

John H. Charles

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generous of friends wherever his friendship was bestowed. He was the first executive officer who signed an official paper relating to the founding of the Historical Department, though he was not the first to commend it to the fostering care of the legislature.

JOHN H. CHARLES was born in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, January 19, 1826; he died in Sioux City, Iowa, December 1, 1904. During his infancy his parents removed to Mifflin township, Ashland county, Ohio, where they settled on a farm and where he grew up to manhood. At the age of 15 he began to learn the trade of a carpenter, at which he worked during the next nine years. In 1850 he left his home to seek his fortune in California. The route to the far west in those days was via the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Mr. Charles embarked on one of the river steamboats for St. Louis, where he stopped a few days before starting upon the long overland journey. The party which he joined outfitted at Independence, Missouri, where they procured twenty-one wagons and teams of four yokes of oxen to each wagon. Each wagon carried four men, their provisions and baggage. After some days together this cavalcade divided into several parties, each taking such route as pleased them best. This course was deemed prudent in order to be certain to find grass for the animals, and perhaps there were other reasons. After a stay of six months in California, where the young man by prospecting for gold and by hard labor accumulated \$1,000, he returned to the east. His next venture was the purchase of 100 cows for the California market. Two other men joined him with the same number of animals, and together they made the overland journey, living in a covered wagon. The cows cost \$17 and were sold at \$80 per head, netting the enterprising men handsomely. Mr. Charles gave some time to various business enterprises, but settled in Sioux City in December, 1856, where he remained to the end of his days. He was engaged in merchandizing and steamboating on the upper Missouri until the year 1900. While he became widely known from his large business interests, his claims to a permanent place in the annals of Sioux City and the State of Iowa rest upon his useful and patriotic labors in other directions. Every public interest of Sioux City found in Mr. Charles a most active and intelligent supporter. He was a pioneer in the founding and development of its Scientific Association, its growing public library and its various schools. But the crowning work of this grand old man was the organization of the movement to erect the famous monument, on a bluff overlooking the river and the city, to the memory of Sergeant Charles Floyd, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, who died there August 20, 1804. That he had the aid of many earnest and distinguished workers, is true, but without his energetic and patriotic efforts from the first step to the last, the monument would not have been built. He secured the aid of Congress, and of the State Legislature, as well as most important assistance in Sioux City. In the inception and development of the wide-spread interest in the Lewis and Clark Expedition the erection of that monument, and the discussions to which it gave rise, in the opinion of the writer, were no inconsiderable factor. And now that he has passed away in the fulness of years and usefulness, a tribute in enduring bronze to the man and his labors should be placed upon this imposing and beautiful monument. Said *The Sioux City Journal* of December 3, 1904: "The home life of John H. Charles has been extremely pleasant, and the Charles home has always been a hospitable one. Kind and gentle as a husband, loving and considerate as a father, true and constant as a friend, and patriotic and energetic as a citizen, John H. Charles was an exceptional man, admired and loved by all. He always loved Sioux City, and Sioux City always loved him."

HARVEY J. SKIFF was born in Allegany county, New York, in 1821; he

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