During these years, an occasional Catholic missionary (for a majority of the people were Catholic) was sent sixty or more miles to hold divine services in Palo Alto. Among those missionaries were Fathers Elwood, Marsh, Butler, Delaney, Monahan, Lenihan and others, till 1871, when a church was built and Rev. J. J. Smith placed in charge of the congregation.

About the year 1867, meetings began to be held among *other* Christian denominations, the most prominent being the Methodists, Baptists, and Congregationalists, and Reverends B. C. Hammond, J. E. Rowen, D. S. McComb, Woolery, Webster, and others labored to arouse the people to a sense of their duty; and in the years 1872, 1873, 1874 and 1875, the Methodists, under Revs. Rowen, Woolery, Hamilton, Robinson and others, the Baptists, under Rev. H. Kettlewell and others, and the Congregationalists, under Revs. Coleman, Fisher and others, but more especially the Methodists, had extensive religious revivals, and many were added to the churches. Much has been done also, especially by

the Catholics and Methodists, for the rising generation by way of religious instruction, Sabbath schools, etc. Both have commodious church edifices, the Catholics who are also the most numerous denomination in the County, having the largest building at present completed within its limits. On the 11th day of June a mission was commenced in the Catholic Church by two pious priests, Revs. Father Hennebery and O'Neil, of the Order of the Precious Blood, for the "revival of faith and morals among the people," and continued for 11 days with powerful and effective preaching, exhortation, prayer, and the administering of the sacraments, and hundreds were brought to repentance. At the close of a discourse on temperance, on the evening of June 19th, by Father Hennebery, and at his request, 500 people arose at one impulse and, with uplifted hand, pledged themselves forever to abstain from all intoxicating drinks; and on succeeding evenings others joined the ranks to the number of nearly 700 in all.

The preaching of the mission closed on Wednesday evening, June 21st, with a most impressive ceremony, when over 700 people, with lighted waxen candles held aloft in their hands, renewed their baptismal vows. The Catholics, Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists and Lutherans are all the church organizations we find of record, the two former, only, having church edifices, but the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Campbellites or Christians, Adventists, Unitarians, Spiritualists, Universalists and Jews are also represented among our people.

GENERAL SUMMARY.

The total products of the County in 1859, with the exception of a few minor items of vegetables, was 2,507 bushels of corn, and 2,965 bushels of potatoes; while in 1875 the yield of the four great staples was as follows: potatoes, 21,713; wheat, 23,208; oats, 46,859, and corn, 142,957 bushels, making a grand

total of 234,737 bushels, besides thousands of bushels of buckwheat, flaxseed, rye, barley and vegetables.

In 1869, our total assessed valuation was \$256,004, and in 1875 it was \$946,055, and in 1876, will exceed one million dollars.

In 1868-9 our warrants sold for about 30 cents on the dollar, and three years later, as before stated, our debt was about \$50,000, while to-day our warrants are worth between 80 and 90 cents, and about \$29,000 would pay the last farthing of our outstanding indebtedness, and with an annual revenue of about \$51,000, though there is much to be done in the line of needed public improvement, it is to be hoped the above debt will soon be absorbed, and we believe our public officers, as well as citizens, are determined that it *shall* be.

EMMETSBURG,

The County seat, near the center of the County, at the foot of Medium Lake, the nucleus of which was *removed here*, having been formed at the Riverdale Farm, which was platted for a town by its former owner, Martin Coonan, has only existed on its present site about 18 months and has over 400 inhabitants, and a large number of business houses, shops, mills, hotels, factories, etc., and two weekly newspapers, both flourishing, one having a Gordon job press in connection running to its utmost capacity. Four stages, one from each of the cardinal points, arrive and depart daily and its Post-office has just been made a money order office. Emmetsburg has also been lately erected into an Independent School District, (the first in the county) and has a new school building, costing about \$1,600 nearly completed. the prospect for a junction of the Des Moines Valley and McGregor & Missouri River Railroads at this point, in the near future may be reasonably and confidently looked for, the latter road having only about twenty-five miles to build into this town, which it is expected to do the present season.

With clear purling streams, and limpid lakes, and most de-

lightful atmosphere the health of Palo Alto's people can not be otherwise than good, and a significant fact on this point is that the first two grave-yards opened the county, to-wit, in what are now West Bend and Fern Valley, were not opened for those who had died of disease, but rather by violence.

We quote the following from J. A. Smith's History of Northwestern Iowa :

"The climatic conditions of this region preclude the possibility of contracting bronchial affections, and fever and ague are of very rare occurrence. This is a poor country for doctors ; what few there are wear poor clothes, and visit their patients either on foot or behind a horse so thin that its shadow attracts less notice than the virtues of a Congressman."

Thus, as we close this brief sketch of its infant history Palo Alto marches cheerily onward, alive to the music and abreast with the progress, religion and refinement of the world's best civilization.

In our researches we think we have discovered evidence of a prosperous and happy future for its people, and our prayer is that its sons and daughters (for the daughters will have more to do with it in the future than in the past) may by their sobriety, integrity and heroic virtue hand it over to a future generation on the next Centennial Day, with its hilltops crowned with castles, the palatial mansions of a patriotic people, whose honor, strength and virtue shall make them worthy citizens of our beloved country, and be the crowning glory of all.

J. L. M.

Emmetsburg, Iowa, July 4th, A. D. 1876.

Supplemental History

— OF —

Palo Alto County.

EDS. REPORTER.— In answer to inquiries and by way of Supplement to our CENTENNIAL HISTORY of this (Palo Alto) county, we would say that all the bright anticipations of 1876 are being realized. The grasshopper pest referred to has evidently departed forever. Our crops have been abundant, and our condition as an enterprising, agricultural people has averted in a great measure the financial evils felt so severely in older settled countries.

