

## Two Early Issues of the Council Bluffs Press

Douglas C. McMurtrie

ISSN 0003-4827

No known copyright restrictions.

---

### Recommended Citation

McMurtrie, Douglas C. "Two Early Issues of the Council Bluffs Press." *The Annals of Iowa* 18 (1931), 83-86.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.5501>

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](#)

## BELOIT COMPANY.

At a meeting of a Company of Californians on the Banks of the Missouri, May 6th, 1860, the following Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted and names entered.

Whereas we are about to leave the frontier, and travel over Indian Territory, exposed to their treachery, and knowing their long and abiding hatred to the Whites; also many other privations to meet with. We consider it necessary to form ourselves into a company for the purpose of protecting each other and our property, during our journey to California.

*Therefore Resolved*, That this Company shall be known as the "BELOIT COMPANY."

*Resolved*, That there shall be one selected from the company, suitable and capable to act as Captain or Leader, and to hold his office until removed by a two-thirds vote of the company.

*Resolved*, That there shall be some one selected from the Company, to act as Assistant or Aid to the Captain; to advise with him, what is or may be best for the Company, and to hold his office until removed by a two-thirds vote.

*Resolved*, That we, as men, pledge ourselves to assist each other through all the misfortunes that may befall us on our long and dangerous journey.

*Resolved*, That the Christian Sabbath shall be observed, except when absolutely necessary to travel.

*Resolved*, That each and every member shall pay strict and proper respect to the feelings of each and all the Company.

*Resolved*, That there shall be a sufficient guard appointed each night regularly, by the Captain.

*Resolved*, That in case of any disputes arising between any members of the Company, they shall be referred to three arbiters, one chosen by each party, and one by the two chosen, whose decision shall be final.

*Resolved*, That in case of a member's dying, the Company shall give him a decent burial.

*Resolved*, That the company be divided into four divisions, each to choose a Wagon Master, each division taking the lead in rotation, and the Wagon Master of the division that arrives at the camp ground first shall be the Camp Master for the night, and all the divisions shall keep within hailing distance.

*Resolved*, That by a majority of votes these resolutions may be altered or more added at any time.

The following officers were elected.—Lewis Clark, of Beloit, Wisconsin, Captain; James Pierce, of Mineral Point, Wisconsin, Assistant Captain; O. Crain, of Angola, Ind., and John Penman, of Beloit, Wisconsin, Chaplains; Dr. S. L. Grow, of Clinton, Wisconsin, Surgeon and Secretary.

### MEMBERS.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Lewis Clark, Beloit, Wisconsin.</li> <li>* Peter O Hagen, Avon, (Arvo)</li> <li>John Penman, Beloit.</li> <li>Wilson Beuret, " "</li> <li>G N Trumper, " "</li> <li>* J D Parish, " "</li> <li>* Amasa Nobles, " "</li> <li>A W Allyn, Shopiere, " "</li> <li>Carvass Hopkins, " "</li> <li>George Marsh, " "</li> <li>Leander Bemis, Beloit,</li> <li>Job R Strange, " "</li> <li>George A Gillman, " "</li> <li>Murray Redington, " "</li> <li>Alvin B Abbott, " "</li> <li>C S Abbott, " "</li> <li>Charles Badder, " "</li> <li>Henry Melon, " "</li> <li>Almon Bennett, " "</li> <li>Elias Twist, " "</li> <li>C M Peck, " "</li> <li>Francis Banta, " "</li> <li>P F Chamberlain, " "</li> <li>T H Farmer, " "</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>David Phillips, Clinton, "</li> <li>Michael Murphy, Beloit, "</li> <li>Hiram Case, Clinton, "</li> <li>Alex Case, " "</li> <li>Dr. S L Grow, " "</li> <li>George Jones, Allens Grove, "</li> <li>James Mendenhall, Clinton, "</li> <li>B C Baker, " "</li> <li>Aaron Case, " "</li> <li>Nathan Baker, " "</li> <li>Abner Mendenhall " "</li> <li>C M Baldwin, " "</li> <li>Era Losee, " "</li> <li>V B Losee, " "</li> <li>Edwin Losee, " "</li> <li>L C Holbrook, St. Charles, Illinois.</li> <li>O Moon, " "</li> <li>J Richmond, " "</li> <li>O Crain, Angola, Indiana.</li> <li>Richard Kirilan, " "</li> <li>John Colman, " "</li> <li>J E Howe, Geneva, Wisconsin.</li> <li>O Sabin, Bloomfield, " "</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>H W Mead, " "</li> <li>E Purdy, Richmond, Illinois.</li> <li>B Burdick, " "</li> <li>Charles McConnel, " "</li> <li>George Squire, Mineral Point, Wis.,</li> <li>Wm. Thompson, " "</li> <li>Samson Mitchell, " "</li> <li>Wm. Arnee, " "</li> <li>William Pierce, " "</li> <li>John Clowney, " "</li> <li>George Hardy, " "</li> <li>Henry Polkenham, " "</li> <li>Joseph Langdon, " "</li> <li>Henry Messenworth, Dodgeville, "</li> <li>John Sturritt, " "</li> <li>Richard Baker, Racine, " "</li> <li>Hugh Campbell, " "</li> <li>Thomas Barker, " "</li> <li>Demster, " "</li> <li>Thomas Farmer, Rockton, Illinois.</li> <li>Alex McKay, " "</li> <li>James Cooper, " "</li> </ul>
--	--	---

\* S. Newcomb, Madison, Wisconsin  
Kanesville, May 7th, 1860.)

