

THIRD SERIES

VOL. XVIII, No. 3

JANUARY, 1932

(Owing to the World War there were no copies issued from October, 1915,
until April, 1920.)

ANNALS OF IOWA

A HISTORICAL QUARTERLY



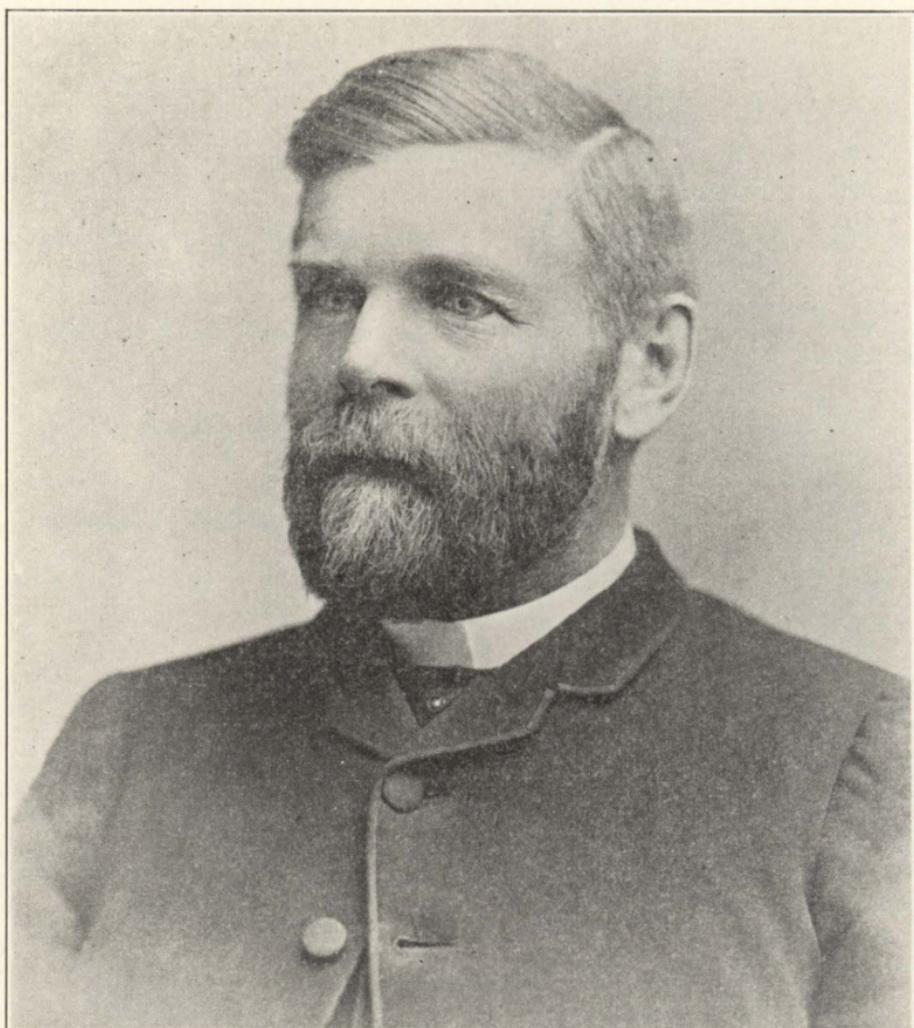
PUBLISHED BY THE
HISTORICAL, MEMORIAL AND ART
DEPARTMENT OF IOWA

EDGAR R. HARLAN, *Curator*

PRICE \$1.00 PER YEAR

SINGLE NUMBER 25 CENTS

DES MOINES, IOWA



Very Truly
A. P. Dodge

ANNALS OF IOWA

VOL. XVIII, No. 3 DES MOINES, IOWA, JANUARY, 1932 THIRD SERIES

EARLY EMIGRATION THROUGH AND TO COUNCIL BLUFFS

(This article, written in 1910 by Nathan P. Dodge, a brother of General Grenville M. Dodge, was left in manuscript form by him among other of his papers which are now deposited in the Council Bluffs City Library. A copy of it has been kindly furnished us by Mr. E. R. Jackson, trust officer of the Council Bluffs Savings Bank.—Editor.)

The first white emigrants who came to this part of the country bound for the Pacific Slope were missionaries on their way to Oregon; they came up the Missouri River by steamboat from St. Louis where they purchased their wagons, stock and provisions, landed at the American Fur Company Trading Post (near Bellevue) and from there began their long journey overland, under the protection of the American Fur Company who sent out a train of goods to their agents in the far west every spring.

