

# Downers Grove Reporter

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**"And The Star Spangled Banner Forever Shall Wave, O'er The Land of The Free and The Home of The Brave."**



## SMALL AUDIENCE HEARS INTERESTING EARLY FACTS

Local Historical Society Meeting Held at Library Hall on Tuesday Evening.

An audience very small, considering the importance of the meeting, heard reminiscences of old settlers at the Library Tuesday night at a meeting of the Downers Grove Historical Society.

Mrs. W. H. Blodgett was the first speaker. She told of the society's object which is to compile a history of the community, mostly in the form of personal experiences of old settlers and have it for reference at the Library. This includes the writing of personal reminiscences. Mrs. E. Farrar and Mr. Walter Lyman are two who have already promised to do this.

The Musical program Tuesday included a piano solo by Miss Esther Klein and a vocal solo by Miss Mildred Potter accompanied by Miss Julia P. Hall. Both of these young ladies greatly pleased the audience by their efforts.

Mrs. Cora Blodgett read a paper "Reminiscences of an Old Settler" written by her father, I. P. Blodgett. This paper is printed in its entirety to show the real need for the historical society and the really interesting facts about the times gone by which would be made available for the present generation and for posterity.

Reminiscences of an Old Settler. I was born in Amherst, Mass. September 14th, 1823. My parents were Israel Porter Blodgett and Avia Dodge Blodgett.

In 1830 my father with several others organized what was called the Hampshire Colony with plans to settle in Illinois. He with two others were selected to go to Illinois in the fall of 1830 and select a location for the colony. However they could not agree on a location and father finally decided on the east branch of the DuPage river, about five miles south of Naperville, where he made a claim and built a house for his family, who were to join him the following summer.

In May, 1831, we journeyed from Massachusetts to Illinois by wagon from Amherst to Albany, by canal boat to Buffalo, the steamboat to Detroit, and by wagon to Chicago, taking about six weeks on the road to make the trip.

There were only a few white families in Chicago at that time and there were only two stores where dry goods, groceries and Indian goods were kept. There was a ferry across the south branch of the river, about where Lake Street crosses; and another across the main branch near where Dearborn Street crosses.

While waiting for my father to come to Chicago for us, we were the guests of a Mrs. McKee, who was so pleased by the arrival of another white woman into the country that she gave a big party to celebrate the event, to which every white woman in the town was invited, and they all came, and including my mother and the hostess there were eight ladies present, all of whom formed life long friendships. From Chicago we went to our new home on the DuPage. There were at that time three other families in that vicinity.

A few weeks after we moved into our own house, a man on horse back came up to the door, leading two negroes whose hands were tied. He asked mother for a drink of water. She filled a pail from a near by spring, and returning began giving the negroes a drink. The man with

an oath asked her why she was giving water to the negroes and said that he had asked for water for himself and not for them. She replied that the spring was there and he could help himself, and they could not therefore she gave water to them and not to him.

During the following winter, for about eight weeks, we had no corn meal or flour and lived principally on hulls of corn and pounded corn, but all both old and young enjoyed the rough fare and were in the best of health.

About this time the Blackhawk trouble was at its height and early in the spring rumors were flying about that Blackhawk and his band of Sacha and Foxes were coming back to Illinois to make war on the settlers. On the tenth of May old Apataksie, otherwise known as Half-day, Chief of one of the bands of Pottowotamies who were friendly to the whites and made almost daily visits to the homes of the settlers, came to our house about midnight and gave a whoop. When father opened the door, he at once began to tell him he was to take his family and get away from here as soon as possible, as Blackhawk and his head men had been in Wabansaw village, now Aurora, in consultation with the Pottowotamies, the day before, trying to influence them to join him in a war he was determined to make against the white people. Father at once aroused the family and my oldest brother was sent in one direction and the hired man in another to alarm the neighborhood and by daylight all the settlers in our vicinity not including Naperville, as Half-day had already warned them, were gathered together and on the road to Chicago.

Our march with ox teams was necessarily a slow one and we camped that night in the vicinity of what is now Riverside, then known as Laugh-ton's Place, and the next morning, moved on across the prairie to Chicago. Old Half-day followed us, all the way, never saying a word until we were in sight of Fort Dearborn. He then waved us goodbye, turned his horse and disappeared.

