

PRAIRIE DAYS

Probably some time before 1845 N. W. McVicker had first come into Iowa, and he divided his time attending school a while at Rochester (Cedar County) working with the John Morgan family (his sister Pop's family) and working for others. It seems that with the work of breaking up the sod, draining of swamps, and making the soil habitable in general, grubbing brush, and the clearing of forest for that section that there must have been plenty of work for the pioneers to do. He was in Cedar Rapids when it was a shanty town, and the best lots sold for \$5. He voted there at 18. He related in his experiences of one being on a far trip afoot between Cedar Rapids and probably as far North as Mason City--a hundred miles or more. No landmarks blazed the trail. No prairie sod houses offered rest. Night came on when he was far away from any human habitation. He lay down to rest upon the prairie sod, gazing up at the stars, hearing the gentle sighing and rustling of the summer breeze, and in that place of solitude and open spaces there took his rest for the night. The pioneer must have shared with the Indian the propensity to accommodate himself to the open spaces. Often he related he was wracked with ague in common with others of the pioneers. No special treatment was afforded for the ills of the pioneers. They simply endured and wore out the ailments.

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