The mission to Oregon came about through the arrival in St. Louis in the fall of 1832 of four Indian chiefs from the Nez Perces tribe in eastern Oregon. The commander of the military post in that city, General Clark, took a kindly interest in these chiefs and entertained them. During the winter two of them died and when spring came the other two departed for their home. One of them died on the way and only one of the four returned to his tribe. These Indians had made this long journey to procure a missionary teacher, or as they expressed it, "the man with the book." One of the Indians in a speech he made at a farewell banquet said: "I came to you over the trail of many moons from the setting sun. I came with one eye partly open for my people, who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. I made my way to you with strong arms, through many enemies and strange lands. I go back with arms broken and empty. Two fathers came with us. They were the braves of many wars. We leave them asleep here by your great waters and wigwams. My people sent me to get the white man's Book

of Heaven. You make my feet weary with gifts and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, and yet the book is not among them. When I tell my poor blind people after one more snow, in the big Council, that I did not bring the book, no word will be spoken. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence." The publication of this speech in the eastern papers caused the missionary societies to look for missionaries who would go to these Indians.

Among those who answered that call was Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. H. H. Spaulding from central New York. Both were married a short time before leaving home to educated and refined women who possessed the missionary spirit and chose to accompany their husbands.

Leaving their home and friends in the winter of 1835-36 they crossed the mountains of Pennsylvania in sleighs to reach the Ohio River, then down the Ohio and up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers by steamboat to Council Bluffs, the only point designated on maps of that day, was a long and tedious trip. Landing early in May, presumably at Sarpy's American Fur Company Trading Post, near Bellevue with their wagons, stock and provisions they began their long journey overland to Oregon.

These were the first white women of whom we have any record who made that journey over the Oregon trail. That they were women of resolution, courage and nobility of character is evident to any one who will read the published extracts from Mrs. Whitman's diary and letters. When they landed here they found the American Fur Company's train had gone and left them "to pursue their journey unprotected." Mr. Sanborn would have turned back but Mrs. Sanborn said, "No, I have started for the Rocky Mountains and I am going there." Both reached their destination and spent many years among the Indians as missionaries and teachers, and Mrs. Sanborn translated scripture and songs into the Indian dialect.

I have not time to tell you of all the hardships endured by these brave women. Only those who have made the trip can know of its discomforts and dangers. Mrs. Whitman speaks of running out of flour and living on jerked or dried buffalo meat and tea and of dreaming of the good bread her mother made;

also of being transported across the Snake River by lying flat on an elk's hide, drawn by Indian squaws with ropes attached to it, held between their teeth; and of abandoning their wagons at Fort Hall and using pack animals the remainder of the way. One incident is worth relating. When they reached the South Pass, the continental divide, they spread their blankets upon the grass, raised the American flag and with prayer and praise on their lips, took possession of the western side of the American Continent in the name of Him who proclaimed "Peace on earth and good will toward men."

Cheer and hope, and faith in the work they were to engage in, was the golden thread that sustained them in their long, hard journey of six months. Arriving in November, Dr. and Mrs. Whitman established a mission on the banks of the Walla Walla River, erected buildings, opened a school for Indian children and a farm to induce the Indians to exchange the chase for farming. But in vain. After eleven years of faithful and self-sacrificing work, these same Indians, whom they had been trying to civilize, walked into their home in daylight and killed and scalped both Marcus Whitman and his wife. Whitman College, founded by friends and located near the mission ground where they were buried, is their memorial.

From 1836 to 1846 there was an increasing number who went over this trail to Oregon and California from different points on the Missouri River. How many came here by boat or by wagon we have no record, there being no white settlement in this vicinity during those years. It was during this interval that Marcus Whitman crossed the Rocky Mountains from his Mission Station in Oregon to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the winter of 1842-3, an unheard of feat in that day, and proceeded to Washington to plead with President Tyler not to give up Oregon which was then in dispute between our government and Great Britain, claiming that it was a country accessible by wagons rich in natural resources. The Hudson Bay Fur Company had represented that it was a worthless country and inaccessible except by pack animals. His presence in Washington caused our government to postpone acting on the contemplated treaty giving up Oregon, which then included Idaho and Montana. Dr. Whitman in his interview with President Tyler said, "If it is true as Secretary

Webster has said that the ownership of Oregon is likely to follow the greater settlement and larger population, all I ask is that you won't barter away Oregon or allow English interference until I can lead a band of stalwart American settlers across the plains, for this I will try to do." The President answered, "Dr. Whitman, your long ride and frozen limbs speak for your courage and patriotism; your missionary credentials are good vouchers for your character," and he granted the request.

