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The Geography of Iowa

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A Commonplace Calendar

With the birth of the Territory of Iowa came the harvest season when the fields fulfilled their early promise, alleviating the dread of impending land sales and substantiating the prophecies of splendid destiny.

Sunday, July 1. Somebody stole a "Rifle Gun, with percussion lock, double trigger," and a "stock well finished with brass" from the cabin of Nicholas McCormick near Peru. A "large sorrel mare" strayed from the premises of J. S. Kirkpatrick near Bellevue.

Monday, July 2. The county commissioners met at the courthouse in Dubuque at 10 A.M.

Tuesday, July 3. A raft containing 100,000 feet of pine plank arrived at Fort Madison from the Chippewa country.

Wednesday, July 4. The birthday of the Territory of Iowa and the sixty-second anniversary of the independence of the nation were celebrated with patriotic ceremonies. At Fort Madison old Chief Black Hawk participated in the festivities. "A few winters ago I was fighting against you," he said. "I did wrong, perhaps, but that is past — it is buried — let it be forgotten." Temperance
prevailed. Even in Dubuque "the immoral practice of drinking spirits to excess was unknown."

**Thursday, July 5.** Charles Corkery, the proprietor of the Shakespeare House in Dubuque, announced that some "lazy, louzy, lounging loafer" had better stop taking the newspapers from the public reading desk. The "pilfering puppy who stole the New Orleans Picayune on last Thursday" was being watched.

**Friday, July 6.** The United States government ordered all squatters to prove their preemption rights to claims in certain Iowa townships which would be sold in November.

**Saturday, July 7.** President Van Buren, reposing "special trust and confidence in the Integrity and Abilities" of Robert Lucas, appointed him Governor of the Territory of Iowa. Major W. S. Anderson resigned from the Iowa militia. For lack of paper the Burlington Gazette was not published.

**Sunday, July 8.** Dr. Campbell Gilmore and Miss Martha Taylor were married at West Point in Lee County. Augustus Pasquer died in Dubuque.

**Monday, July 9.** Before a large meeting at sunset in front of the courthouse in Dubuque, M. M. McCarver and W. W. Coriell denied charges of malfeasance in office and won a vote of confidence.
Tuesday, July 10. At Burlington "all the furniture belonging to the Territory of Wisconsin, consisting of Desks, Tables, chairs, stoves, etc. etc" was sold at 3 p. m. in front of Webber & Remey's store. Henry G. Moore opened a school for youth "at the front room of his residence". Jesse B. Browne moved the Fort Madison post office to the new building on Front Street one door east of the boarding house kept by the widow of Nathaniel Knapp. Since the game of nine pins "is productive of great waste of time, and leads to habits of idleness and dissipation, and is attended with great noise and disturbance" it was prohibited in Fort Madison. Peter V. Lorimier, aged three, died at Dubuque.

Wednesday, July 11. In spite of the low water, which made the passage of the Des Moines Rapids difficult, the steamboats Relief and Des Moines reached Fort Madison.

Thursday, July 12. The mid-day sun was extremely warm.

Friday, July 13. David Rorer and W. Henry Starr formed a law partnership in Burlington. All business "adverse to each other" was finished separately. A calfskin pocketbook containing twenty five-dollar bills of Alabama money was lost near Fort Madison.

Saturday, July 14. In step with political events
James Clarke changed the name of his newspaper to the *Iowa Territorial Gazette and Burlington Advertiser*. \( \frac{1}{2} \) David Rorer announced his candidacy for the office of Delegate to Congress and, with Cyrus S. Jacobs, addressed "a large and respectable meeting" of Taney Town prairie voters at the house of McGuffee. \( \frac{1}{2} \) A citizen declared that the Port of Dubuque ought to be cleared so that the current of the river would wash the shore and carry away the "filth that at present causes the water to taste like a bitter stew."

**Sunday, July 15.** Hot and dry. Yet "all kinds of grain and vegetables have grown very well this season, and in much greater abundance than that of any previous one."

