

Henry W. Wills

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stopped a few days at St. Charles, on the Missouri River, and when about to leave for home, a Nisheshin, Chemocoman (good white man) made him a present of about twenty very petite young apple trees, put up in a bundle, with the roots protected, and instructed him how to plant them near his own wickeup. Red Bird brought them all the way in his hand, and planted them promiscuously among the forest trees contiguous to his own home.

He protected them by placing stakes around them, and they grew up slim and tall, in consequence of being so much shaded.

I know it has been claimed or supposed by some, that Louis Honore Tesson, a Frenchman, planted these trees. He *did* stop awhile with Red Bird, fleeing from some epidemic that prevailed for a time in St. Louis, and afterward by representations made to the governor of Louisiana (then in possession of the French) that he had been of great service to their government among the Indians at this point, and claiming also that he had purchased of these Indians a league square of land—got a permit from the governor, as above, to enter, occupy and hold. In 1838 I held the legal possession of the mile square (which embraces Montrose and this orchard) when the heirs of Thomas F. Reddick, deceased, who was the assignee of Tesson, commenced suit against me in an action of right for the possession—subsequently other parties defendant were substituted—which suit was finally decided in the Supreme Court of the United States in 1852.

But Red Bird and other Indians often told me that Tesson was a very poor man—that he lived while there around in the different wickeups—that they lodged and fed him—that he never furnished them with provisions as he claimed—that he never purchased an acre of land of the nation from those who had authority to sell.

Red Bird said he was a *che wal is ki*—rascal. I am entirely satisfied of the truth of Red Bird's story. But I did not intend, when I commenced writing, to tax you with anything more than a brief account of the apple trees.

D. W. Kilbourne.

HENRY W. WILLS

The ANNALS, as a policy, has devoted its biographical space almost exclusively to the persons in Iowa who have attained the public attention in some such place as membership in the General Assembly, in the District Court, in the military records, in the pulpit, in education, or in philanthropy.

We yield in this instance to a personal desire to record a line in memory of a co-worker for the state who served as none of these, but served under nearly all who have been conspicuous at

the seat of government during the past forty years, Henry W. Wills.

Mr. Wills was sixty-three years old. He studied pharmacy in his youth, but began in the Capitol as an assistant janitor to his father, a valiant soldier in the Union Army of the Civil War. Soon the son took the work entirely from his father who still survived, incapacitated, for many years. Henry did the work for his father, and for no pay, until the father's death, then was appointed to the place. As janitor he was soon helping with duties quite beyond his own. He grew into responsibilities of two persons at least. He was always at his work earlier than the law required and remained afterward, as a rule, when the most devoted had gone. His efficiency was a benefit to all co-staff members and to us who were neighbor officials and employees of the Historical Department.

It is possible for any intelligent department head to succeed if his subordinates are efficient and loyal. In Mr. Brigham's thirty-two years as state librarian, his success has been extraordinary. His staff has been conspicuously efficient. In rank Henry Wills was humble, but in the elements of success he outstripped his costaff members. He was a pace maker to his neighbor workmen. The praise of a superior is the greatest inspiration to a conscientious workman. It was a long way up from Henry Wills, a janitor, to Johnson Brigham, the state librarian. Henry's aim which was to aid his superior and his fellow workers, was achieved as indicated by the following words of Mr. Brigham pronounced at the funeral:

"Mr. Wills has been in the employ of the state for the past quarter of a century, part of the time as janitor in the State Library. Never in my long career as an employer have I found a man more capable and trustworthy, and more generally beloved and respected.

"The office of shipping clerk for the State Library was created in 1919 and promotion well earned was promptly accorded him. In this position he served the library with unremitting zeal and rare efficiency until disease compelled him to seek relief. He is missed not only by the members of the library staff, but by a large circle of friends in the State Capitol."

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