

WASHINGTON'S Birthday was marked by the laying of the cornerstone of Douglas county's new \$1,000,000 court house.

According to contract with the builders, Messrs Caldwell & Drake, the beautiful structure should be ready for occupancy May 30, 1911. Twenty months time was specified for the building of the new official home of the county's executive and administrative staff.

Actual work on the construction began September 1, 1909, excavation work having been started in March of the same year. When completed, Douglas county will have one of the most imposing and most modern county buildings in the country. Built of steel and white marble the structure will be a magnificent official home for the Douglas county servants of the public.

The location itself, on the site of the old court house, is most desirable. Although much of the old hill has been cut down to permit the construction work the main entrance to the building on Farmington street will be from a grand stairway of stone, reaching to the top of the terrace. Thus the beautiful effect of the hill site will remain.

All the finest efforts of the craftsman will go to make up the beauty of the structure. Of mammoth construction, in the first place, the same principle of grandeur is to be carried out in the interior. There will be spacious court rooms, offices, corridors and waiting rooms. Every room in the building will be well lighted by the sun, for ample provision has been made for windows. Interior decorations will be simple, yet appropriate for a public building.

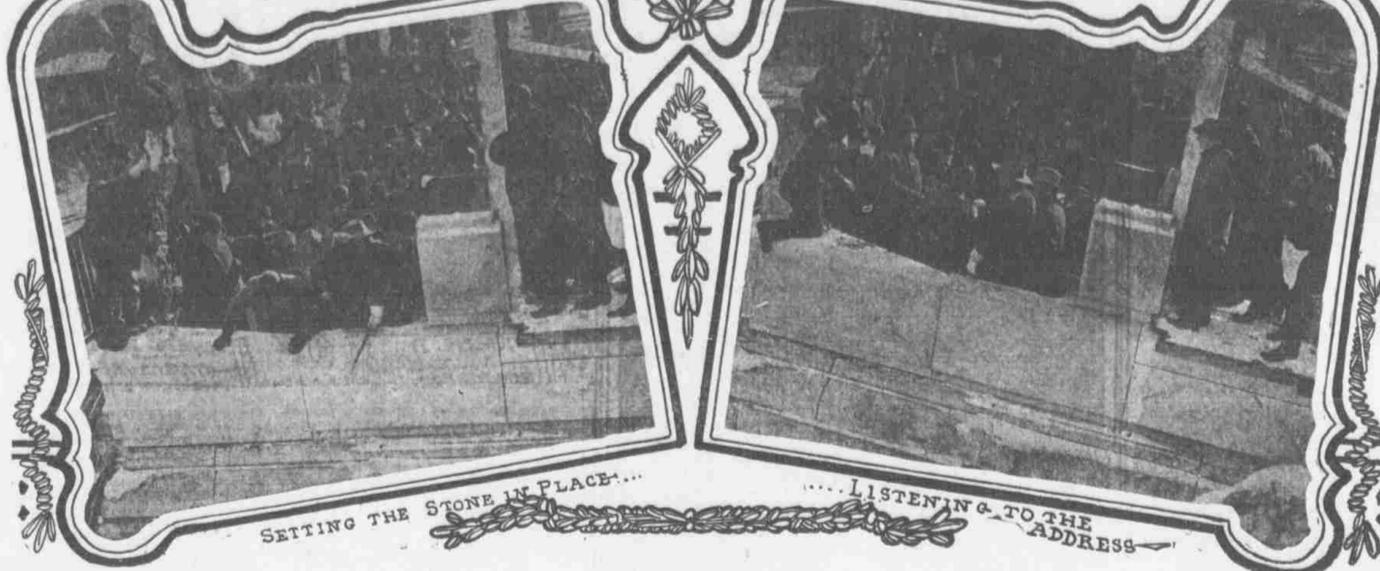
John Latouner, the architect for the new building, the structure itself measures 264x150 feet. In the center of the building extending from the main floor to the roof is the rotunda, fifty-six feet square. The halls are spacious, the main ones being twenty-five feet wide, and the main corridors, extending east and west, being 12 feet long. Although there is simplicity in the decorative scheme, the marble work alone in the interior will cost \$100,000. This is for the floors, the staircases, the panels above the floor and the grand steps.

Five elevators will serve the building. Three of these will be for general passenger service, a fourth will be used as an entrance to the county jail, and the fifth is for the jail kitchen. The jail will be on the fifth floor. Prisoners will be escorted to the building from the Seventeenth street side. The patrol wagon may be driven into the building at the basement entrance. A space sixty feet square is provided in order that the vehicles may turn around. Above the floor is a mezzanine story, seven feet high, devoted entirely to piping for the jail quarters. The hot water, cold water, gas, electric light, sewerage and heating apparatus are all confined to this mezzanine floor, thus leaving no exposed piping in the hall. There is no communication between the court house and the jail except by the prisoners' elevator and the kitchen elevator.

Below the main basement there is a sub-basement, to be used exclusively for piping, electric wire connections and sewage pipes.

