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Historical Society Of Pottawattamie County

September, 1999

History of the Christian Home- Children's Square USA Kicks Off Fall Presentation Lineup

The "Christian Home"- now Children's Square- has been a part of Council Bluffs for over 115 years since Baptist minister the Reverend Joseph Goff Lemen took three small children into his home because their father could not care for them. By 1883, due to a typhoid epidemic, Rev. Lemen had 20 children. He asked the businessmen of Council Bluffs to help him care for these children and the Christian Home was founded. Speaker Tim Neal will be the featured presenter at the next meeting of the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County and will take us through the history of the facility and into Children's Square as it fulfills its mission today.

The meeting is scheduled at 2:00 p.m., Sunday, September 19, at Community Hall, 205 South Main Street. There is no charge and refreshments will be served; you are encouraged to bring guests as everyone is welcome.



Children at the Christian Home in the 1940's; from Children's Square archives.

In October speaker David Maron talks about Fort Atkinson. Fort Atkinson was once the largest military post in the west at one point with over 1,000 troops during its active period. It was in existence for seven years, during which a library and school were built and large-scale agricultural project undertaken. This meeting is scheduled for October 17.

At the meeting Sunday, November 14, Sgt. R. L. Miller will present a history of the Council Bluffs Police Department.

An Expanded Rail Collection to Greet Visitors to "Depot Days"

An "Operate-it-yourself" "O" gauge model train and a return appearance of Thomas the Tank Engine, Annie, and Clarabel from the BBS popular series Shining Time Station will be part of the fun at the Historic Rock Island "Depot Days" in Council Bluffs on Saturday, September 15, and Sunday,

September 26. The depot is home of the "RailsWest Railroad Museum and HO Model Railroad." The depot, placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, is located at 16th Avenue and South main Street, one mile north of Interstate 80, exit 3. Hours on Saturday will be from

10:100 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday from noon until 5:00 p.m.

Members of the Greater Omaha Society of Model Engineers will be operating their extensive HO Model Railroad. Various freight, coal, grain and passenger trains.

(continued page 5)

History Links the Past to the Present

History affects everyone, whether they like it or not. What happens now becomes history as soon as its complete. Today, that awareness has been made even more acute by the mass media, which has brought us all together through modern technology. What happens on one side of the country or world greatly affects those of us living on the other side. But this wasn't always the case.

A the land affected the general history of a region, so did it affect the region's social and economic history. The lives of farmers in the North were vastly different from those in the South. The environment of each region produced men with different attitudes, religious beliefs, and economic stability. Local history helps a genealogist understand the details of the lives of residents, both how they moved within a region and why they migrated from it.

When the great westward migration began in the early 19th century, groups of people traveled over trails set by explorers. The history of these migration paths and the places migrants settled must be understood by even the beginning genealogist, especially when he or she finds that their ancestry has gone west.

Since men tended to live where there was work, local, regional and national history become affected. In addition, the economic conditions in a particular area had an effect on the lives of not only these men's families but also on their customs.

When new industries moved into a region, the population increased. When work was no longer available, families moved. Where people go can become a genealogical research nightmare. However, the history of the place they left can often point the researcher in the right direction.

If farming is productive or work constant, families tended to remain in one place for generations. Without a large influx of new families, it was possible to maintain local customs for a long time. The families formed a cohesive group, much like the Amish in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Also, local history helps point out the nationality of the groups that settled there. The population of Pittsburgh is made up of a number of ethnic groups who came to work in the steel mills. These people brought with them their customs in religion, marriage and daily living from their homelands.

Sometimes, when great numbers of an ethnic group settled in one area, the original settlers would find it profitable to sell out to the newcomers and move on. Knowing the occupation of those who moved may be helpful in tracing where they went. Work in newly opened places often called out to families in which the father and sons were skilled carpenters, blacksmiths, weavers or traders. Just as the early colonists of the United States consisted of skilled workmen, so other settlements required the experienced worker.

In modern times, whole groups of immigrants have been sent from their port of entry to the industries where they were needed. The building of the railroads in the 19th century is a good example. Also the mines of Eastern Pennsylvania, the farms of mid-America and the lumbering operations in the northwest, all accepted and absorbed immigrants.

Wars have also had an effect on population shifts. The soldiers who fought in them saw new and more desirable lands and ways of life. The French and Indian War took men from their occupations in the colonies to distant regions they knew only vaguely. During the Revolutionary War, men from all over the colonies left home, many for the first time. In fact, the Revolution did as much to open up this country as the explorers. Soldiers from one region got to know what another was like and this had a long-lasting effect. The Civil War, and World Wars I and II had the same effect.

Tracing a family following a war may be difficult, but if the former soldier received either land or a pension for his services and move don, he can probably be found in the records of the part of the country where he served.

