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ISSN 0003-4827



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Recommended Citation

Adams, Mary N. "Correspondence [Mary Newberry Adams]." *The Annals of Iowa* 4 (1899), 115-116.
Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.2385>

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REUBEN G. THWAITES, SECRETARY WISCONSIN STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

MADISON, WIS., May 4, 1899.

MY DEAR MR. ALDRICH: I have your very kind invitation of the 25th ult. to attend the ceremony of laying the Corner-stone of the Iowa Historical Building, to occur upon Wednesday, the 17th inst., and beg to thank you most cordially therefor. As, however, I shall at that time be absent in the East, inspecting library appliances for our own new building, it will, I regret, be impracticable for me to be present.

The Wisconsin Society begs sincerely to congratulate the Historical Department of Iowa upon its splendid success and prospects, and sends the heartiest sort of greetings for this interesting occasion. I am, dear Mr. Aldrich, yours very sincerely,

HON. CHARLES ALDRICH,
Des Moines, Iowa.

R. G. THWAITES,
Secy. and Supt.

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

142 DEARBORN AVENUE, May 4, 1899.

MY DEAR SIR: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation to be present at the laying of the Corner-stone of the Historical Building; and, in expressing on behalf of this Society its appreciation of your courtesy, to venture the prediction that this auspicious event in the history of the Department will mark the beginning of a period of even greater usefulness for the Historical Department of Iowa.

Yours very truly,

MR. CHARLES ALDRICH,
Des Moines, Iowa.

CHARLES EVANS,
Secretary.

HON. L. S. COFFIN, EX-RAILROAD COMMISSIONER.

FT. DODGE, IOWA, May 29, 1899.

MY DEAR ALDRICH: Allow me to thank you most sincerely for your kind invitation to attend the laying of the Corner-stone of your contemplated Historical Building. I regret exceedingly that I was out of the State at the time. I was at New Orleans attending a convention of the Brotherhood of Trainmen. . . .

Allow me to congratulate you on so much of the great victory you have already won. This long fight . . . has been a hard and discouraging one, but you begin to see the triumph from afar. This much now won enables you by increased faith to bring the complete victory nigh. I most earnestly hope your years and strength will be increased and strengthened, so that you will remain to see the full realization of all your hopes. . . .

With heartfelt sympathy and best wishes,

L. S. COFFIN.

HON. HENRY HOSPERS, STATE SENATOR.

ORANGE CITY, IOWA, May 23, 1899.

MY DEAR SIR AND FRIEND: I feel proud of you and your noble work, which will be better appreciated in the future. I was sorry circumstances did not permit me to be present at the laying of the Corner-stone. I congratulate you upon your success, and I am glad that you could see with your own eyes the consummation of your wishes, for which you so patiently and industriously labored. May you many years enjoy good health and happiness. . . . With very high respect,

Your obedient servant and friend,

HON. CHARLES ALDRICH,
Des Moines, Iowa.

HENRY HOSPERS.

MRS. JUDGE AUSTIN ADAMS OF DUBUQUE.

DEAR SIR: The invitation to be present at the laying of the Corner-stone of the Historical Building is received. I regret my inability to be present and listen to the address of Hon. John A. Kasson. . . . The interest in the study of history is beginning to take its place in the education of the people. "To awaken the consciousness of their own past," to study the evolution of humanity and to preserve the facts so that there can be a true history of our time; this is now being appreciated and cared for. As our own civilization becomes perfected we appreciate the history

of the oldest, and Emerson says—" 'Tis far in the depth of history the voice which speaketh clear." A memorable day when a state establishes for its people an arc of the covenant from all time to all time. Sincerely regretting my inability to be present, I remain, etc.,

MR. CHARLES ALDRICH,

Des Moines, Iowa.

MARY NEWBERRY ADAMS.

J. H. HARRISON, ESQ., DAVENPORT, IOWA.

May 16, 1899.

DEAR MR. ALDRICH: I very much regret that it will not be possible for me to be present at the laying of the Corner-stone of the Historical Building on the 17th inst. I trust that some notes will be sounded on that occasion which will awaken all the people to appreciation of an important and too long-delayed enterprise.

I wish to congratulate you personally and your co-laborers upon the success now assured in the work wherein you have given the State such untiring and valuable assistance and direction.

Very truly yours,

J. H. HARRISON.

In answer to letters addressed to his predecessors in office by Governor Shaw, in which he expressed a desire, in view of the historical character of the exercises of May 17, to do honor to the former governors of this State at the reception to be held that evening, replies were received from two of them who were unable to attend. The following is an extract from one received from Governor Boies:

If at all practicable for me to do so, it would afford me very great pleasure to accept the invitation so kindly tendered, but I find my time so fully occupied by prior engagements, and the imperative demands of my private affairs, that I am compelled to send sincere regrets.

Governor Merrill, the senior ex-governor of the State, who himself laid the Corner-stone of the present capitol, wrote as follows:

LOS ANGELES, CAL., May 12, 1899.

Hon. Leslie M. Shaw, Des Moines, Iowa.

MY DEAR GOVERNOR: Your welcome invitation found me too ill to respond. I can not explain my regrets. An accident by a street car months ago so disabled me that I can not venture from home. But for that I am sure I would laugh at my gray locks (pretty thin), and board the first train and be on time for your reception. To meet old acquaintances, with the ex-governors of Iowa, with Mr. Kasson and Senator Harlan, would be a treat. Your invitation opens fresh remembrances of old times, running back thirty years, when we laid the Corner-stone of the good capitol of Iowa. Your new Historical Building will be an honor to the State and to its projectors. Aldrich is building a monument for himself. 'Tis fitting that Senator Harlan and Mr. Kasson take a leading part in laying the Corner-stone. They both have done much for the Historical Department and the State. Mr. Kasson is a born diplomat with rare ability. He did excellent work in the interest of the capitol building. Mr. Harlan as senator aided me greatly to get money to clothe and pay the first regiments for the war, and gave me timely assistance with the Smithsonian Institution as to rock for the capitol. Please give these gentlemen and the ex-governors my right hand of fellowship. I still claim Iowa as my real home. She has my respect and love.

Thanking you, I am, truly yours,

SAMUEL MERRILL.

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