Dr. Whitman piloted two large trains of emigrants from the Missouri River to Oregon that season and when the Hudson Bay Company endeavored to make them abandon their wagons at Ft. Hall, six or seven hundred miles this side of their destination, Dr. Whitman said to them, "Don't you do it. I have guided you safely 1,300 miles, trust me to see you safely through." They did trust him, arrived in Oregon safely with all their effects and became permanent settlers. Thus we are indebted to this missionary more than to any other man for this vast territory so rich in timber and minerals. A prominent citizen who conversed with Daniel Webster, secretary of state, said afterwards, "It is safe to assert that our country owes it to Dr. Whitman and his associate missionaries that all the territory west of the Rocky Mountains and south as far as the Columbia River is not now owned by England and held by the Hudson Bay Company."

The next emigration west of any size was the Mormon emigration. Leaving Nauvoo, Illinois, early in 1846, they established relief stations across Iowa, passed through here and stopped on the west side of the Missouri River where Florence is now located. Continuing their journey westward from there the following years, 1847-48, they made their new home in Salt Lake Valley.

Following this came the large emigration to California in 1849. The discovery of gold in that country the year previous had created great excitement all over the country and it was estimated by government officials that from eight to ten thousand wagons, forty thousand persons and eighty thousand head of stock crossed the plains during the summer of 1849. Those who crossed the Missouri River at St. Joseph, Fort Leavenworth,

Independence and other points would come into the Platte Valley or Oregon trail about two hundred miles west of here.

For protection against the Indians in crossing the plains it was necessary for emigrants to make up trains of twenty to twenty-five wagons. One of their number was chosen captain whose orders were obeyed. He made the detail of men to watch at night and to herd the stock when they were turned out to feed during the day. Their canvas-covered wagons were usually drawn by three to five yoke of oxen. Mules were however sometimes used. They travelled from fifteen to twenty miles in a day. The usual plan was to break camp and yoke up early in the morning, travel until eleven o'clock, turn out the stock to feed until two P. M., then start again and travel until about six o'clock or until they reached a good camping place and go into camp for the night with wagons interlocking each other so as to form a loop with an opening at each end, then turn out the stock to feed again until dark, drive them inside this wagon corral for the night and place a guard at each of the openings.

Their provisions were generally flour, salt pork or side meat, beans, canned vegetables and coffee. When they reached the buffalo herds which roamed north and south from 200 to 400 miles west of the Missouri River, they laid in fresh buffalo meat preserved by cutting it into strips and hanging it on the outside of their wagons to dry in the sun. This was called jerking it. Antelope and other game were killed which gave them a variety of food. But as emigration increased, the game was frightened away from the trail and became more scarce.

While the emigration to California in 1849 is often referred to as unusually large through here, the volume of it was not very much lessened the succeeding years. The accession to the Mormon colony in Utah each year by converts from the United States and foreign countries was very large. Every young Mormon man was subject to be called on for two years' missionary work in the States or in Europe. The result of this mission work was a stream of emigrants for Utah flowing through here every spring and early summer.

The discovery of gold near Denver in Colorado in the fall of 1858 created another gold excitement in the Eastern States and the emigration to the newly discovered mines in the spring of

1859 was very large. Added to those bound for Utah and the Pacific Slope, it was probably the largest emigration that ever passed through Council Bluffs in any one season. The stage road east and west of our city was lined with these canvas-topped wagons. It was said one could travel from here to Denver and not be out of sight of an emigrant train. They were a cheery, jovial, expectant lot of emigrants. I saw painted on some of their wagons, "To Pike's Peak or bust." Before the summer was over the larger number of these gold seekers were returning, disappointed. Those early discoveries were limited to some placer mining in Cherry Creek which runs through Denver and Clear Creek, west of Denver. I noticed the sign on one of the returning wagons had been changed to "Busted" which probably indicated their financial condition. These returning emigrants were not only disappointed but were in rather a revengeful mood, threatening to burn Omaha and Council Bluffs because their newspapers had published exaggerated reports of the mines.