Fortunately, there was quite a supply of food in the Fort consisting of pork, flour, salt, sugar, etc. Rations were distributed every morning, and guards were on duty from 6 p. m. to 6 a. m. Sentinels were also on duty during the day. We remained at the Fort nearly six weeks. About the first of July, a messenger came to the Fort and notified the settlers that they must leave, as two companies of regular troops had been sent from the east to regarrison the Fort. This produced great consternation among the settlers, whose interests did not seem to be at all regarded by Major Whistler, the Commander. After several interviews, however, he agreed that the women and children might remain in the Fort and a portion of the barracks were set apart for them. The men from the DuPage settlement at once started back and began the erection of a fort within the bounds of where Naperville now is. They worked rapidly and in about two weeks moved their families into this log fort, where they remained for five weeks, when all rumors of war ceased and they returned to their homes.

By this time there were some twenty or twenty-five families in our vicinity and on returning from the fort a meeting was called to decide on a school house, which was built and ready to be occupied by the first of December. A Mr. Strong taught that winter. Father also built a blacksmith shop, and resumed his trade as a blacksmith.

In February 1836, we moved to Downers Grove, and here father carried on his blacksmithing, as well as farming, and he made the first plow which would work in prairie soil and scour itself. He never patented this improvement, and other plow makers copied his work much to their profit.

On the 16th of March, 1849, in company with E. Wells and John and Charles Peck, of Lombard, I started from Downers Grove with three yoke of oxen and a wagon load of food and camping outfit for the long overland journey to California. Just to illustrate this slow mode of travel, the first night found us one and one-half miles past Naperville. The second day brought us a couple of miles past Aurora. About 20 miles this side of St. Joe, Mo., owing to some slight disagreement, we decided to separate, and Mr. Wells and myself bought the wagon which was owned by the Pecks.

The Pecks took their yoke of oxen and one joined the Gooding boys from Joliet, the other hiring out to drive a team. We camped in St. Joe about ten days, waiting for the grass to grow so we might have feed for our cattle, as grain was scarce. While there we remodeled our wagon and bought two cows which we broke to harness and used as leaders of the team. We crossed the Missouri river on the 10th of May.

On leaving St. Joe we joined the Peoria company and went with them to South Pass, where the road forked, one leading to Salt Lake, the other to Fort Hall. A part of the company wanted to take the Salt Lake road, but also the argument was taken up after we went into camp for the night, and again next morning, we had not come to any definite agreement when we broke camp. Arriving at the forks I turned the team that I was driving into the Salt Lake road and said "All who want to go to Salt Lake, follow." Two teams followed and the other 20 took the Fort Hall road.

Arriving at Salt Lake, we traded the two yoke of oxen and the two cows together with a bucket of hard bread and enough calico for a woman's dress, for two yoke of oxen. Having a fresh team, we left the rest of the party and went independent until we reached Black Rock, Nevada, where we fell in with the Gooding company.

It took six months and four days to get to Sacramento Valley. From there went up to Feather river, near the Oregon line, where I spent most of the time for ten years I was in California.

I returned by the way of Cape Horn, and probably those who returned that way experienced but a minimum of the dangers and discomforts which were the lot of those who crossed by other routes, yet to those who endured the close between decks of a storm tossed vessel, with twice a day ration of salt pork, sow belly, and wormy bread, washed down by insipid water, with an additional dish of scouse, a dish made of hard bread, salt pork and salted bull beef, with an additional dessert of rice and back molasses, endured as only those could who sought a country which would provide them with the comforts for the rest of their lives, little reckoning that disappointment awaited the great majority even of those who survived the toil and hardship.

### ASKING FOR BIDS FOR NEW POST OFFICE LOCATION

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT Office of the Chief Inspector, Washington.

Special Notice

March 29th, 1919.

The undersigned will receive proposals up to and including April 29, 1919, for the furnishing of suitable quarters for post office purposes at Downers Grove, Illinois under a lease for five or ten years from January 1, 1920 in accordance with the attached blank form, which, as will be noted, calls for the furnishing of rent, heat, light, water, closets, urinals, safe or vault, and all necessary furniture and equipment for the proper conduct of said office at a stated price per annum.

There will be needed in this instance: Not less than 1400 square feet of floor space.

Good day-light. Location not too far from business center and within eighty rods of railroad depots are points for general consideration.

Blank proposals and specifications may be obtained from the postmaster. The form of lease may be examined at the post office.

Diagrams of the rooms offered should be submitted, showing dimensions, windows, etc.

The right is reserved to reject any or all proposals.

