

Great Seal of Iowa—Again

E. W. Eastman

ISSN 0003-4827

Material in the public domain. No restrictions on use.



This work has been identified with a [Creative Commons Public Domain Mark 1.0](#).

Recommended Citation

The Annals of Iowa, 1(7) (Jul. 1864): 329-331

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](#)

vice and good conduct." Death alone could have induced a soldier maintaining such character to have parted with this precious memento. The Catholic hierarchy, with its superstitions, are largely represented among these medals.

But I must not dwell. The above but constitute the silver of my collection. The gold is limited, but the copper abounds and extends back from the earliest usage of that metal for coinage, up to the excavated coins of the ill-fated cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and through almost all civilized nations to the present time.

A good collection of coins is a history in itself. A single coin, though ever so rare, is of little value, while in a cabinet it may be the missing link in a chain of events that will throw light upon otherwise obscured history. Those persons, therefore, who have detached coins, should give them to some collection, and if they can do no better, they may send them to

Yours truly,

ALFRED SANDERS.

DAVENPORT, March 28, 1864.

GREAT SEAL OF IOWA—AGAIN.

[We gladly give a place to the following characteristic letter from our old friend of many years. "Old Enoch," has no "axe to grind," and he ably argues "the other side." The Lieut. Governor is the author of Iowa's motto upon the monument to the "Father of his Country." "Iowa—her affections, like the rivers of her border flow to a perpetual union."—ED.]

ELDORA, May 5, 1864.

HON. T. S. PARVIN, IOWA CITY.

My Dear Old Friend:—I have received from you the April number of the "ANNALS," and thank you for it. I am well pleased with it. Of course you have my "*individual* efforts" to the extent of *one* subscriber, and here is my 50 cents.

I like the general plan and object of the "ANNALS." The early history of Iowa and of the pioneers who have left their indelible impress for good upon the State, is worth preserving,

and you, in my judgment, are the right man in the right place to do it.

I have read with a good deal of pleasure your "criticism" on the "Great Seal of the State of Iowa," and that also of the "Territory." There is an independence of expression in it that I like. I love to see a man *think for himself*, and then *say* what he thinks. But I do not agree with you one bit in your opinion.

Like you I lived in Iowa when it was a Territory, and when the Territorial seal was given up for the State seal. I *like* the change. I never did like the Territorial seal. The Eagle on it is a coarse ill-begotten thing, keeled over, with great haunches as big as a New Foundland dog's, hanging out, and with one foot standing on nothing, and the other one, ditto. It looks for all the world as though it had been pilfered from an old counterfeit Mexican dollar. It is not *our* living *American* Eagle, soaring on his spreading pinions above the reach of harm.

"The god who mounts the winged winds,"

as is beautifully delineated on the State seal,

"above the earth with wings

"Displayed on the open firmament of heaven."

There is nothing that is *civilized* about the Territorial seal, unless it is considered civil to keel an eagle over on his back—nothing but claws and an Indian's bow and arrow and a wild eagle—nothing that a "white man is bound to respect." If it only had a "cussed little Indian" on it, barbarism would be perfectly delineated in all its naked deformity. If Jeff. Davis had adopted it for a vignette on his Confederate Scrip instead of the "National Government" for "the note of the Iowa National Bank," I would not have been so much surprised at it.

Now turn your eye to the *State* seal, and remember that we live in a progressive age,—that we are a civilized, christianized and enlightened people. See the cottage house, the orchard, the plough, the waving grain, the harvester's sickle, the sheaf of wheat, the leaden ore, and the majestic boat of commerce, all displaying an improved *mind*.

Then there is, propetic of *this very day*, standing in front, a bold and fearless son of Iowa,—a citizen soldier, *in the very dress* of an Iowa soldier, bearing onward and upward that blessed old flag of our country, crowned by the cap of liberty. See how manly and firm he stands, and then think of Pea Ridge and Springfield, and Donalson, and Shiloh, and Vicksburg, and Corinth, and Missionary Ridge, and every other hallowed spot where sleeps an Iowa soldier slain, and then say if it is not a fit emblem of Iowa.

And then away above all these, born on eagle's wings, that *is* an eagle, floats that glorious motto that the patriotic, brave sons of Iowa have already taught traitors must *continue* to float there, and must be respected while it waves.

No sir. No more of the great seal of the *Territory* of Iowa for me. It does well enough to represent Iowa as it *was* when Black Hawk, with his strings of beads and buckskin breeches on, sat chief in his wigwam and ruled the land. But the "Great Seal of the State of Iowa," with its device of civilization and liberty, and industry, and progress, and valor, is the natural and fit motto of *to-day*. It represents Iowa as it is and *is to be*, and not as it *was*. I wish there was a *meeting-house* "within this radius of one inch" in addition to what is there, the thing would then be *perfect*.

There, I have said three times as much as I intended to when I began, but it is *my opinion* nevertheless. I do not suppose it will agitate you very much, as you know my way of expressing my opinion about as well as I do yours.

I am Truly

Your Friend,

E. W. EASTMAN.

The Grand Lodge of Iowa at its recent session voted to the "Iowa Orphans Home" the sum of one hundred dollars a year for five years,—a generous contribution and worthily bestowed; this large class commend themselves warmly to our sympathies.

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.