In addition to the trains of emigrants who went west to make their homes and better their condition, there were the freighters, those who hauled goods to supply the residents in Utah and Colorado. There were large shipments of provisions and groceries sent to Denver by our merchants. My brother and his partner, John T. Baldwin, sent to Denver wagon trains of flour which they manufactured here. One of the largest and most successful freighters was Alex Majors of Nebraska City, who hauled freight to Utah and the military posts. He also inaugurated the Pony Express taking letters through to California in ten days. He required his teamsters to sign an agreement which read as follows:

"While in the employ of Alex Majors I agree not to use profane language, not get drunk, nor gamble, not treat animals cruelly, and not do anything else that is incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman, and I agree, if I violate any of these conditions, to accept my discharge without pay for my services." He said in his later years these conditions were obeyed and he never had to discharge a man for violating them. He furnished each man with a Bible and would not permit his trains to travel on Sunday.

The Indians were very troublesome on the plains in the emi-

gration season, especially during the period covered by our Civil War. The Pawnees with whom they came in contact soon after crossing the Missouri River and who posed as friendly, limited their depredations to visiting the emigrant camps and stealing whatever they could lay their hands on, and running off some of their stock if opportunity offered. But the Sioux and Cheyennes farther west were the most dreaded. They would swoop down upon a straggler, or a train that was poorly protected, murder the men, carry off the women, children, stock and all the provisions they could pack, burning the wagons.

One of our own citizens, Mr. Marble, who was freighting corn to Denver lost his life in one of these raids. His ten-year-old boy, Willie, was taken prisoner by the Indians but rescued some weeks after by government troops; exposure brought on fever and he died before reaching his home here.

I must not leave this part of my subject without speaking of the Mormon hand cart train which passed through Council Bluffs during the summer of 1856. They rested a short time at Florence, Nebraska, and then pushed on to Utah. This train consisted of several hundred hand carts travelling in two divisions. The emigrants accompanying this train were mostly from Great Britain and other foreign countries. Landing in New York they were sent to Iowa City, the end of the railroad, and from there they began their laborious journey westward. The first division reached here in July. My father, mother and sister were then living on the east bank of the Elkhorn River twenty-three miles west of Omaha, near the emigrant ferry crossing, protecting the lands we had claimed the year previous until they were surveyed by the government and we could enter them. My mother wrote me under date July 26, 1856, from her cabin home as follows:

"A Mormon hand cart train came yesterday and were ferried across the Elkhorn River. Father and Julia went down to see the people. I think the leaders should be prevented from taking the children on such a journey and to a land where the influences are so bad."

The men, women and children which accompanied these trains numbered about one thousand, including a goodly number of young children and elderly and feeble men and women. Some were fortunate to drop out by the way. We have some worthy

people in Council Bluffs who came in this train. My mother secured from it a very good English girl to assist her in her housework. Inman, in his "Salt Lake Trail" says: "When they reached Florence there was some controversy among the elders in charge of the train as to whether they should remain there over winter or go on to Salt Lake. Levi Savage, one of their number, protested against their continuing their journey so late in the season. He said they could not possibly reach Salt Lake before November and they would suffer great hardships in crossing the mountains, but he was overruled and rebuked for want of faith. The other elders said the Lord would provide for their necessities. Savage replied saying he thought they ought to use the common sense the Lord had given them, 'but seeing you are going forward, I will go with you. May God in his mercy preserve us.'"

These hand carts weighed about ninety pounds and were loaded with clothing, bedding and provisions and the children who were unable to walk, cooking utensils hanging beneath. They were drawn and pushed by the able-bodied men and women. Each one hundred persons was furnished with twenty carts, five tents and three or four cows and a wagon with three yoke of oxen to carry the camp equipage and provisions. They travelled about fifteen miles a day the first part of their journey.

