

Salt Creek Township, David County, Iowa

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ANNALS OF IOWA

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SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP, DAVIS COUNTY, IOWA

In recent years there has grown up a variance of recollection and of opinion as to the precise location of the grave in which were deposited the remains of the famous Sauk, Black Hawk. No one in Iowa, we believe, disputes the fact that his death and burial took place in the extreme northeast corner of Davis County.

All students of early Iowa history are aware of the identity and character of Willard Barrows. All who are familiar with the original notes and plats of the land survey of eastern Iowa are familiar with Mr. Barrows' work as a deputy surveyor. Those familiar with the land survey of Davis County are aware of the existence of notes and plat of Township 70 North, Range 12 West, now Salt Creek Township, Davis County, the work of Willard Barrows, done in October, 1843.

With respect to the location of the grave of Black Hawk and of other sites of historical interest in that vicinity we present a reduced facsimile of Barrows' plat of that township. Going with the plat Barrows' notes, which are pertinent to these historic sites, are as follows:

Township No 70 N of Range No 12 W in the Territory of Iowa.
Commenced Oct 17th 1843 Completed Do— 30th—

By W. Barrows
Surveyor

North Between Secs 1 & 2
15.00 Leave Timber & Enter prairie
40.00 Set $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. post
post in Mound
pit 5 Lks. East
73.20 Intersected N Boundary
200 Lks East of Cor. & set post
post in Mound
pit 5 Lks. South
Land first Rate

Timber Oak Lin
 Hickory &c &
 Level Rich Prairie

The Grave of the Chief Black Hawk
 is upon the S E $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec 2—from
 which bears

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| A. Maple | 20 in S $38^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$ W | 784 lks |
| Ash | 20 in S $84^{\circ}\frac{1}{4}$ W | 866 do |
| B. Oak | 30 S $71^{\circ}\frac{1}{2}$ W | 835 |
| Elm | 24 S 68° W | 839 |

Mark B. H. 1841—

DIARY OF A VALIANT IOWA CHRISTIAN

Benjamin Franklin Pearson was a brick-and-stone mason by trade. He emigrated from Maryland to Iowa. He was a devout member of the Methodist Episcopal church beginning to preach while he was still a youth. He was married, had acquired a home, and was the father of a number of children whose mother had died, when he enlisted as a private soldier in Company G, Thirty-sixth Iowa Volunteer Infantry. He was elected second lieutenant of his company, was advanced to first lieutenant, and throughout his service from 1862 to 1865 recorded his experiences as a soldier. The diary is presented as much to disclose the record of what has been termed a backwoods local preacher as to reveal the experience of a valiant soldier. We know of no record of the backwoods preacher as a Union soldier so helpfully illuminating.

On the frontier religion and war have been always intermingled. The Methodist Episcopal church had its conspicuous backwoods preacher, Peter Cartwright, who as itinerant preacher was only more typical of the frontier Methodist Episcopal crusader than was B. F. Pearson, because Pearson was merely a local preacher. He constantly and carefully pursued his trade while constantly in service as a preacher. He therefore remained a local rather than a national figure. The two men were often in a common field, always of a common purpose. Cartwright was born in Virginia in 1786, Pearson in Maryland in 1815. Cartwright abhorred the Abolitionists for thirty years of his ministry. Pearson did not. Cartwright suffered through the secession of

Southern Methodism in 1844 and the litigation following, while Pearson, living through that era a local preacher, smothered his distress until, with the contribution of secession in Methodism, the southern states seceded. Cartwright at the first contended that abolition Methodists could and should save to their church division by Christian patience and toleration. He remained of that opinion until his death in 1872. He contended that slavery was a political question and that all politics should be excluded from church councils. He suffered still more bitterly from the intolerance and arrogance of southern advocates of church disunion, especially from the work and words of Bishop Soule. Pearson, a less known frontier follower of Wesley, suffered likewise, but with a larger admixture of other than church concern.

What a religious young man must face from war is suggested by a third preacher of the Cartwright era, Barton W. Stone, against whom and whose teaching Cartwright in Kentucky leveled his powerful efforts with but little less delight than he took in his assaults against Satan himself.

Stone records:

The soldiers [among whom were brothers of the author] when they returned home from their [Revolutionary] War tour, brought back with them vices almost unknown to us [at Port Tobacco, Maryland, where the author was born, December 24, 1772] as profane swearing, debauchery, drunkenness, gambling, quarrelling and fighting. For having been soldiers and having fought for liberty they were respected and caressed by all. They gave the ton[e] to the neighborhood and therefore their influence in demoralizing society was very great. Their vices soon became general and almost unbearable. Such are universally the effects of war, than which a greater evil can not assail and afflict a nation.¹

What Stone says of the Revolution has been true of all wars. Cartwright witnessed and reveals it in the social life of the frontier after the War of 1812, the War with Mexico, and the Civil War. Pearson witnessed the War with Mexico and its results. He participated in his church division, he served in the ranks of the army in the Civil War, and he, alone, in his diary, shows what it is to be a consistent soldier of the Cross under arms, supporting the flag. His is the one record of which we are aware of a militant Iowa citizen always with the Bible in one hand, and in time of war, always with a musket in the other.

¹From "Biography of Elder Barton Warren Stone, Written by Himself, with Additions and Reflections by Elder John Rodgers, in 1847."

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