**Monday, July 16.** Contrary to rumor there was no scourge of smallpox in Burlington. A few mild "cases of rarcoloid" had occurred but the disease was not prevalent. \( \frac{1}{2} \) In a signed newspaper statement C. S. Jacobs called James G. Edwards a "miserable apology for a man", a "canting hypocrite and lying varlet", and a "base liar and an infamous scoundrel and coward", which was construed to be for the purpose of provoking a duel.

**Tuesday, July 17.** H. E. Dickinson and Thomas Hedge dissolved partnership in the dry goods business. \( \frac{1}{2} \) The dry weather was favorable for harvesting, though the thermometer regis-
tered nearly 100° in the shade at Dubuque. Robert Lucas accepted the Governorship of Iowa.

Wednesday, July 18. Charles Runnels, a recent immigrant from Warren, New Hampshire, died of a disease contracted on the journey. "Silex" favored Rorer for Congress instead of Chapman because Rorer proposed to ask Congress for funds to build colleges while Chapman was alleged to be opposed to endowing high schools.

Thursday, July 19. Peter H. Engle made a good impression on a large number of voters whom he addressed at Fort Madison. The river was rising at the rate of a foot a day at Dubuque.

Friday, July 20. Secretary William B. Conway arrived at Burlington aboard the Ariel. Dr. James Davis, gentlemanly and fluent, asked Fort Madison voters to send him to Congress.

Saturday, July 21. Readers of the Burlington Gazette learned that "a few drops of the Sweet Spirits of Nitre" would effectually banish bed-bugs. The Dubuque Iowa News could not print several advertisements because the persons were "unknown" and the copy was not accompanied by cash. Dr. Lurton had just received a supply of fresh "Vaccine Matter". Warner Lewis was "respectfully requested to become a candidate for the next Legislative Council" and to feel confident of liberal support from Dubuque.
Sunday, July 22. Forty passengers adopted resolutions praising the captain and crew of the Demoine for courteous treatment, punctuality, and good meals on the trip up from Saint Louis.

Monday, July 23. Coroner Thomas E. Easton held an inquest on the body of a man found in the river and decided that he had died from "fractures of the skull in manner unknown." Charles Mason took the oath of office as Chief Justice.

Tuesday, July 24. Rattlesnakes were plentiful.

Wednesday, July 25. Secretary Conway issued a proclamation establishing the judicial districts, assigning the judges, and fixing the terms of court. Citizens of Clayton County met at the home of Henry Holtzbecker to nominate candidates. James Richey hoped to be elected to the Legislative Assembly on the platform of locating the county seat of Henry County on the Skunk River and paying for the public buildings by selling lots. James G. Edwards stated publicly that he abhorred duelling "and could not by any means be led into one" with Jacobs.

Thursday, July 26. The infant son of J. B. Newhall died. During a "severe thunderstorm" a stable in Dubuque was struck by lightning but the horses were not injured.

Friday, July 27. The river at Burlington rose "nearly four feet within a day or two".
Saturday, July 28. At Dubuque the river, which had been ten feet above low water mark, highest for many years, began to recede. Baptiste La-place had forty barrels of "first rate Rectified Whiskey" for sale. P. Samuel offered to sell his farm on the north fork of the Little Maquoketa. Sixty acres were fenced with stake and rider and thirty acres were under cultivation. L. W. Babbitt opened a gunsmith shop in Burlington where he was ready "on short notice" to make "Plain or Fancy Rifles and Fowling guns", prison and common door locks, printers chases, and county seals.

Sunday, July 29. Iowa subscribers read De Tocqueville's impressions of American democracy in the July number of the United States Magazine and Democratic Review.

Monday, July 30. Joseph T. Fales held probate court at his office in Dubuque. Rorer told voters in Dubuque that he thought the Territorial legislature ought to locate the capital, but Chapman hinted that he would use his influence to have Congress name a central point.

Tuesday, July 31. Politicians hoped Governor Lucas would come soon and apportion representation in the Legislature.