

The First Judge of Iowa

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Oct. 22. P. W. Bennett and I went north side of creek and mowed some grass to cover sheds. Set up my buckwheat. Gave Giberson notice that I should open the road on my east line.

Oct. 23. Went to mill and helped Bennett's drive a cow into their stable.

Sun., Oct. 24. John and Tom came here.

Oct. 25. Helped Bennett kill said cow. I mended John's boots at night. We went cooning. John and Tom went home. We killed two opossums.

(To be continued.)

THE FIRST JUDGE OF IOWA

The first court ever held in Iowa was presided over by David Irvin. He was a native of Albemarle County, Virginia, and commenced the practice of law in that state, at Harrisonburg. He was a young man of much promise, and in 1834 was appointed by President Jackson, judge to officiate in that portion of what was then Michigan which lay west of the lakes. His district embraced the country extending west to the Missouri and White Earth rivers, and north to the northern boundary of the United States.

In 1836 the Territory of Wisconsin was organized and embraced all this country; and of the three Judges appointed for the new territory Irvin became one, and the district to which he was assigned embraced all that part of the territory which was west of the Mississippi River, and he came to Burlington and made it his home till the Territory of Iowa was organized. He then went back to Wisconsin, and by successive appointments he retained the judgeship there till that territory became a state. In 1848 that territory assuming a state government, his office expired and he removed to Texas where he resided till his death.

When Judge Irvin first came west it was comparatively one vast wilderness. At the time he took up his residence in Burlington, the place contained scarcely three hundred inhabitants, and there were only about ten thousand whites within the present limits of Iowa.—C. Negus in the *Dollar Monthly and Old Settlers Memorial*, Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 5, in Historical, Memorial and Art Department of Iowa.

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