

Colonel Thomas Cox

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A FORGOTTEN NATURALIST.

We have given a large space in this number of THE ANNALS to an article by Mr. T. J. Fitzpatrick, on the life and labors of C. S. Rafinesque, one of the most learned and versatile original investigators in the great field of American natural history. Excepting to those who have been engaged in the same studies, the name of this traveler, explorer and scientist, has long been practically unknown. Some account of his life and labors has appeared from time to time, but these works have been published in limited editions, now out of print, and not within the reach of either general or scientific readers. It has seemed desirable that THE ANNALS should contain a record of his life and writings. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who has doubtless collected more books and papers relating to Rafinesque than any other man in the west, supplies the information in the article now published; which will be followed by a complete bibliography of his publications. Rafinesque was a most interesting character, eccentric, but very learned. He has been and still is a subject of much controversy, touching the merit of his work, but he assuredly has a fixed place in the annals of natural history. A most interesting quotation is made in this article from the late Gen. George W. Jones, of this State, who was a student under Prof. Rafinesque in Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky. This article points the way to sources of information for those who would make a comprehensive study of his life and writings.

COLONEL THOMAS COX.

Until recently this Iowa pioneer, well known in his time, had long since ceased to occupy a place in the public mind. Indeed, he was practically forgotten, though his name continued to appear in the lists of our territorial legislators. Before coming to Iowa he had been elected to both branches

of the State legislature of Illinois. He was appointed Register of the U. S. Land Office at Springfield and had held several other important positions in that State. He was also a volunteer in the Blackhawk war. He came to Iowa in 1837 and was for a time surveyor of public lands. It is understood that he subdivided ten townships in Jackson county, settling on a claim or farm some four miles from the city of Maquoketa. He was a member of the house of representatives of the first, second and third territorial legislatures, in the last of which he served as speaker. In 1842 he was elected to the territorial council, the term being two years. He was elected president of that body in the last term of his service, the office of lieutenant governor not having been created. The contest must have been a spirited one, as he was chosen on the forty-first ballot. He died on his claim November 9, 1844, and was buried under a hickory tree which still stands near the site of his log cabin.

During the early part of the present year his remains were removed to the Mt. Hope Cemetery in Maquoketa, the new grave being marked by a granite boulder, which bears the following inscription: "Thomas Cox, 1787-1844. Pioneer Law Maker." The unveiling and dedication of the monument took place on the 4th day of July under the auspices of the Pioneers and the Historical Society of Jackson County. The opening prayer was made by Rev. Dr. Wm. Salter, of Burlington, who preached the funeral sermon of Col. Cox 61 years ago, at which time he was pastor of the Congregational church of Maquoketa. An excellent address was delivered by Hon. George L. Mitchell, who paid a high tribute to Col. Cox. The monument was unveiled by Mrs. H. G. Dorchester, of Bellevue, Jackson county, a daughter of Col. William A. Warren, a distinguished pioneer of that county who was also a member of the constitutional convention of 1857. After these exercises the procession returned to the city where the old settlers and visitors reassembled in the Armory. The assemblage was called to order by W. C.

Gregory, President of the Old Settlers Association. Some further exercises were held, consisting of music and remarks by different gentlemen present. Dr. Salter delivered a brief address containing interesting reminiscences of his life in Maquoketa, and of the circumstances connected with the death and burial of Col. Cox.

The idea of thus honoring the memory of this distinguished pioneer originated with Mr. Harvey Reid, of Maquoketa, whose indefatigable researches were rewarded by obtaining a complete historical account of the life and public services of Col. Cox, both in Illinois and Iowa. He was assisted in this work by Mr. J. W. Ellis, Secretary of the Jackson County Historical Society. This was a most important day in the history of that city and county, for a splendid beginning has been made in placing upon record the early history of that region. Mr. Reid intends to publish a pamphlet containing a full account of the life of Col. Cox, the removal of his remains and the dedication of the monument. He will also prepare an article for this magazine which will be illustrated with a portrait of the pioneer lawmaker.

THE HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT AT ST. LOUIS.

Suggestions came from many quarters that the Historical Department should make an exhibit at St. Louis. A concurrent resolution was passed by the legislature which authorized the Executive Council "to prepare for shipment to St. Louis such articles as they may decide to be suitable for an exhibit from the historical department of Iowa." Upon investigating the matter it was found that only a limited space could be secured for this purpose. The items enumerated below were therefore selected and forwarded by express under the immediate charge of Mr. Charles A. Cumming, a well known artist of Des Moines. Quarters for the exhibit had been secured in a fire-proof building in the care of W J McGee, the distinguished chief of the department of an-

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