

The Contents of An Old Basket

ISSN 0003-4827

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Recommended Citation

"The Contents of An Old Basket." *The Annals of Iowa* 8 (1908), 389-392.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.3454>

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is not improbable under a normal growth of intelligent and insistent public opinion that our city councils will be empowered to go abroad for heads of their technical departments wherein experts and specialists are imperatively required if the maximum efficiency is to be attained; and ultimately they will likewise secure the supreme head of the city administration in a manner not unlike that followed by the city councils of Germany.

F. I. H.

THE CONTENTS OF AN OLD BASKET.

The writer passed the night at the Bryson Hotel in Hillsboro, Henry county, Iowa, some two years ago, and from a casual remark of the host, Mr. Gene Bryson, became interested in the family history of his maternal grandfather Pope. When asked whether there were existing any documentary materials touching the Pope family Mr. Bryson said "If there are, they are in the old basket out in the woodshed." "The old basket in the woodshed" in many a homestead of Iowa holds material of interest to all future Iowa and the west.

The old basket in question revealed the fact that Samuel Pope, a man of family, removed from Hillsborough, Ohio, to what was then Washington, now Hillsboro, and as letters therein contained indicated, "near Ceocuck, Iowa." He was a democrat, a tavern keeper, a horseman, a hunter, and a raconteur of tavern tales which, told in the first person, made of his name the peg on which to hang almost every tavern lie in southern Iowa. The basket verified tradition on all these points and though it contained not over a hundred items, embraced the following:

Commission to Samuel Pope as Captain of the Fourth Company, Third Regiment, Second Brigade and Eighth Division, Ohio Militia, dated July 7th, 1819, and signed by the Secretary of State Jn. McLane, and by the Governor, Ethan Allen Brown; it bears the seal of Ohio, and is endorsed with Captain Pope's oath of office. A similar commission as Lieutenant Colonel of the regiment, dated September 8th, 1824,

signed by the Governor, Jeremiah Morrow. A breeding poster, season of 1833, exploiting *Bertrand* by *Bertrand*, giving terms and exhibiting affidavits of Kentucky owners and breeders showing the horse's performances on the track and qualities as a sire, his descent from "the old imported Diomed" on one side and "the imported Janus" on the other. A letter from Ohio, which the writer transmitted by a mutual friend who, while traveling to Iowa, also led for Col. Pope a running horse; Kate Pope rode this horse at the first Iowa State Fair, at Fairfield, in a race which was an early Iowa sporting sensation. Printed list, 1844, Ohio state officers, with floor plan of House of Representatives, showing seat of each member. *Hillsborough (Ohio) Gazette* extra, April 12, 1847, announcing the capture by American troops of the city of Vera Cruz. Mexican war letters from a son, a paragraph of one reading: "Col. Hays of the Mounted Rangers arrived here this morning. He came very near capturing Santa Anna prisoner. They took his uniform coat. It is a most splendid thing, cost two thousand dollars. They got so near him that his bed was still warm." Two certificates of stock in The Iowa Manufacturing Company, dated respectively April first and eighth, 1840, issued to Henry Wade and countersigned by J. R. Bailey, Secretary, and I. Galland, President, each for ten shares at one hundred dollars each. A statement of account of The Western Stage Company with Samuel Pope for the months of January and February, 1858. Two licenses as hotel keeper issued under authority of the Acts of Congress of July 1, 1862, and June 30, 1864, by J. C. Walker, of Fort Madison, collector for the First Iowa District; the first showing payment of ten dollars, valid until September 1st, 1863, and the second of five dollars and valid until May 1st, 1867. Ballots headed respectively, "Democratic State Ticket. For Secretary of State, Samuel Douglass" and "Union State Ticket. For Governor, William H. Merritt." Numerous letters relating to routes and methods of travel through the west; militia, Mexican War and Civil War experiences written by a son, and a comrade's letter detailing the death of this son on a southern field.

Materials of this kind are much desired in the Historical Department Collections. Items of the Western Stage Company are especially sought. Concerning the 1,500 men employed in Iowa in 1858, with over a million and a half dollars invested and thousands of vehicles and their equipment, there remains practically nothing at hand from which to adequately consider the institution. Books of account, contracts, bills of lading or manifests, tickets for passage, route sheets, damage claims, mail and express commissions must have been and may be in existence by thousands. Where are they? A lone statement of account between the company and one of its agents in the last twenty years of its struggle against progress comes forth after fifty years repose in the old basket in the woodshed. It very interestingly exhibits its debits to Col. Pope thus:

1858.			
January 2d.	By fare received on Trunk & bag		
	from H(illsboro) to Mt P(leasant)		.75
2d	passage F. Whiting from H. to Salem		.50
13	“ “ “ J. E. Dougherty	“ “	.50
15	“ “ “ I. Morrison	H. Mp	1.75
16	N Lyons Hto	Utica	.50
18	W. D. Hill,	U to M P	2.00
20	I Sellers	H to U	.50
23	S Coulton	U to M P	2.00
23	Mrs Moore	U to M P	2.00
23	D Adams	H to Salem	.50
Feb 2	Ann Frazer	H to Salem	.50
4	F. Whiting	H to M P	1.50
8	Lucy Funkhouser	U to M P	2.00
“	L Leffler	U to M P	2.00
22	I S Reist	H to M P	1.50
26	W H. Hatch		2.00
			<hr/>
	Amount of Credit		20.50

It charged itself with a total of \$45.28 made up of some forty-five items, only two of which are entered as of the same day, and only a few days missing, well exemplified in the following:

January 2, 1858, to 1 extra meal for driver and feed for horses.....	.75
January 11 to 2 extra meals for driver and feed for horses.....	1.50

January 12 to 1 extra driver and team over night (\$.25 and \$1.00) .	1.25
January 13 to 1 meal for driver.....	.25
February 22 to 1 man and horse over night.....	1.00
To keeping of one sick horse from February 20th to March 1, 1858,	
8 days at \$2.00 per week	2.28

DES MOINES RIVER ENGINEERING.

The question of the navigability of the Des Moines River long figured in the politics and business of Iowa. In 1849 Samuel R. Curtis, fresh from success as the engineer of the Muskingum River work, was brought to Iowa to survey the Des Moines River and submit plans for making it navigable. He had, as his assistants, Guy Wells, Samuel Jacobs, M. M. Hayden, and William Dewey. Their work was prosecuted under the Board of Public Works of which Hugh W. Sample was president, Charles Corkery secretary and Paul Brattain treasurer. A plat of the survey was filed with the Board in 1849. This plat disclosed the total length of the river, from Fort Des Moines to the mouth of Nassau Slough, to be two hundred four and sixty-eight one-hundredths miles; length of navigation, one hundred eighty-three and sixty-eight one-hundredths miles; length of canalizing twenty-nine and thirty-seven one-hundredths miles. A total fall of three hundred nine and seventy-nine one-hundredths feet was utilized by twenty-eight dams and nine locks. From the first dam at St. Francisville, twelve miles from the mouth of the Nassau Slough, navigable water was to be locked to the Mississippi. Each dam was of such a height as to raise the water to the next dam above. Beginning with St. Francisville the dams were respectively located as follows: Number two at Cowpen's Mill near the line between ranges seven and eight; number three at Thom's Mill (Athens); number four a half mile above Farmington; number five at Bonaparte; number six at Bentonsport, number seven at Keosauqua. These seven dams, with locks and gates, were actually constructed and put in operation. Number eight was near Philadelphia (now Kil-

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