J. E. A. Sullivan, Post Office Inspector, Chicago, Illinois.

Charles Carpenter returned Tuesday to Norfolk, Va., to rejoin his ship after a ten-day furlough spent with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Carpenter. He made three trips over on the Cruiser Minneapolis in the conveyance service.

## ADDITIONAL LOCALS

Ho Hum! You guessed it — Spring Fever.

Fancy onion sets and early seed potatoes at Lehmann & Michel's. adv.

Large variety of garden seeds in bulk at Lehmann & Michel's. adv.

Well March sure went out like a lion and if our memory is correct, it came in the same way.

Mrs. E. L. Cox is visiting with her parents in Oakfield, Wis. and expects to spend two weeks there.

Full assortment of Poultry, Garden and Field fencing at Mertz & Mochel's. adv.

All kinds of vegetable and flower seed, 3 cents per pkg. at Lehmann & Michel's. adv.

Pulverized sheep manure, the ideal fertilizer for garden and lawn, \$2.25 per 100lb sack, at Mertz & Mochel's. adv.

Pansies. Now is the time for transplanting. Large assortment in colors, of good, healthy plants. Phone 136-J. C. V. Wolf, Florist adv.

Men wanted—We need ten men for Nursery and Landscape work. Apply at once. Littleford Nurseries. Phone 312-J. adv.

W. H. Carpenter has returned from the West Suburban Hospital where he has been for three weeks and where he underwent a serious operation.

Hear the wonderful tone of the Brunswick Phonograph. Plays all records correctly without extra attachment. For demonstration, call G. A. Camp, phone 48-R. 3-14-2p

Theodore Erickson, Marine, returned Saturday from Paris Island on an indefinite furlough. He is hoping that means a discharge as he is anxious to return to civil life.

Mrs. A. Stamford White and daughter, Mrs. Earl H. Hoover, of Chicago, were visitors in Downers Grove Monday, the guests of Dr. Gourley's family.

J. W. Nash received a wire from his son, Forrest, Tuesday morning, saying he was at Camp Mills, N. Y. after a sight seeing tour of France. He was under fire not once but many times.

Barnard's Perpetual Green mixed lawn seed, 30 cents a pound. Fancy Kentucky Blue Grass, 35 cents per pound. Pine Tree mixed lawn seed, 20 cents a pound. Less 2 cents per pound in 5lb lots at Mertz & Mochel's. adv.

The M. E. Philaetha Class will hold their regular business meeting and social hour Monday evening, April 7th, at the home of Mrs. Bentley on Gilbert Avenue. Important business on hand, all members requested to be there.

The dinner given by Mrs. Dora Drew on Wednesday evening, March 26th, in honor of Mr. Witt's birthday, was attended also by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Witt, their names having been left out in last week's issue of the Reporter.

## RESERVE MILITIA WILL PARADE AT OAK PARK SUNDAY

Headquarters Second Infantry, Illinois Reserve Militia, Chicago, Ill., Mar. 29. GENERAL ORDER NO. 19.

1. This Command will assemble at 3:00 p. m., April 6, 1919, at the High School Athletic Field, Oak Park, Illinois, and will march from there to the Concordia Field, Oak Park, and will give a Parade and Review.

2. Service uniforms, overcoats, belts outside of overcoats, will be worn. If the weather is threatening, ponchos may also be carried. This Ceremony will take place under arms.

J. C. Wilson, Col. 2nd Inf. I. R. M. Attention Company H!

Pursuant to General Orders No. 19 above, assembly will be at 2:00 p. m. at the Armory.

