

Pieces of Iowa's Past, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

January 25, 2017

This Week: Reviewing the Twenty-Seventh Iowa General Assembly

Background:

This year begins the 87th Iowa General Assembly. The first eight *Pieces of Iowa's Past* articles this year will briefly examine the work of the 7th, 17th, 27th, 37th, 47th, 57th, 67th, and 77th general assemblies.

Twenty-Seventh Iowa General Assembly



Governor Leslie Shaw

The 27th General Assembly convened for 82 days from January 10 to April 1, 1898. Governor Francis Drake was at the end of his term, and Governor Leslie Shaw was inaugurated January 13, 1898. He was 49 years old.

There were 50 members in the Senate: 11 Democrats and 39 Republicans. Lieutenant Governor James Milliman presided over the Senate.

There were 100 members in the House of Representatives: 31 Democrats, 62 Republicans, four Silver Republicans, and three Populist members. James Funk was Speaker of the House.

Iowa's population had grown to 2,231,853, according to the 1900 federal census.

From the Senate Journal, January 10, 1898:

Senator Cheshire offered a resolution that George H. Cleggett be authorized to place a barber's chair in the cloak room without expense to the state, for the use of Senators and employees of the Senate.



Speaker James Funk



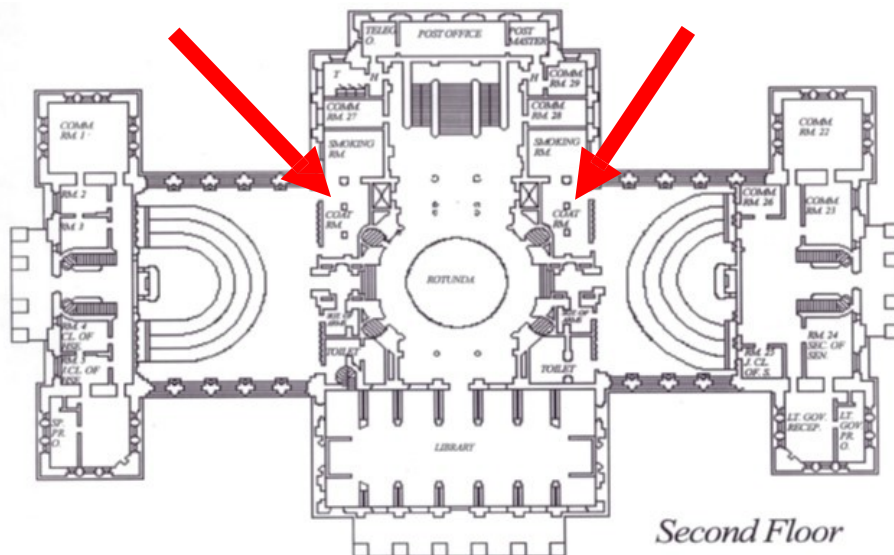
**Lieutenant Governor
James Milliman**

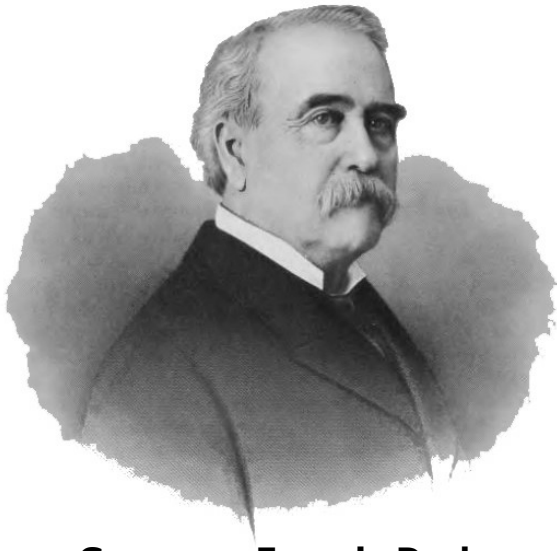
From the House Journal, January 10, 1898:

Representative Carr offered a resolution calling for W. H. Gordon to be granted the privilege of placing his barber chair in the cloak room for the session.

Representative Bailey offered a substitute resolution that G. W. Nichols be allowed to place his barber chair in the cloak room for the session. The substitute resolution was adopted.

Representative Klemme offered a resolution that Frederick Wright be granted the privilege of keeping, at his own expense, a boot-black chair in the cloak room of the House, for the accommodation of members and employees of the House.





Governor Francis Drake

From Governor Drake's Biennial message to the House of Representatives and the Senate:

The Governor's message appeared in the House Journal on January 10 and in the Senate Journal on January 11, 1898. Governor Drake would leave office on January 13, 1898.

Governor Drake remarked on the great improvement in the State library. The library had been extensively rearranged and a large space utilized that was previously unoccupied. A large number of books had been added to the collection, requiring more space. There were 8,299 volumes added, including 3,015 by donation or exchange.

