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#### A BELLEVUE BANQUET.

In December, 1854, a banquet was given by Col. Peter A. Sarpy at the trading post of the American Fur Company. That pretentious edifice was constructed of hewed cottonwood logs. It was two stories high. It had a south frontage of about forty-five or fifty feet. It rejoiced in a piazza along each floor, upper and lower. At the east end was an additional structure of one story which contained the kitchen, pantry and store room. The entrance into the dining room was from the west side of the kitchen. The building and its out-houses, rejoicing in the neatest and purest of whitewashes, shone in the sunlight and contrasted with the tepees of the Omaha Indians, which were around about them, as do uniformed soldiers with half-naked savages. The property was located about a quarter of a mile north from the present depot of the Burlington railroad and a trifle eastward. The site is now in the Gulf of Mexico, having been carried away by the tawny flood tides of the Missouri River many years ago.

Aside from the building of the American Fur Company, standing at Bellevue in 1854, there were Historic Buildings. the Presbyterian Mission House, occupied by the Rev. William Hamilton, his family and the teachers in the school for Omaha Indians, and the McKinney House, in which was the printing office that published the Palladium, a few log cabins which had been built by the United States government for the Indian agency of the Omahas and Otoes, and a grout house put up by Isaiah Rennet. Bellevue

was really the largest settlement—counting permanent edifices and accommodations for human beings—in the territory of Nebraska, in November, 1854. Even the Masonic fraternity recognized this fact by going there to install their first lodge and to initiate Colonel Sarpy at the old trading post. And when it came to social functions Bellevue was the belle of the Missouri valley. Councils with the Indians and social entertainments for the white people were a specialty with Colonel Sarpy, and a square meal, well-cooked, and made up of something else than pork, hot bread and black coffee, was a most alluring and exceedingly rare felicity in those days of our first autumn on the west bank of the Missouri. Therefore when an invitation to dine at the trading post came the recipient could not be restrained from its acceptance by any ordinary appliances, obstacles or threats. THE CONSERVATIVE calls to mind, from down the long avenue of forty-five years, one of those primitive dinners and the guests who sat about the well-filled table.

Among them was the first chief justice of the territory of Nebraska, Fenner Ferguson. He was a native of New York. He was, by President Pierce, appointed chief justice of Nebraska from Albion, Michigan, where he had an enviable reputation as a man and citizen of irreproachable character and a lawyer of learning and honesty. He was about forty years of age, six feet in height, well-proportioned and possessed of a most agreeable expression of face and features. His eyes were blue, his complexion fair and his hair a light brown. He was genial and agreeable; no one enjoyed the amenities of social life more and no one could contribute more to the enjoyment of others than Judge Ferguson.

Next to him sat Addison R. Gilmore, the first superintendent of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, when the western terminus of that line was at Rock Island. Colonel Gilmore became the first receiver of the first United States land office which was established and opened at Omaha in April, 1857. He was a most affable, genial and agreeable gentleman. He wrote a most legible and uniform hand and was master of a peculiarly fascinating epistolary style. There was no promi-

nent citizen of the territory who had a stronger or more abiding faith in Bellevue and in the agricultural and commercial possibilities of all Nebraska. He saw all in his imagination which we today behold in reality. The Union Pacific and all the other railroads now operating and more were visible to his eye of faith. He was a man of about fifty-four years of age, of average height and weight, fine features and a pair of splendid sky-blue eyes that laughed in mirth and gleamed fire in wrath. He was quick of mind and body, capable, efficient and convivial and charming as either host or guest.

At the feast in question an honored and most entertaining guest was the first governor of the state of Iowa, Ansel Briggs. There was present also Dr. J. P. McMahon of Council Bluffs, in the same state.

The dinner was bountiful. It was served on tin plates. The coffee was poured into cups of the same precious metal. The principal dish was a stew. It was served smoking hot and from it there steamed a most savory and appetizing fragrance, suggestive of the most palate-satisfying viands. Everbody ate with relish and avidity. Everybody praised the repast and was filled to satisfactory repletion. Pipes and tobacco came on and the leisurely after-meal smoke was filling the room with the fragrance of old Virginia's best, when suddenly Colonel Sarpy called the ancient French trapper, who acted as master of the kitchen, into the presence of the guests and in angry tones exclaimed:

"Antoine, you ought to be shot. For my friends here I ordered you to prepare a feast fit for chiefs, head men and braves only. I told you that you should kill and cook for this occasion, sir, only the fattest and youngest dogs about the post. And here are bones off which we have gnawed the tough meat of old dogs, you scoundrel!"

The reprimand only reached this point when Colonel Gilmore, throwing up both hands, exclaimed with pallid horror depicted on every lineament: "Great God, Colonel Sarpy, have we been eating dog meat?" And before Sarpy could answer the cowed and frightened Antoine said:

"Colonel Sarpy an gentlemen—ze pup—ze young and tendaire dogs escap