A generous response of car owners

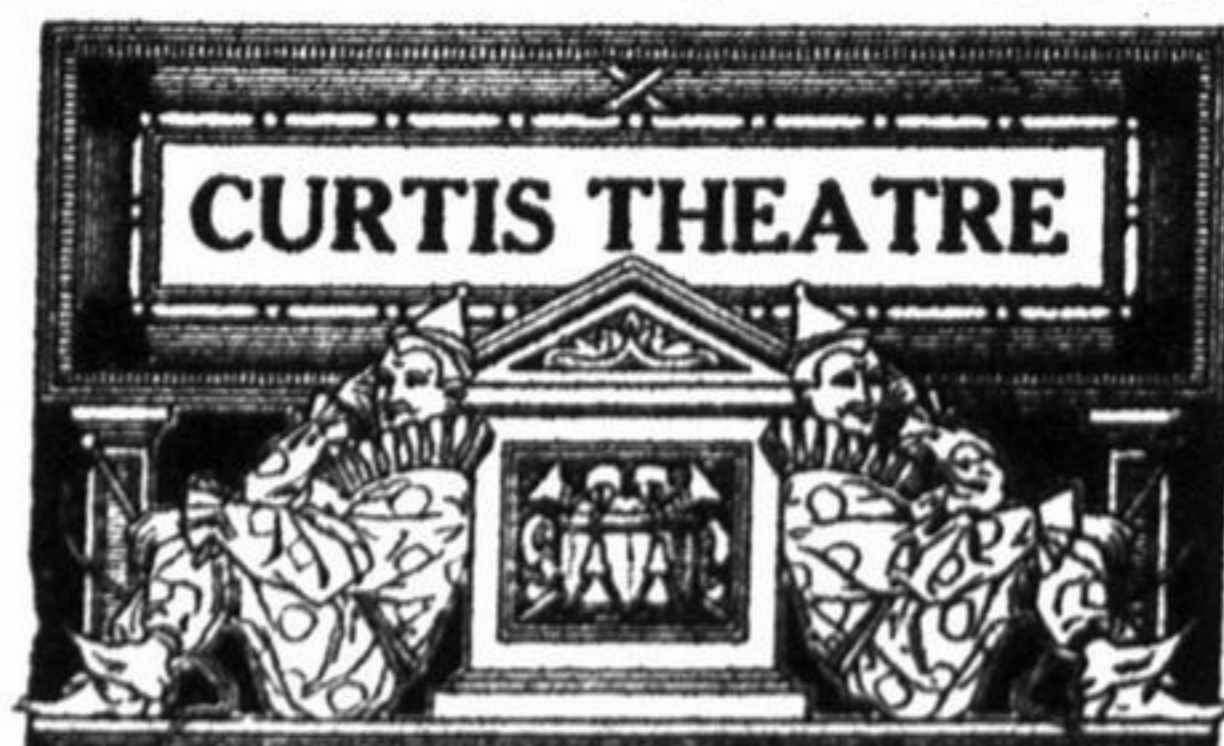
is hoped for, so that it will not be necessary for Co. H men to drive their own cars. If any owners of cars have been overlooked by Lieutenant of Transports, Wm. F. Heints, 205-W and who would like to serve, please call him up anytime Saturday, so he can arrange his detail.

All furloughs of Company H men are hereby cancelled for April 6th, as they are not operative for Regimental or Battalion Assembly. Sickness or absence from town on business will be the only excuses recognized, and then only when reported to squad leaders or platoon commanders.

We must have eight squads every man on the job.

To discharged men of the U. S. Army an invitation is extended to fill in vacancies which might occur, in the event of no vacancies you are welcome as guests, there will be ample room in the transports for all, including gobs and marines.

Capt. B. E. Balczynski.



Direction of Millard Campbell.

TODAY, Saturday, April 5th at THE CURTISS, we present to you —

## The Great NAZIMOVA IN HER UNEQUALED SUCCESS

### "An Eye For an Eye"

NAZIMOVA IS CONCEDED TO BE THE MOST FASCINATING AND TALENTED ACTRESS ON THE SCREEN. She may be seen in this thrilling production at the Curtiss only in Downers Grove. The play is a vivid drama of the Orient and the great Star will be seen in the role of Hassouna, a girl of the desert. You will not be disappointed at seeing this feature.

Also a Big-V, TWO-REEL COMEDY & PATHE NEWS!

TUESDAY, APRIL 8th WE OFFER YOU ALICE JOYCE, in her latest feature, "THE CAMBRIC MASK." This will be the first showing of this picture in the State of Illinois.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10th WILLIAM RUSSELL in WHERE THE WEST BEGINS DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

Prices, Children at the Matinee 5c. Adults 10c Night Prices, 10 and 20 cents



## THOR Electric Washers \$10.00 DOWN

Places this fine machine in your home. The balance you pay in instalments of \$10.00 each and the machine is soon yours for about the same price you would pay for a wash woman.

Don't you think this is a good investment and can you afford to be without it? It's as good as a government bond and pays you a high rate of interest on the money invested.

The machine is good for 20 years service and pays for itself in about one year, and is not an expense but a money saver.

Come in and see it run. It's a young laundry and will save many a doctor and hospital bill and perhaps the life some one to you.

## J. D. GILLESPIE & Co., Agents

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