

County Historical Societies

ISSN 0003-4827

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Recommended Citation

"County Historical Societies." *The Annals of Iowa* 6 (1904), 302-303.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.2983>

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COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETIES.

The suggestion is not infrequently heard that each county ought to have a historical society. It is not said that each county should produce a whole shelf of printed literature each year, but there is much in all local history that is worthy of preservation, and there is much valuable material going to waste, being irretrievably lost, simply because no one has the time or cares to take the trouble to preserve it.

Iowa, for instance, is quite young. She is so young that old men can recall the time when Iowa was not. But into her short life no little history has been crowded. Des Moines county played no unimportant part in the early history of the State. Much of that has never been written or verified and the time will soon come when there will be no opportunity to get the early history of this city and county from those who helped to make that history.

And there are not a few in city and county, who would gladly join hands with other good citizens and enter upon the patriotic work of preserving for the generations that come after us, a knowledge of what was done by us and those who preceded us. The expense need not be great, in fact there need be no expense. The county court house or the public library would furnish a meeting place and until some enthusiastic friends of the society make other provision therefor, the place for keeping the records and the accumulations of the society.

The generation of today in this young State has no idea, cannot picture to itself the conditions under which those lived and worked who built the foundations for this magnificent commonwealth. Neither does it know aught of those pioneers. In the schools they learn much of the planting of some colony on the Atlantic coast, details of all kinds covering early colonial times are impressed upon their minds. What do they know or learn of the founding of their own State, or of the trials and sufferings, the toil and hardship,

the failures and successes of the makers of Iowa? And perhaps these are no less important and of no less interest to Iowans than the story of Rhode Island or Delaware.

By all means let us have a historical society.—*Burlington Hawk-Eye, Sept. 7, 1903.*

IMPORTANT DECISION IN FAVOR OF THE MINERS.—We are informed by the citizens of the Upper Des Moines Lead Mines, that the United States District Court for Illinois (Judges John McClain and Nathaniel Pope, presiding) decided at its late session that the acts of Messrs. Flannegan and Cunningham, superintendents for leasing the lead mines, etc., etc., were without authority of law and therefore void. The court decided, as our informants state, that the old act of 1807, authorizing the President to lease Lead Mines and Salt Springs, in what was then called the Indiana Territory, is rendered inoperative or virtually repealed by the law of 1834, establishing the Galena and Mineral Point land districts. It was but a short time since that we had the pleasure of noticing a similar decision made by the Supreme Court of our own Territory—and of offering our congratulations to our northern brethren in Iowa. We now extend them to the people of northern Illinois and Wisconsin. They cannot but feel that their day of deliverance from the odious tythe system, so repugnant to the genius and spirit of our institutions has arrived. The officers sent by the administration in the shape of superintendents, agents, etc., etc., have, we understand, on account of the vexatious manner in which they harrassed the citizens of the mineral district with petty law suits, become extremely odious. We are of those who believe that the Federal Government is departing from the high purposes for which it was created when it descends to an interference with the business and avocations of its people. It was never made for a lead mine digger or a salt water boiler.—*Territorial Gazette. [From The Bloomington (Iowa) Herald, June 30, 1843.]*

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