(From "Antique Week", March 8, 1999, by Bob Brooke; contributed by Darlene Vergamini)

September in History

- September 1, 1752 The Liberty Bell arrived in Philadelphia
- September 1, 1805 Zebulon M. Pike arrived at Dubuque's Mines
- September 3, 1857 The Constitution of Iowa of 1857 went into effect
- September 6, 1834 The first counties in Iowa- Dubuque and Demoine- were created by the Territory of Michigan
- September 6, 1869 The first westbound train arrived in San Francisco
- September 9, 1956 Elvis Presely appeared on national TV for the first time- on the Ed Sullivan Show
- September 23, 1806 Lewis and Clark returned to St. Louis from their expedition
- September 26, 1820 Daniel Boone, Frontiersman, died in Missouri at the age of 85
- September 26, 1891 Earthquake felt throughout eastern Iowa
- September 27, 1909 Earthquake recorded in Southwestern Iowa

Fans were known to the ancients, and kept the flies off Pharaoh. The Japanese, clever as always, devised the folding variety, and they became enormously popular in the Western world. Whether the thing was made of feathers, silk, or paper, the idea at first was simply to cool the person. But there was something exquisitely graceful about a beautiful lady waving her fan, and as women will, they discovered it. It was a new way to say yes, no, or maybe. Americans naturally systematized the codes of fan signals, and we print one such code, dated 1879 below. This publication takes no responsibility for any problems our readers may incur by using it. Like Colt, we merely sell the weapon.



<i>Carrying in left hand,</i>	DESIROUS OF ACQUAINTANCE.
<i>Placing it on left ear,</i>	YOU HAVE CHANGED.
<i>Twirling in left hand,</i>	I WISH TO GET RID OF YOU.
<i>Drawing across forehead,</i>	WE ARE WATCHED.
<i>Carrying in right hand,</i>	YOU ARE TOO WILLING.
<i>Drawing through the hand,</i>	I HATE YOU.
<i>Twirling in the right hand,</i>	I LOVE ANOTHER.
<i>Drawing across the cheek,</i>	I LOVE YOU.
<i>Closing it,</i>	I WISH TO SPEAK TO YOU.
<i>Carrying in right hand front of face,</i>	FOLLOW ME.

<i>Drawing across the eyes,</i>	I AM SORRY.
<i>Letting it rest on right cheek,</i>	YES.
<i>Letting it rest on left cheek,</i>	NO.
<i>Open and shut,</i>	YOU ARE CRUEL.
<i>Dropping,</i>	WE WILL BE FRIENDS.
<i>Fanning slow,</i>	I AM MARRIED.
<i>Fanning fast,</i>	I AM ENGAGED.
<i>With handle to lips,</i>	KISS ME.
<i>Shut,</i>	YOU HAVE CHANGED.
<i>Open wide,</i>	WAIT FOR ME.

(both items on this page contributed by Darlene Vergamini)

Two Savage Tribes Once Battled Near Present Day Carson

The student of local history is often led to wonder why there is so little Indian history, legend, or any evidence of a former occupation in southwestern Iowa. It is known that the hills along the Missouri river were a favorite meeting place of the tribes, and tradition says that Council Bluffs received its name from a council of the chiefs held there many years before Frank Guittar established his government post in 1827; before Mart and Richard Hardin came to teach our red brother the use of the hoe and spade and before the tide of Mormon emigration had come to locate the future metropolis. When such a council was held who held it, and its exact location is now very largely matters of speculation, while the wide expanse of forest and prairie stretching from the Missouri east to the Des Moines has scarcely a mark or story to indicate its existence previous to the coming of the white man.

Was Neutral Ground.

The accepted reason given from the fact that this portion of Iowa had not read Indian history is, that so far as the events could be traced, this was a neutral ground, never permanently occupied by any one tribe. To the north were the fierce and warlike Sioux; to the east were the more peaceful Iowa tribes. West of the Missouri were the Pawnees and to the southward several tribes roamed over the plains of Missouri and Kansas. Western Iowa lay as

neutral land between, blunted over by each in turn, but, with a diplomacy equal to that now made manifest in the "European situation."

No tribe would submit to its permanent occupancy by its usually hostile and always distrusted neighbors. In consequence there would be little of history or narrative attaching to this country for of its migratory visitors, who hunted through its forests, fished in its streams or followed the deer across its rolling prairies, there would be little or nothing worthy of remembrance or record. In this situation it is safe to say that the only occurrences of an active or tragic interest would be in the accidental meeting of hostile parties, and it is of such an encounter, not far from the very spot, the present narrative has to tell.

The story comes to us from Dr. John C. Johnson, for thirty years government physician among the tribes of the Indian Territory. The vents as narrated were given him about twenty-five years ago by Charles Journeycake, chief of the Delawares, dwelling on their reservation in the territory. "Journeycake" was a chief of some importance and is well known in the history of his day. His name, like most of the Indian names, was derivative and pertained to the fact that his grandfather had once made a long journey with no food but a single cake.

In the Early Seventies.

The old chief was then about 75 years of age, and as the incident related had occurred while he was a young man, Dr. Johnson places it as about seventy-five or eighty years ago- probably during the early 1820's. At the time, as the venerable chief told the doctor, a party of twelve Delawares left their home in what is now the eastern portion of Kansas, probably not far from the present city of Leavenworth, and came up the Missouri for a visit with the Pottawattamies. These they found, according to the old chief's story, somewhere near the present site of Omaha, but probably upon the east bank of the river. The two tribes were at peace and the visitors were accorded a hearty welcome.

