

History of Jackson County, Iowa

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few days in investigation, they would very soon change their minds on these points.

As we have shown in other parts of this history, it is but about twenty-four years since Oskaloosa was laid out as a town, and at that time there were but few log cabins in the place. Now it contains an actual population of about five thousand persons, all of whom are engaged in some kind of business. There is this one remarkable feature, if no others, about the place—it has but few idlers. We have remarked this feature, particularly, for three years, and find it to be in advance of almost any town we were ever acquainted with in this particular. There appears to be no room or call for this class, and the result is, we are not troubled with them. We have now in active operation a number of good schools, occupying the time and labors of twelve or more good and competent teachers. This is independent of the college, which institution requires the services of a number of very competent and good christian men as teachers. For school facilities the city contains as good advantages as any city of equal population in the State; and what is still better, the people voted a school tax this spring sufficient to raise ten thousand dollars a year. This shows that our people have the cause of education deeply at heart, and that they are willing to spend their money in that way.

HISTORY OF JACKSON COUNTY, IOWA.

COLLATED BY F. SNYDER, EX-EDITOR JACKSON COUNTY SENTINEL.

Jackson County was organized in the year 1838, and comprises in area fourteen full and six fractional townships. It was surveyed by Col. Cox and a Mr. McDaniel. Its principal towns are Bellevue and Sabula, on the "Father of Waters," Maquoketa, on the Maquoketa River, and Andrew, the county seat.

"The character of the soil is rich and fertile, and the ranging heights and diversified scenery on the banks of its numerous water courses, present an abundance of beautiful building sites."

It is one of the best watered counties in the State, and is well supplied with timber, principally white oak, black walnut, white walnut, hickory, elm, sugar and basswood. Its water power is unsurpassed for manufacturing purposes. Upon several of its streams are erected flouring mills, saw mills, and woolen factories. Mr. Robert Becker, late of Le Claire, Iowa, has the best water power at Canton, on the Maquoketa, twenty miles above Maquoketa City, that there is in the State. The soil in the valleys is a first-rate, black, sandy loam, several feet in depth; hence it is a good agricultural county. The ridges are generally second and third-rate soil, with a subsoil of clay, or, in some instances, ferruginous sand, and produces fine crops of wheat, potatoes and other root crops. The rocks belong to the "Upper Magnesian limestone" formation, and are well adapted for building purposes.

The first court held in the county convened at Bellevue, June 18, 1838, and was presided over by "Hon. Chas. Dunn, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Territory of Wisconsin, and presiding Judge of the District Court of Jackson County." The following persons were the grand jurors: Thos. S. Parks, Samuel S. Drapen, John Stuckey, J. D. Bell, D. G. Bates, J. S. Mallard, W. H. Vandiventer, C. H. Harris, Benj. Hudson, Obediah Sawtel, M. Seymour, S. Burlison, Jerry Jones and Joshua Howel. D. G. Bates was appointed foreman. The court appointed W. A. Warren crier, and Elisha E. Barrett and David Hetrick "constables of the court." W. H. Brown was appointed "District Attorney for the present term." Edwin Reeves, Esq., was appointed "Attorney for the territory for the present term." The first case on the docket was the United States vs. Absalom Montgomery, on recognizance for arson. "On motion of T. S. Burnett, Esq., Thos. Drummond, Esq., a practicing lawyer in the State of Illinois, is admitted to practice in this court." John H. Rose was appointed Clerk of the court.

Second term, September, 1838; Hon. Chas. Mason, Chief Justice of Iowa Territory, presiding; R. G. Harker, Esq., and J. G. Arnold, Esq., District Attorneys; J. K. Moss, Clerk.

On the forks of the Maquoketa, about eight miles west of Maquoketa City, is located a cave which ranks among the greatest curiosities of the West. It extends about an eighth of a mile under ground, and terminates in a large circular room, capable of accommodating five hundred persons. The cave, its entrance and surroundings, are of a singular picturesque wildness and beauty. A beautiful stream of cool, sparkling water flows gently between the hills above, on under the natural bridge, then trickles down through the rocks, and passes through the cave. After passing through the cave, its banks are composed of perpendicular walls of solid rock, a hundred feet high, which gradually diminish in height until the stream enters the Maquoketa River.

THE FIRST NEWSPAPER AND PRINTING PRESS IN IOWA.

THE FIRST AND LAST EDITORS AND PRINTERS FOR THE OLD PRESS.

[The following history of the first newspaper printing press of Iowa, we first found published in the Dubuque *Herald*, several months ago. We are not aware who is the writer. It is worthy of preservation in the ANNALS, and we give it a place.]

A paragraph has recently been running the rounds of the Iowa press, and appeared also in the papers of some other States, assuming that the first printing press in Iowa is still used in printing a paper in one of the northern counties. Similar mistakes have been made at different times in the statement that the first Iowa press was in use in other localities.

Without referring to the many blunders which have been made by the press itself in relation to the history of the State and of Iowa newspapers during the first twenty-five years of our Territorial and State existence, we will give a few facts concerning the first paper and the first press.

To John King, of Dubuque, belongs the honor of engaging alone in the first newspaper enterprise in what is now Iowa. He came here from Ohio in 1834, and having the foresight to perceive that "Dubuque's Lead Mines" would attract the elements that would eventually build a prosperous city, he

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