

Early Iowa Fencing

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were more underpaid than even now, there were not many new dresses seen in our household during those years. So this moiga dress was seen at every rhetorical during the eight years, and the girls learned to love it as well as its wearer, and even asked for a piece of it.

My mother gave the skirt to me which was all that was left of the dress. A ruffle had been added. Of this I have given to old students, pieces. To three at their golden weddings I sent bags made of the moiga. But the original dress or skirt well darned remains. I've wondered if you would like it for your Historical Department?

Yours cordially,

BERTHA STODDARD WHITNEY.

EARLY IOWA FENCING

As sod and ditch fence are in common use on our prairie farms and as those in present use are not very durable I have tried another plan which I think will be more permanent and can be done with probably less cost. The plan I have adopted in constructing my fence is as follows:

I plow ten furrows on each side of the place where I intend to erect my fence leaving a space unplowed in the center of six feet on which to build my walls. I plow my furrows one foot wide and four inches deep, and am careful to keep the plow level. I then line for the wall four feet wide and cut my sods so as to make them handy and lay them in two walls four sods high, then line for my ditch ten inches from the wall and two feet six inches wide. Take one spade deep and fill the space in the middle, then more sods, and deepen the ditch till the fence is done. Lay the sods one flat upon another green side up, inclining the fence toward the center one inch to every sod in height.

I am of opinion that a fence three feet and a half high, with a ditch two feet deep will make a good fence. It will not cost more than the common way of making ditch fence, and I think it is fifty percent the best. Any person wishing to satisfy himself of the truth of this statement can call at the geographical center of Scott County, where he can see one hundred rods or more of fence constructed on the above plan.

A FARMER.

—*Iowa Sun*, Davenport, April 25, 1840. (In the newspaper collection of the Historical Department of Iowa.)

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