Since closing our Centennial History, Emmetsburg has had a healthy, if not *rapid* growth. The county has largely increased in population.— The school building then being constructed here was rapidly completed and school opened in two departments (a portion of the time three departments have been organized) and the school is, and has been, second to none of its grade in this part of the State.

Many new business houses, shops and factories have been added to those we had in 1876, (for a list and description of which we refer the reader to the Index and Advertising Pages of our Cen. Hist. and to the advertising columns of the REPORTER.) Another wagon factory is to be opened soon, and a plow factory has recently been established. We presume one or more cheese factories will be opened soon as there is a fortune for someone in it—and it has become almost a necessity.

Emmetsburg, the county seat, was incorporated a few months ago, and the Milwaukee & St. Paul, Railway Company are rapidly constructing the McG. & M. R. R. across the county; they confidently expect to reach this town with their trains by the last of July.

Property, especially real estate, which has been very cheap here in the past, is rapidly advancing, and persons desiring to purchase in town or country will do well to buy soon.

Immigration is pouring in upon us this season as in days of yore, and all who come to help us settle and improve the country and transform the broad domain of rolling prairie into teeming fields and blooming gardens will receive a hearty welcome and a share in the success and happiness that surely awaits each one of us who does his duty.

The R. R. now being built across the state from east to west divides Palo Alto into two very nearly equal parts, and with its various depots in the county will afford reasonably convenient transportation to all the inhabitants, while the Ft. Dodge & Ft. Ridgley R. R., a new enterprise, is approaching from the south, and making a junction with the east and west road here, at Emmetsburg, will give us ample facilities for communication and trade with all parts of the North, South, East and West.

The Fourth of July was celebrated with becoming pomp and decorum; the long looked for R. R. engine, being plainly visible from the balcony of the REPORTER OFFICE, contributed to heighten the enjoyment of the occasion, and a fitting and eloquent Oration by A. L. Hudson, Esq., of Algona, was listened to with wrapt attention and patriotic enthusiasm, by about two thousand people.

EMMETSBURG, IA. July 10, 1878.

LATER. -- The cars have reached Emmetsburg, and with them come people looking for homes in town and country, looking for locations for elevators, factories, warehouses, etc. Agriculture, manufacture, trade and commerce seem to have received new impulses of vigor and hope.-- But while the statement of simple facts makes a good record, and a strong encouragement to persons seeking homes, such as may here be easily secured and made prosperous by the honest, temperate and industrious, we do not, wish to mislead *any*, by assuming this to be a perfect Eden, and that all who behold are equally satisfied, for sensible people know that the round globe does not contain a country that is agreeable to all,-- and this, like others, requires the earnest and intelligent effort of the individual, and this we believe with its cheap land: (\$5 to \$12 per acre) good water, clear streams, healthful climate and rich soil, will insure as much happiness to those who deserve it as any new and growing country can well bestow.

J. L. M.

July 25, 1878.

T. W. HARRISON,

Attorney-at-Law,

Real Estate & Collection Office

Emmetsburg, Palo Alto Co. Ia.

Practice in the Courts of

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And adjoining Counties.

Collections in these counties promptly made and proceeds remitted the day received.

Real Estate Business and Real Estate Law a Specialty.

Complete Abstracts of Title to all lands in Palo Alto County.

Certified Abstracts of Title to lands in above named counties furnished at reasonable rates.

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I aim to keep on hand a full stock of Heavy, Shelf and

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Give me a call and I will satisfy you that I cannot be undersold. A large assortment of

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Repairing tinware, manufacturing eave troughs, copper and sheet iron work of every description done on short notice. Work warranted.

The Farmers' Hardware,

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Cheap Cash Store.

HENRY MUNCH.

I have a full stock of goods and will sell them at prices that cannot fail to suit purchasers. My stock consists in part of

Dry Goods, Notions,

Hats, Caps, Comforters, Nubias, Men and Womens' Underwear, together with

Groceries and Provisions.

I will exchange goods for Butter, Eggs or other Farm Produce. Remember the Cheap Cash Store.

Main Street, Emmetsburg,

Opposite Williamsons' Hardware.

HENRY MUNCH.

W. W. JOHNSON,

—Dealer in—

Lumber,

Lath, Shingles,

Siding,

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Sash, Glass,

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Doors,

Building Paper,

Grain, Salt,

Live Hogs, Coal &c.



Agent for the Celebrated

J. I. CASE THRESHER.



W. A. STEVENS, Agent.

Emmetsburg, Palo Alto Co, Iowa.

Cohoon & Carr,
Attorneys - at - Law,
Emmetsburg, Palo Alto County, Ia.

References, (By permission.)

W. G. HAMMOND, Iowa City, Iowa.

HON. C. C. COLE, Des Moines, Iowa.

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Promptly. Office Three Doors
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Doors, Blinds, Mouldings,

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The stove is free from smell, smoke, soot, ashes or dirt! All are invited to call and see it at work.

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J. W. Barrett,

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Repairing, Jobbing, Etc. done to order and with dispatch.—
Farmers and others desiring work in my line will call at the

Red Shop,

Corner of Main and Grand Avenue.

 Any person desiring special information concerning the country, its inhabitants, institutions, &c., &c., not found in these pages [not including Abstracts of Title, which will be furnished at ordinary rates] can obtain the same, to any reasonable extent, by inclosing fifty cents by private letter to the writer, at Emmetsburg, Ia. For New Lithographic Map of Palo Alto County, send fifty cents additional.

Palo Alto Pilot,

H. A. Pike, *Publisher*,

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X

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