

Written at Valley Forge

ISSN 0003-4827

No known copyright restrictions.

Recommended Citation

"Written at Valley Forge." *The Annals of Iowa* 27 (1945), 76-77.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.6402>

Hosted by Iowa Research Online

of great ability and keen discernment differed widely on this matter. There were those who bitterly denounced the railroad companies and their managers and attorneys for whatever there was of lack of prosperity in all Iowa. The defenders of the railroads pointed to their usefulness in development of a pioneer region. A more conservative group sought wise regulation of rail rates and curbing railroad political influence. In the end the issue disappeared by a process of natural settling down to a moderate position of mutual good will.

If the roll were called of Iowa men of prominence it would be found that from time to time very many changed their views upon such issues as the tariff, prohibition and corporation control. It is not at all strange that the platforms of the political parties reveal peculiar contradictions, and that no party can claim to have been consistent and steadfast on every dominant issue.

WRITTEN AT VALLEY FORGE

The Society of the Sons of the American Revolution is a comparatively small group of compatriots in Iowa, but they all very well know that although Iowa was a wilderness until fifty years after the close of the American Revolution, there were among the Iowa pioneers a number of the soldiers who served under Washington, who also helped turn the first sod in this first free state of the Louisiana purchase. Some of them have also seen in the state's collection of precious manuscripts the writings of the founding fathers kept as a perpetual reminder of the cost of liberty.

When a company of pioneers was formed for military action to go to the northern border of Iowa and protect the settlers around Spirit Lake, one of the company commanders in that expedition possessed a rare writing that connected him up with historic events of the long ago. Capt. Chas. B. Richards had an order of General Wash-

ington directed to a Mr. Richards who was grand uncle to the Iowa captain. It was written from Valley Forge, not important in itself, but valuable as a fine specimen of the writing of the great commander. It is on a shelf in the Iowa manuscript collection and it reads:

Headquarters Valley Forge, March 9th, 1778. Caleb Gibbs, Esq. Capt Com'g—Sir—Send Lieut. Livingston and fifty men to Tarrytown as an escort to Messrs. Richards, Clymer, and Potts, as far as West Chester, and with the enclosed order for the transfer to his command of the recruits, horses and wagons awaiting there, as escort to headquarters.

GEO. WASHINGTON, Com'r in Chief

That order was kept by Mr. Richards and is now an Iowa treasure. Anyone familiar with American history can fill in between the lines the interesting story of Valley Forge and its tragedy.

AN INDIAN OF IOWA

It is not generally known or remembered that the military secretary of Gen. U. S. Grant, who wrote out the terms of surrender at Appomatox, was an Indian and that at the beginning of the Civil war he was a resident of Iowa.

Don-e ho-ga-wah was born on the Tonawanda reservation about 1828. His Anglicised name was Ely Samuel Parker. His birthplace was near the city of Buffalo, N. Y. He was well educated, first at a missionary school, then an academy and technical school, after which he studied law. He was refused admission to the bar because of being an Indian. He became an engineer and held high positions in the government service. In 1857 he was superintendent of a custom house and marine hospital at Galena, where he and U. S. Grant became warm friends.

He was living in Dubuque at the outbreak of the Civil war and he at once tendered his services to the governor of New York, but was refused a commission. He was re-

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.