When they reached Wood River about two hundred miles west of the Missouri their cattle were stampeded and they lost thirty-five head which reduced the first division to one yoke to each wagon. Their journey was not half over before their rations were reduced. The old and infirm began to droop and die. Some would drop dead while pulling the carts. A severe snow storm caught them on the continental divide. Five died that night and the last ration of flour was issued. In the morning there remained only two barrels of biscuits and a few pounds of sugar, dried apples and rice. This small amount was consumed in one day. They then began to kill and eat their work animals. They had promise of relief from Salt Lake and being too weak to move on remained in camp for three days; many died and mothers, themselves weak almost unto death, wrapped their clothing around the wan forms of their perishing infants. At the end of the third day a train of wagons loaded with provisions and cloth-

ing reached them from Salt Lake and distributed enough to give them relief, and pushed on to relieve the second division of the train which was far behind. Each day the weather grew colder, many perished by freezing. At one camp fifteen were buried. Thirteen of these were frozen to death. The first division numbered 420 at the beginning of their journey but arrived in Salt Lake November 9 with only 67. The second division numbering 600 arrived three weeks later. They lost a much smaller number, having encamped ten days during the storm, thus conserving their health and strength. For a few days their rations were reduced to four ounces of flour per head per day. This was the first and last train of that kind that ever crossed the plains.

The first white people who came here and remained as permanent settlers came from Missouri in 1828 with the Pottawattamie tribe of Indians. They were Davis Hardin and S. E. Wicks. The former was the government farmer for these Indians and the latter their miller. Their grist mill was located on Mosquito Creek about two miles east of the city and Mr. Wicks's log cabin home was nearby. These buildings were there in 1855-56. George Parks rebuilt the mill and ran it for several years and it was known as Parks's Mill.

Mr. Hardin first settled east of town but afterwards removed and opened a farm west of Manawa (in the southeast quarter of section 15, township 74, range 44) called Council Point. Mr. W. D. Hardin, our city assessor, is the grandson of Davis Hardin and I think Mr. Wicks has a daughter still living in our city. The late Francis Guittar, father of Theodore Guittar, camped in the ravines now within the corporate limits of this city as early as 1827. He at that time was in the employ of the American Fur Company, with his headquarters at Traders Point on the Missouri River about six miles south of the city (southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of northwest $\frac{1}{4}$, section 35, township 74, range 44). In 1850 he moved up and built a log store building on the east side of Main Street near Broadway. His business in those early years was trading with the Indians for furs and skins. When I came here in 1855 his store was the headquarters of the Omahas and Pawnees, who thronged our streets.

A. W. Hildreth of Highland County, Ohio, came here in 1839 and erected a sawmill. I think he must have been in the employ

of the government and probably came to saw lumber for the buildings erected by the government for the Indians and the military post. The only sawmill that was running when I came was located near the Missouri River. The ground it stood upon is now on the Omaha side. This mill was owned and run by Tom and Ed Jefferis. The Dagger Mill, which was run by water from Indian Creek and stood about where Mill Street is located, I do not think was running then and was soon after abandoned.

I want to speak of one other man who was a friend of those I have mentioned but whose home was just over the line in Mills County, Samuel Ellis, who came here in 1835 as a missionary and teacher to the Pawnee Indians. He did his trading here in the last years of his life and was often seen on our streets. When these Indians were running off stock and committing depredations on our Elkhorn settlement in Nebraska in the spring and summer of 1855 we used to send for Mr. Ellis to act as interpreter in our interviews with the chiefs of that tribe. We were trying to get these chiefs to call off their young men whom they claimed were the ones who were stealing the cattle and breaking up the homes of the settlers. No doubt the chiefs and old men shared in the plunder. Mr. Ellis' son, born in Nebraska in 1842, is still living on the old home in Mills County.

About the time the Pottawattamie Indians came here, or soon after, the government sent a company of soldiers who made their headquarters in a blockhouse on the knoll in front of where the Pierce Street school building is situated. This blockhouse was still there in 1855. In the same enclosure was a log dwelling, the home of the Jesuit priests who came as missionaries to these Indians. The Pottawattamies only remained here about eight years, giving up their lands in southwestern Iowa by treaty in 1846 for others in Kansas.

This same year, 1846, the advance guard of the Mormons arrived. They had been driven from Nauvoo, Illinois. Some of them came early enough to plant and raise crops that season but the main body, with their leader, Brigham Young, did not reach here until July. Their first encampment within present limits of our city was on the plateau now crossed by Woodbury Avenue, where Father Rice and myself have orchards. While in camp there they showed their loyalty to the government by rais-

ing a battalion of five hundred men for the Mexican War, who joined Col. Donaphan's army which marched from Missouri to New Mexico.

From the camp on this plateau Brigham Young and most of his followers crossed the Missouri River and settled temporarily in Nebraska where Florence is now located. A goodly number, however, remained on this side of the river and settled along Indian Creek, then called "Miller's Hollow," and in the ravines leading off of it, which at that time were covered with hardwood timber. This was the beginning of what is now the city of Council Bluffs. Indian Creek then was a shallow stream winding back and forth across the valley.

