

## The State Historical Society of Iowa; Iowa City, Iowa, 1909

F. I. H.

ISSN 0003-4827

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### Recommended Citation

H., F. I. "The State Historical Society of Iowa; Iowa City, Iowa, 1909." *The Annals of Iowa* 9 (1910), 391-392.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.3613>

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sympathy is wont to play a large part in its consideration, at least in the attitude of the public toward the matter. When large sums or vast interests are at stake, hard sense and stern logic are rigorously insisted upon, and few gainsay the justice of thus proceeding, although sympathy for the one adversely dealt with may be felt. Mr. Lincoln would appear to have been chargeable with non-feasance—with disregard and neglect of his client's interest because of tenderness of heart; whereas relief was not for him to grant, but was the prerogative or the privilege of his client. The conclusion of the case is not known.

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#### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*Thomas Cox, by Harvey Reid: pp XVI, 257. The State Historical Society of Iowa; Iowa City, Iowa, 1909.*

The career of Thomas Cox of Jackson county represents the careers of a large proportion of the pioneers of Iowa—not necessarily of the average pioneer but certainly of a considerable number of the first settlers. He was a pathfinder and pathmaker. As a lawmaker and as a surveyor he marked the lines and set the stakes of law and order. He was a big, bluff, buoyant, hale-fellow-well-met; convivial, forceful, reckless, unsystematic, non-persistent, except under the whip and spur of keen public excitement and crowding events. The records of his life are meager and the exhibits of his work not large. Nevertheless he was a factor of decisive influence in the affairs of our territory, and Mr. Reid has given us an interesting and instructive narrative of Colonel Cox's career. This volume is an expansion of Mr. Reid's article in *The Annals of Iowa* (3d series, Vol. VII: 241-269.)

The span and spaces of Cox's life comprehended three states, Kentucky, Illinois and Iowa. He was a soldier in the War of 1812 and again in the Black Hawk War. In the latter he might have achieved official elevation and distinction, but consciousness of his weaknesses made him shrink from responsibility. He served in various capacities—as Justice of the Peace, as Register of the Land Office, as Deputy United States Surveyor. He was a land speculator and town-site manipulator. He was a member of the Legislature of Illinois and also of the Territorial Legislature of Iowa, becoming Speaker of the House of Representatives (1840) and President of the Council (1844). He was one of the founders of Spring-

field, Illinois, and possibly not ineffective in determining the location of the capital at that point, and he was one of the decisive factors in locating the second capital city of Iowa.

To the majority of his readers the most interesting and valuable portion of Mr. Reid's work is his account of the dispersal of the thieves and outlaws of Bellevue, with whose summary cessation Colonel Cox had not a little to do. In three substantial chapters he tells of the beginnings, progress and culmination of the difficulties between Brown and his pals and Cox and his friends. The situation was dramatic and is here vividly portrayed. In post-prandial discourses and dedicatory addresses and in eulogies one frequently encounters assertions to the effect that lawlessness—crime and lynchings—was conspicuous by its absence in the formative period of Iowa. This account of the "Bellevue War" should effectually abolish such sentimental notions.

Mr. Reid did not have much from which to construct his narrative, but by industrious research and discrimination he has brought together numerous collateral facts which enable him to make a good background whereby the dim outlines of Cox's career and character become definite and indicate substance. Lucidity, force and straightforwardness are noticeable traits of the author's style. In dealing with Cox's faults he exhibits both deftness and delicacy, suggesting them, but refraining from details.

F. I. H.

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*How We Built the Union Pacific Railway, and Other Railway Papers and Addresses. By Major-Gen. Grenville M. Dodge, Chief Engineer of the Union Pacific Railway. Privately Printed.*

As the title indicates, this volume relates mainly to early western railway engineers and engineering. These papers are all in the terse, forceful style of Gen. Dodge, upon engineering and promotion problems and feats, to which the author successfully applied his own great powers. They form an easy and authoritative path through the mazes of published materials on these topics to the sources upon financing and constructing the Union Pacific Railway, and of the considerations and influences determining legislation and other public acts bearing upon this first transcontinental railway. Congress has authorized their publication as a public document. The book is copiously illustrated with photographs and drawings in half-toné.

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