Governor Drake spoke on the Traveling Library established by the Twenty-sixth General Assembly. Fifty Traveling libraries existed containing in all 2,500 volumes "traveling to places otherwise unsupplied with such facilities."

Senate File 167 called for an appropriation to expand Iowa's Traveling Library.

The appropriations bill for the Traveling Library passed the House and Senate, but was not signed by Governor Shaw.

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/shelves/billbooks/27GA/SF%200167.pdf>

Drake commented on the success of the Semi-Centennial Celebration* that took place in Burlington in October 1896. The celebration lasted eight days and cost the State the sum of \$9,976.

<http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2172&context=annals-of-iowa>

**This was the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Iowa's statehood.*

Drake's message also encouraged the Legislature to appropriate an additional \$30,000 to the construction of the new Memorial and Historical Building.



**Iowa Hall of History
(Memorial and Historical Building)**

There were 37 items included in the cornerstone of the Memorial and Historical Building: the Rules of the 27th General Assembly and the 1846 Iowa Constitution were two of those items.

Governor Drake's address included comments concerning the new USS *Iowa*, launched March 28, 1896, and christened by Mary Lord Drake, now Mrs. George W. Sturdivant (Governor Drake's daughter). The previous General Assembly had procured the elaborate silver service presented to the ship.



**Silver Service from the USS *Iowa*
Currently on display at the Iowa Historical Museum**

Governor Drake included information concerning the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition committee report, which asked for an additional allowance of \$47,400.

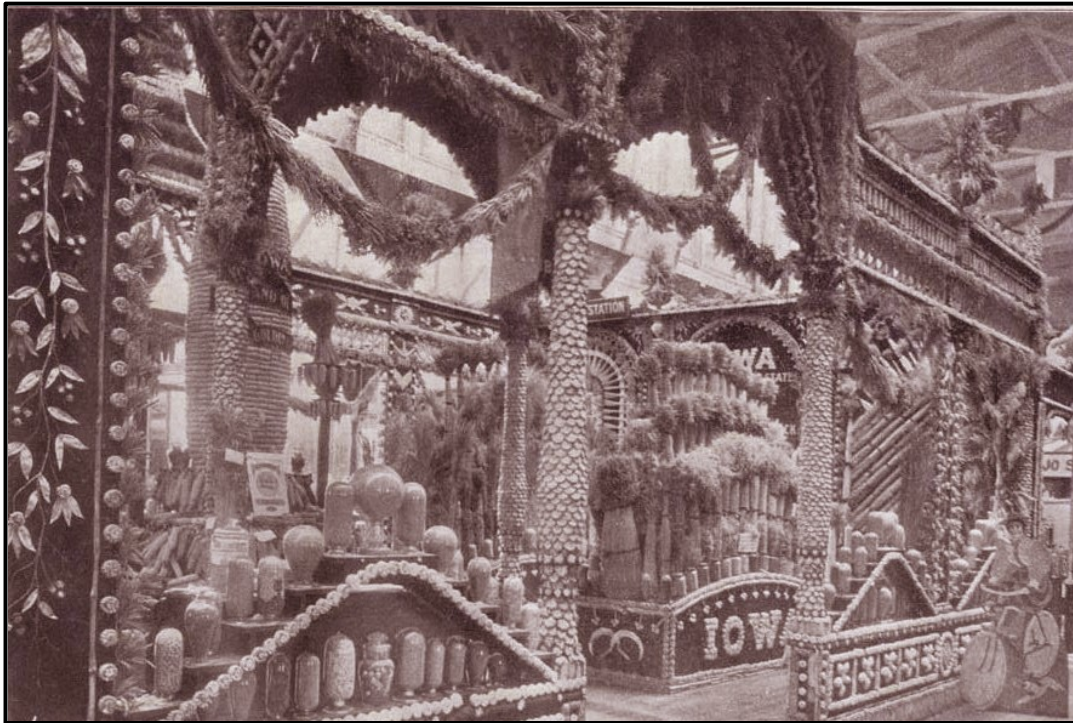
Governor Drake mentioned a letter he received from the Governor of Nebraska in regard to the Exposition and erecting a grand commemorative arch, requesting each of the 24 states to contribute one course of stone to the construction of the arch.



Arch of States



**State of Iowa Exhibit Agricultural Building
Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, October 1-8, 1896**



From the report of the Iowa Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition Commission:

An Exhibit of Agricultural Products

- Prepare, install and maintain a collective state exhibit of grains, grasses, seeds, roots, plants, etc., grown by cultivation, or such as are indigenous to Iowa soil to include the manufactured products of this vegetation, such as flour, meal, sugar, glucose, starch, and products of the canning factory, also samples of Iowa soil: approximate cost is \$3,500
- The sum of \$5,500, or so much thereof as may be necessary, be set apart and appropriated for the purpose of the Decorative Agricultural Exhibit of farm products, including corn, and other grains, grasses, seeds, etc., and the expense of Decorative Art, and all work in connection with the gathering, installing and maintaining said exhibit in the Agricultural Building.