The stores and shops were located on First Street, then called Hyde and Broadway, near where the Methodist Church now stands. This Mormon colony increased year by year by additions of converts from the States and Europe, until 1852, when the most of those who were loyal to Brigham Young sold out their possessions and moved to Salt Lake. From 1846 to 1852 there were but few Gentiles here. It was practically a Mormon colony with Elder Orson Hyde as their spiritual and civil ruler. He was editor of their paper, the *Frontier Guardian*, and was also their preacher. Their tabernacle, built of logs, stood on the ground near the corner of Harmony and Benton streets.

A California emigrant, who stopped here a few days in the spring of 1850 speaks of Kanesville as it was then called, as the headquarters of the Mormons, containing five or six hundred inhabitants and the merchants doing a flourishing business during the emigration season. Another, who was stranded here for a while in 1852 and worked as typesetter on the *Frontier Guardian*, says the buildings were all log cabins and many were living in tents. He does not think there was a frame building in town. There were two log churches, one, the tabernacle, was 75x100 feet, 1½ stories high, with rude slab benches. The other must have been the log building on Broadway, known as Beebe's Hall, or possibly the old log Court House which stood on First Street.

Brigham Young, the leader of those Mormons who located at Florence, built a stockade on the plateau near the river to protect his people from the Indians and the following spring, 1847, he

led a party of 143 picked men, with 23 wagons, to Salt Lake Valley, where they decided to make their future home. It was this party that laid the foundation of Salt Lake City. Brigham Young returned to Florence in the fall and made the necessary preparation for the removal of the remaining followers to their new home. This second party, which Brigham Young led across the plains in 1848, comprised 1,891 men, women and children with 623 wagons, mostly drawn by oxen and accompanied by stock. Those left behind abandoned their homes on the west side of the river and joined their friends on this side where they would have better protection from the Indians.

The settlement made in Miller's Hollow and in the adjacent ravines bore the name of Kanessville from 1848 to 1853, when by legislative act it was changed to Council Bluffs. This change was hastened no doubt by reason of the state granting a charter to the Mississippi and Missouri River Railroad which fixed its terminus on the Missouri River at or near Council Bluffs. This name, as you know, originated with Lewis and Clark in 1804, who held a council with the Otoes and other tribes of Indians about twenty miles above here on the Nebraska side of the river, now marked by a monument, and was on all the government maps. A fort called Fort Atkinson was established there for a time. It was also one of the American Fur Company's trading stations. The latter afterwards moved to a point on the river just above Bellevue with an additional station on the Iowa side called Traders Point.

The mail for this upper country was all directed to Council Bluff (not Bluffs) and came up the river by steamboat and was left with the agent of the American Fur Company who acted as postmaster, for the convenience of the large California emigration in 1849 who camped on this side of the river. This mail was left at Traders Point, but Kanessville was the first regularly established post office here, with Evan Green as postmaster.

While some of the Mormons who remained here were loyal to Brigham Young after the exodus of 1852 and went to Salt Lake in subsequent years, the most of those left behind had abandoned the Mormon faith, or objected to some of the new doctrines which had been introduced, especially polygamy, and these later formed the new church of Latter Day Saints. They made their

permanent homes here and in the adjoining counties and many of them became prosperous farmers and business men.

Each year beginning with 1852 made a notable increase in the Gentile population. Most of those who came to engage in business came by river, while those who came to open farms came by wagon. Large stocks of goods were brought here each spring and summer and our merchants were prepared to supply the home demand, which included all who had settled within one hundred miles north and east of our city and also supply the western emigration which came overland from the middle west states in increasing numbers. Ferries had been established across the Missouri and other rivers, so the North Platte route across the plains was considered the best. Every spring as soon as grass was up so cattle could feed upon it the main traveled roads across Iowa and from here west were lined with ox or mule teams bound for Utah, California, and Oregon. Their camps were to be seen about our city where wood and water were convenient. They crowded our streets, loading supplies for their long journey. Every one was busy and our merchants did a profitable business. As soon as a team was loaded and the train to which it belonged ready, they would pull out for the ferry landing and camp there until their turn came to cross. This crossing was generally on our city front changing its landings to avoid the sandbars. When my brother was building cabins on our Elkhorn claims northwest of Omaha in the fall of 1854, he crossed the river at Traders Point, opposite Bellevue. When I came with my father in the spring of 1855, we crossed at Florence with genial, jovial Jimmie Bradshaw at the wheel. Bishop Tuttle on his way to Utah, Idaho and Montana to establish Episcopal churches in those states, describes his crossing the Missouri River on the morning of May 29, 1867, as follows: "In getting across the Missouri River from Council Bluffs to Omaha, the kinds and degree of discomfort were unspeakable. The river, itself turbid and sullen, well deserved the name the natives give it, the 'Big Muddy.' The ferryboat was flat, rude, unclean, more like a raft than a boat; the approach to it on the Iowa side was a steep bank of sticky, slippery, black mud, down which we all walked or slid as best we could, our baggage and blankets being pushed and hurled after us in indiscriminate confusion.

