

The Illinois Centennial Anniversary

By J. Seymour Currey.

THERE were several dates occurring during the year 1818 which marked some important event connected with the admission of Illinois as a state in the Union, culminating with the act of congress on December 3 of that year. The passage of this act was the decisive step in the series. It is this day therefore that we distinguish as the Centennial anniversary of the state's admission into the Union, the most important anniversary in the history of Illinois. Illinois had existed as a territory for nine years before it became a state, having formed a part of the territory of Indiana from 1800 to 1809. During the latter part of the time that Illinois was a territory, Nathaniel Pope was the territorial delegate in congress, and on April 7 in the year 1818, he introduced a bill to admit Illinois as a state in the Union. This bill was favorably acted upon by the committees to which the measure was referred. A few days later the measure was brought before congress for discussion and at that time Pope proposed an amendment regarding the northern boundary of the new state, namely, that instead of an east and west line from the foot of Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river, as proposed in the bill, the line should be drawn on the parallel of forty-two degrees and thirty minutes, that is, from a point on Lake Michigan sixty-one miles north of the line specified and thence west to the Mississippi.

Pope Explains Object

"The object of this amendment," Mr. Pope said, "was to gain for the proposed state a coast on Lake Michigan. This would offer additional security to the perpetuity of the union, inasmuch as the state would thereby be connected with the states of Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York through the lakes." The arguments of Mr. Pope carried conviction and the measure with this important amendment was adopted by congress on the 18th of April, generally referred to as the "Enabling Act." The region thus added included the present site of the city of Chicago, which under the terms of the original bill would have been left entirely outside of the new state.

At that time Chicago was a mere frontier trading post, consisting of a few rough dwellings situated near the stockaded enclosure of the second Fort Dearborn, and its future importance as a commercial center was but little understood by the public men of that time. Pope, however, clearly discerned the value of its situation and this is the more remarkable for he had never visited the spot and could only judge from an inspection of the maps which had, indeed, reached a high degree of accuracy, even in those early times.

"When we reflect that the region affected by Pope's amendment," says a writer, "was as yet an almost unbroken wilderness, that the advantageous position of Chicago and its contiguous territory was only a matter of speculation, we must recognize in Pope's action in proposing and urging the adoption of his amendment the work of a keen and far-

sighted statesman." The Enabling Act became a law April 18, 1818. It provided for an election by the people to choose delegates to a convention for the formation of a constitution, which, accordingly was held early in the following July. The labors of this convention were concluded August 26, and a copy of the constitution was at once sent to congress for its approval.

Question Before Congress

Late in November the question of the approval of the constitution came up in congress and after considerable discussion it was duly accepted as satisfactory, and the act admitting Illinois as a state in the Union was finally passed December 3, 1818, being the twenty-first state so admitted. Shadrach Bond was elected the first governor. This day is therefore the Centennial anniversary of its statehood, and the year 1918 is designated the "Centennial Year."

An anniversary of this kind serves to recall an event to the later generations for instruction and comparison. It is an incentive to patriotism and progressive citizenship stimulating the interest of intelligent observers among the people. Such an interest is a fundamental element in our system of government and our guiding statesmen and law-making bodies do well to encourage the observance of anniversaries of historical events as well as important dates in the lives of distinguished persons. It encourages the study of history which, as Cervantes says, "is the depository of great actions, the witness of what is past, the example and instructor of the present, and the monitor of the future."

Two years ago the Illinois legislature created a "Centennial Commission" to arrange details for the proper observance of the various anniversaries occurring in the present year. The most important action taken was a provision for a memorial building to be situated near the capitol at Springfield. A million dollars will be spent by the state in the construction of this building, the cornerstone of which has been laid in this present year. In it will be housed the state historical society, the state library, a Lincoln memorial room, the state museum and some other departments. The commission has taken under its auspices the celebrations at different places of the centennial in the form of pageants, parades and great meetings.

Have Special Coin

In commemoration of the centennial year congress has authorized the coinage of 100,000 half dollars bearing a special design, these half dollars to be sold for one dollar each. They can now be procured at all the banks, the profit on the sales to be applied to the expenses of celebrations throughout the state. The Evanston Historical society is in possession of one of these interesting coins. Two statues, one of Lincoln and the other of Douglas, have been dedicated this last fall, both of them placed on the beautiful sloping lawn in front of the capitol, whose lofty dome overlooks the city and country in its vicinity.

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WAR-LOVE DRAMA AT VICTORIA NEXT WEEK

There is something sadly sweet in the title, "The Girl He Left Behind". Its sentiment is wafted down from the period of '61, when Uncle Sam's boys marched away to the martial strains of "The Girl I Left Behind Me" with loyalty in their stout American hearts, but a lump in their throats at parting with "the" someone left behind. It was always a mother, sometimes a sister and just as often perhaps someone else's sister to whom the farewells were spoken with a laugh on their lips and a smothered sob in their hearts.

Billy Allison of "The Fighting Allisons" had but on thought on leaving and that was to "get over there" on the first transport, the quicker the better. His "grandpa" was one of the first volunteers under Lincoln in the other days, and "Billy" was a "chip of the old block".

There was a sweetheart that Billy was leaving, but like his grand sire there was not only a smile on his lips but a lusty song in his voice "Always leave them smiling when you say good-bye", when he waved his farewell to the loved ones at the garden gate. There's other mighty interesting things told about "Billy" that will be heard in the beautiful "love story of rose time" in "The Girl He Left Behind", which comes to the Victoria theater, for one week, on Sunday, December 15.

Kenilworth Boys Returning

Henry Everett Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Everett of Kenilworth, is expected home from France by Christmas. He has been with Capt. Marshall Field's regiment, Lieut. Francis Allen, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Allen of Kenilworth, is due in New York next Sunday. He has been in the aviation service.

F. H. ANDERSON DIES IN CANADA

Dr. Frank H. Anderson, well known north shore veterinarian and Republican leader, died of heart trouble Saturday afternoon at the home of his parents in Forest, Ontario, Canada, after an illness which lasted since July 5 of this year. Private funeral services were conducted from his home in Evanston Wednesday.

Dr. Anderson enjoyed a wide acquaintance among north shore residents. He was one of the best known veterinarians in the state. For years his practice carried him along the north shore where he cared for the blooded stock on many estates. During the Spanish-American war he aided the American government in selecting horses for the military and he did the same thing for the British army during the early days of the war with Germany.

Overseas Gasoline Demand

Since the signing of the armistice the overseas demand for motor transport grade of gasoline has increased rather than diminished. The motor transport grade and the two aviation qualities are chief items in the overseas demand upon American supply sources. Aviation demands have greatly increased. Overseas demands as well as domestic requirements will have a considerable bearing upon any decision as to whether it is desirable to fix a standard of quality for domestic motor gasoline. The Fuel administration has for some time had under consideration the question of a domestic standard.

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