Frontier Guardian, Print

\* Belonging to Capt. Clark's mess  
see page 33

# ANNALS OF IOWA

---

VOL. XVIII, No. 2    DES MOINES, IOWA, OCTOBER, 1931    THIRD SERIES

---

## TWO EARLY ISSUES OF THE COUNCIL BLUFFS PRESS

BY DOUGLAS C. MCMURTRIE

The first printing press in what is now the state of Iowa was put to work in May, 1836, at Dubuque, on the Mississippi. It was thirteen years before the printing craft reached the western border of the state, at Council Bluffs, on the Missouri. In the intervening time the press had reached eleven other points in Iowa besides Dubuque, accompanying the spread of settlement.

Although Council Bluffs was relatively late in making its appearance among Iowa printing points, the establishment of the press there was not without historic significance. For the settlement on the Missouri, which was called Kaneshville for its first two years of existence, soon became the starting point for a renewed movement of migration into the lands that lay beyond it to the west. It was also one of the rallying points at which the Mormons assembled before their final journey into the wilderness to discover their Zion in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

The first press at Kaneshville was that used by Elder Orson Hyde for beginning the publication of the *Frontier Guardian*, a Mormon weekly, the first issue of which probably appeared in February, 1849. Within a short time, the California gold rush reached flood stages, and the *Guardian* chronicled the arrival and departure of the California emigrants. In June, 1850, the *Guardian* published figures showing that 4,500 wagons and 22,000 head of stock had already passed through Kaneshville that year.

At Kaneshville the parties of adventurers replenished their supplies and reorganized their forces before their departure into the lands beyond the frontier. For the most part, the California parties were regularly organized bands or companies, under strict regulation and discipline by elected leaders. The *Guardian*,

for example, published in its columns the "Laws and Resolutions of the Cassville and Beetown Emigrating Company," and gave similar publicity to other groups, such as the Iowa and Wisconsin Emigrating Company, the Eagle Prairie Company, the Missouri and Iowa Mining Company, and others.

An extremely interesting printed document of those days, and one of the earliest specimens of Kanesville printing that has survived, is a little leaflet containing the resolutions of the Beloit Company, a group of emigrants mostly from the southern part of Wisconsin, with a few members from Illinois and Indiana. It is dated "Kanesville, May 7th, 1850," and carried the imprint "Frontier Guardian, Print." It was found among the pages of a long and detailed manuscript journal kept by Silas Newcomb, of Madison, Wisconsin, from April 1, 1850, when he left his home, until March 31, 1851, when, after many adventures, he reached his final destination in Oregon. On May 8, 1850, he pasted to one of the pages of his journal the printed blue folio broadside containing the organization and roster of the Beloit Company, to which he added his own name in writing. (See frontispiece.)

Earlier than this broadside specimen of printing at Kanesville is another printed document of even greater historical interest and importance. This is the "Constitution of the State of Deseret," issued by Orson Hyde at Kanesville in 1849. The advance guard of the Mormon migration to Utah had reached their new home in July, 1847, more than six months before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo made the Rocky Mountain and Great Basin region officially a part of the United States. Early in 1849, as the United States government had done nothing to provide the new domain with the machinery of civil government, the Mormons took the initiative and organized the State of Deseret, electing Brigham Young as its first governor. The printing of the constitution of the new state at Kanesville was doubtless in the interests of the Mormons there who had not yet reached the point of preparing to move westward.

The two imprints here described are no doubt the earliest known products of the press at Council Bluffs other than the newspaper. The Beloit Company broadside is probably unique, as all copies of it must have perished except the one which Silas

# CONSTITUTION

OF THE

# STATE OF DESERET

WITH THE

# JOURNAL

OF THE CONVENTION WHICH FORMED IT,

AND THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE CONSEQUENT

THEREON.

---

KANESVILLE.

PUBLISHED BY ORSON HYDE,

1849.

Newcomb pasted in his diary. Of the "Constitution of the State of Deseret," not more than three or four copies have survived, one of them being in the Harvard College Library. Its rarity may be judged from the fact that at a book auction some eight or nine years ago the only known copy of this 16-page pamphlet not then preserved in a library was sold at \$1,030.

---

### GOVERNOR GRIMES HOLDS A RECEPTION

---

James W. Grimes relinquished the office of governor of Iowa on January 14, 1858, was elected United States senator January 16, and on January 19 gave a reception at the Demoine House, the leading hotel of the new capital city. This was the first session of the General Assembly that met in Des Moines. In its issue of January 14, 1900, the *Iowa State Register*, see files in the Newspaper Division of the Historical, Memorial and Art Department of Iowa, in giving a series of historical reminiscences, has the following concerning this reception of Senator elect Grimes:

One of the great levees given at the famous hostelry (Demoine House) was that given by Governor Grimes in honor of his election as United States senator. The Governor was never noted for the tidiness of his wearing apparel, and was often seen trudging from the Demoine House over to the Capitol Building through the mud, generally with his pants stuck in his boot tops, or else one leg in the boot top and the other rolled up, while the rest of his dress was worn in a don't-care sort of manner—in fact it was on the slouchy order. Now, in giving this grand reception he did not send his invitation cards around by another person, but trudged about and delivered them himself. But when the guests—the members of the legislative, the state officers, judges of the Supreme Court and leading citizens began to arrive they found a great surprise awaiting them, for there stood the senator elect clothed in a spick-and-span new full dress suit, patent leather shoes and kid gloves. This little incident furnished food for talk for the frontier town for many months. The old settlers even say that it was one of the grandest soirees ever given in the city.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.