The same kind of paths of departure from the deck existed on the Nebraska side, where vigor and vigilance were put to the sharpest test to surmount the muddy acclivity. The officials and attendants and transfer agents were the most exasperatingly 'know-nothing' and seemingly 'care-nothing' set of men ever seen; and so confusions and delays innumerable greeted the bewildered 'tenderfoot' now first entering the gate city of the 'Far West.'” This western emigration with the new settlers constantly coming in made a good market for the produce raised. I paid one dollar a bushel for corn and hauled it thirty miles to our cabin home in Nebraska in April of 1855.

The coming of the steamboats every week in the spring and summer was an interesting event. It was the chief avenue by which friends and strangers came to our city and then it often furnished our young people, and that included everybody, an opportunity for a dance on the boat. During the period of high water we had two boats a week and they were generally full of passengers and brought large stocks of merchandise to our merchants.

The arrival of the four-horse daily stages from the east and south was also an interesting event. Usually full of passengers and well loaded with mail bags and express packages, with an extra crack of the whip the driver would swing his team around in the front of the Pacific House, which stood on the site of Beno's store, and unload his passengers before a crowd of gazing citizens who had watched for its arrival to welcome the new comers and congratulate them that they had at last reached the place of all others to live and invest their money. This was repeated so often as they came in contact with one and another they believed and most of them were induced to remain, at least for a time. The passengers and mail for Omaha would remain over night and be taken over the river by the stage which left the Pacific House at nine o'clock every morning.

One who travels through the West today can hardly realize that prior to June, 1854, there was no white settlement between the Missouri River and the Pacific slope except the Mormon colony in Utah. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill May 30, 1854, opened Nebraska for settlement. Omaha was laid out that summer, a beginning made of the present prosperous city

and settlements on the tablelands north and south along the river.

The following year, 1855, there were a few settlers who made claims, built cabins and opened farms on the east bank of the Elkhorn River, twenty to thirty miles west of Omaha, but the Indian depredations compelled these settlers to abandon their farms and crops in the early fall and come back to Omaha. My father, brother, his wife with a two and a two months' old babe, and myself, with our nearest neighbor, S. N. Fifield, and his wife, the first to settle there were the last to leave. So the western line of civilization remained on the Missouri River until the spring of 1856. Since then the line of the frontier has been gradually pushed west, first slowly, then more rapidly with the building of the Union Pacific Railroad until now one crossing the continent will seldom be out of sight of a settlement. These changes seem marvelous, even to those who have stood at one of the principal gateways opening to that almost unknown country and watched the stream of people enter and develop its resources into rich and prosperous mining and agricultural states.

There is one incident among many that comes into my mind as I review the past that may interest you. In the rear of my office, which was on Broadway, about opposite where Hafer's lumber yard is now located, was a carpenter shop and back of that, fronting on Vine Street, was a two-story residence. This was the home of Wm. H. Folsom, an architect and carpenter and loyal friend of Brigham Young. It was but a few steps from his shop across to my office and when work was slack he made me frequent visits and sought to win me over to the Mormon faith. There was a young and attractive daughter in the family, who being proficient in music and having a piano, perhaps the only in the city, she had many callers. Among them was a friend whose ability and integrity of character I admired and with whom I used to roam over these bluffs and discuss the questions of the day. The Folsom family moved to Salt Lake City in 1860-61 and in 1862 my friend turned over his land business to me and departed for the same city. I surmised his interest in the young lady had attracted him there; whether such was the case I never knew. His first letter to me, which appears below, gives no indication.