Out on Last Hunt.

Several days were spent in feasting and in the sports peculiar to the tribes, then the visitors, accompanied by a son of the Pottawattamie chief, started on a hunt. They traveled due east for about thirty miles, said the old chief, when they came to a river, and there encamped in a grove they discovered a large party of Sioux about thirty strong. The camp was but slightly guarded, the warriors being scattered in pursuit of game, and the Delawares, recognizing the Sioux as their sworn foes, immediately attacked the camp. Being but poorly guarded the Delawares at first drove them away.

("Savage Tribes", continued from previous page)

But the alarm being quickly spread called the warriors from the hunt and the little party of but thirteen were quickly surrounded. The fought desperately and many Sioux were killed and wounded, but the difference in numbers was too great to admit of but a single termination. OF the twelve Delawares but one escaped. Though badly wounded he managed in some way to elude his enemies and made his way across the prairies to the southeastward. Near the present town of mount Ayr, the county seat of Ringgold county, he found a party of Creeks, who received him into their camp. He remained with this tribe for two or three years, but never recovered from the effects of his wounds and exposure and died without having seen his own people, who for many years knew little of nothing of the fate that had overtaken the party.

The son of the Pottawattamie chief was also wounded, his jaw being torn and broken by a gunshot wound, but he too contrived to escape the vigilance of the Sioux, and, hiding under the banks of the river until nightfall, made his way back to his father's camp on the Missouri.

Remembers Event Well.

The old chief told Dr. Johnson that as a young man he remembered distinctly when the twelve went away never to return, and many years afterward, while in attendance upon a peace conference at Washington, he met with members of the Creek nation who told how the solitary

member to that party had come to their camp; of his story of the fight and his subsequent death, and in the same conference was an old Sioux chief who had been present at- or at least had full knowledge of- the death fight of the Delawares on the banks of the Nishnabotna.

This is the story as told by the old Delaware chieftain, and Dr. Johnson finds no reason to doubt its accuracy. If the chief was correct as to the meeting place of the tribes being near Omaha, the distance eastward to the river would agree closely with the narrative, and the fight must have occurred not far from this place, probably near Big Grove (Oakland), or Macedonia, or it may have been that the distances were not accurately estimated and the encounter may have taken place on the East Botna. It would be interesting, at all events, to know just where it did occur. The story is here given as the one stray bit of Indian tragedy attached to the banks of the Botna.

(Contributed by Darlene Vergamini)

Bloomers Must Go

Montgomery, Ala.- Representative Timberlake introduced a bill into the general assembly yesterday seeking to make it unlawful for any woman to wear any article of men's clothing or any costume that appeals to the passions of men. The bill specifically prohibits the wearing of bloomers, tights, divided skirts and shirt waists.

(Contributed by Darlene Vergamini)

("Depot Days", continued from page 1)

These HO model trains will be operating on the mainline while other trains are made up and switching is done in the various rail yards.

There will be free railroad related material for both children and adults. Railroad artifacts and memorabilia will be available for sale.

A special attraction anticipated this year are the Burlington rail cars (a 1917 caboose and 1927 lounge car) and Burlington 1901 steam locomotive to be available for exterior viewing. The Rails West museum has new tracks in place to display these cars which have for the past several years been located at Dodge Park in Council Bluffs; it is believed they will be in place in time for Depot Days, joining the 1967 Rock Island Caboose and 1963 Union Pacific Railway Post Office car which have been a part of the museum collection for a number of years. A 460,000 pound 1937 Union Pacific steam locomotive, currently located at Dodge park, will also become a part of the Historical Society collection later this fall.

There is an admission to the museum and model railroad, but a 50 cent discount is given for each River City Roundup button. Regular prices are adults, \$3.00, children age 6 to 12, \$1.50, and children under age 6 free with a paid adult.

(contributed by Marcia Hastings)

**Historical Society of Pottawattamie
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The Historical Society of Pottawattamie County is dedicated to the preservation of books, letters, sites, records, artifacts and buildings of historical significance in the county. The Society operates and is restoring the Historic Squirrel Cage Jail, Rock Island Depot, involved in the efforts to create a local museum, and is active in promoting historical and genealogical research.

Requests for information about Society projects, membership, and volunteer work are welcomed. Write the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County, Post Office Box 2, Council Bluffs, IA, 51502.

The Historical Society of Pottawattamie County Member Newsletter is printed eleven times a year and mailed to all members. The membership mailing list is maintained by the Society Secretary, Robert Hastings. Please direct any address corrections to Mr. Hastings at 322-0612 or to the Society post office box listed above.

Members are always welcome to attend a Board Meeting. Anyone desiring to speak at the meeting should send a letter or call either the Secretary or President to be placed on the agenda.

Historical Society

Of Pottawattamie County

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