Salt Lake City, Aug. 25, 1862.

I am at last safely housed in Happy Hollow where the Happy Saints do dwell. Arrived in this far-famed city of Jerusalem on the 27th of July after a somewhat tedious journey of ten weeks and was glad to get a chance to rest awhile and don't think I could have been hired to go any further, especially this season.

I like the city and its inhabitants first rate and rather guess I shall conclude to sojourn here for a few days. The site is a good one and the folks take pride in improving their places, build as good houses as they can afford, and plant shade and fruit trees. Some parts of the city look like a young forest now, streams of water run along both sides of the streets, used for irrigating. The country is awful barren except where it is improved. Folsom seems to be doing well as architect on the Temple and Theatre and is quite busy most of the time. Just told me he was going to write you. Said he would like to talk with you awhile and when you got tired of that country to come out and you should be welcome. He wished to be kindly remembered to you and John T. Baldwin.

Our mutual friend Amelia is not yet hitched on to Brigham or any other man. Girls are as plenty as toads after a shower all through this country, although there is mighty few that are good looking. It does not make much difference with me, never was much of a marrying man, nohow, some like yourself in that respect. Hope you will not get drafted, although I can't help thinking they ought to draft out of the Republican party alone.

Brigham Young soon after married Amelia Folsom, she became his favorite wife and today is a fine looking old lady enjoying all the comforts and privileges that wealth and friends can give.

My friend is a prominent citizen and business man in a far western city and has enjoyed the companionship of one wife and has some noble sons to bear his name.

Council Bluff Potawatomy Sub Agency¹
21st March 1839.

My Dr Brother:

Yours of 7th Dec. 38 came to hand 25 Feby. 39. It was truly gratifying to me inasmuch as your delay in answering mine had made me dispare of ever hearing from you personally in this life. I had intended wrighting to the post master at Shelbyville to see what was the cause of my not getting an answer. The power of attorney you have sent cannot be filled at present owing to the Distance of 200 miles I should

¹This letter signed D. Hardin is evidently written by Davis Hardin, spoken of by N. P. Dodge in the foregoing article. It seems to have been written to a brother of Mr. Hardin in Kentucky. The spelling, punctuation, etc., of the original is followed.—Editor.

have to go and at this season of the year I cannot in justice to my business leave home. I send you my signiture in two p'aces, witnessed by my two oaldest sons for you to fill, to answer if possible, one for the Disposial of my interest in my Ohio land, the other to transact aney business for me in Kentucky. In .28 or .29 I think or about that time, I assigned a note of hand giving by William Chamberlin to myself (I think) it was transfered by me to Samuel Morgan. Morgan brought suit against Chamberlin obtained judgment execution issued Chamberlin insolvent. I then paid Morgan his money one hundred & five Dollars Debt on cost and took Morgans assignment on record without any recourse on sd Morgan. All transacted in Franklin, Simpson County, Ky. I am told lately that Chamberlin is now able to pay the Debt. You will collect or have it collected for me. If you should get hoald of aney money in aney way for me pay yourself one hundred & four Dollars and the interest of your money I collected in Logan County, Ky. Also pay aney person for there trouble. If there should be a remnant left you send it to Duke W. Simpson at West Port, Jackson County and direct him to me for it.

No change in my family since my last except Elizabeth is restored to good health. We all enjoy the best of health. My task here is light amongst these people and my situation better than I expected.

Prices of articles are: Flour \$15 to \$25 per barrel, corn meal \$1.50 per bushel, pork \$12.50 to \$20 per hundred pounds, turkeys \$2 to \$3 each, chickens grown \$6 per doz., eggs 50 cents, butter 50 cents, corn \$1.00 per bushel, roasting ears 25 cents per doz., Irish potatoes \$1.50 per bushel, cabbage \$12.50 per hundred, cucumbers 25 cents per dozen.

This is a stimulus for one to have everything to sell and but little to buy as I am striving to do and nearly supported my family in this way.

You will write me on receipt on this letter and not delay so long again. May God assist us both to persevere and enable us to meet in Heaven is my prayer.

————— is well and joines me in the most cordial love for you and yours.

Your brother,
D. Hardin.

Mailed at Ft. Leavenworth April 15. Postage paid 25 cents. He requests his brother to direct his reply to D. Hardin, Potatotomy farmer, Council Bluff Sub Agency to the care Lt. E. Stone, Fort Leavenworth, Mo.