# WHEN GRAND MASTER DOWLING OF NEBRASKA MASONS SET THE CORNER-STONE OF THE DOUGLAS COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

## SCENES AT THE CEREMONY ON THE AFTERNOON OF TUESDAY, FEBR 22, 1910....



One of the features of the construction is the arrangement of vaults. All are large, well lighted and specially built. The vault for the treasurer and register of deeds is sixty feet long, nineteen feet wide and extends through two stories. Every room in the building will be well lighted. Double windows are provided and all partitions are to be double. The rotunda and hallways are trimmed with marble wainscoting, seven feet above the floor. The two main stairways will be of marble with a wainscoting four and a half feet high.

The third floor will be divided into four quarters. These will be divided into suits and occupied by the four principal offices, the treasurer, the clerk, the register of deeds and the comptroller. The second floor will be similarly divided and will be occupied by the district clerk, the county commissioner, the county judge and the juvenile court. The third and fourth floors are the court rooms. The third floor has two court rooms to the west and two to the east with the judge's rooms and jury room facing Farmington and Harney streets. By this means the court rooms are removed from the noise of traffic on Farmington and Harney streets. The fourth floor has two court rooms on the east and on the west side is a double court room to be used for criminal cases. The sheriff's office is located to the north.

The rock upon which the new county building will rest was placed in position according to the beautiful ritual of masonry. Although Washington's birthday was one of the coldest days of the winter the ritual was carried out in its entirety, although there were no addresses. All day long the mercury hovered about the zero mark and to add to the frigid weather a wind from the north swept over the city, cold and piercing. It was one of those days when the wagon wheels crunch and squeak as they roll over the snowy pavements. The elements prevented a large public demonstration, but, nevertheless, a goodly crowd gathered about the northeast corner of the block and tarried for a brief half hour while the ceremony was in progress.

Flags floated from the dome of the old court house and flags, too, were hung about the platform, where the services were held. From the pinnacle of the huge derrick that held the big stone suspended above its resting place the Stars and Stripes swung in the cold wind. On the platform floor had been kindled by the workmen in the sheet iron stoves in order to make the work for the masons more pleasant.

At noon on the appointed day the Douglas County Association of Nebraska, 310 members gathered for its annual midwinter picnic, planning to view the cornerstone services. Owing to the severity of the weather the pioneers gave up the plan of marching to the court house in a body, remaining in session in their warm rooms during the service. A delegation was elected to be present on the platform with the masons during the service. The detachment was headed by W. I. Kierstead and included Judge Leo Estelle, Fred B. Lowe, Goodley Brucker, Joseph Redman and John Dressel.

missioners—Fred Bruning, O. J. Dickard, P. J. Trainer and Jeff W. Bedford—were present on the platform. Very Rev. George A. Beecher, chaplain of the day, read the xxiv Psalm and pronounced the invocation, following which a quartet sang "The Most Excellent Master." Next the list of articles placed in the cornerstone was read. Then the huge stone was slowly lowered into place, the stonemason being Grand Master Dowling. After the quartet sang "The Flag Without a Star," Mr. Dowling gave the formal explanation of the implications of Masonry. Then followed the setting of the stone, the announcement that it had been well laid and the singing of "America" by the audience.

During the few hours preceding the laying of the stone there was a scramble to get records deposited in the new stone. All the articles that had been taken from the old cornerstone were transferred to the new receptacle and in addition were placed copies of the Omaha papers of February 22, copies of most Omaha's daily and weekly publications, lists of all employees in the county offices, the names of all officials, the laws of Free Masonry and the rolls of various Nebraska organizations. The copper box placed within the stone is twice the size of the receptacle in the old cornerstone, measuring 18x18x10 inches. Like its predecessor, it was made by Milton Rogers & Sons.

In transferring the contents of the old cornerstone to the new there enters a bit of sentiment. After an undisturbed rest of twenty-seven years the old stone was pried from the wall and conveyed to the rooms of the Board of County Commissioners, there to be opened. The box had been hermetically sealed and cold chains and keys were necessary to break the cover.

Contents of the box were just as fresh and crisp as they were when buried in 1882. Copies of The Omaha Bee, the Herald, the Post and Telegraph and Republican and the Nebraska Watchman were just as new as though they had just been run off the press. The full typewritten address delivered by Andrew J. Popplow, the day of the dedication was also in the box. It was unstained and smooth and the imprint just as good as though it had just been submitted by the stenographer. There were a number of Japanese, Chinese and other coins that had been donated by Julius Meyer. An interesting feature was the old "shin-plaster" paper money in small denominations running from 2 cents to 50 cents.

In the bottom of the box was a thin brass tablet or sheet on which had been engraved the history of the court house and the names of state and county officials at that time. It stated that \$100,000 had been appropriated for the building of the county building. Tax payers have since learned that it cost them one-fourth more than that amount. On the inside of the top lid was the engraving, "Made by C. F. Berger, with Milton Rogers & Sons, O. M. N. B., October 18, 1882."

### BENNY HAVENS'S REAL HOUSE

#### Has West Point Worshipped at the Wrong Shrine?

#### WHAT ABOUT THIS DISCOVERY?

#### Evidence that the Famous Tavern, Instead of Having Been Burned Down, is Still Standing

#### Among the Hills.

WEST POINT, N. Y., Feb. 23.—Down by the shore of the Hudson river under the cliffs which terminate just south of Butter-milk Falls there stood formerly a little weather-beaten house long known in the neighborhood as the famous Benny Havens tavern, which for over half a century was the rendezvous of cadets from the nearby Military Academy. When a little over two years ago it was destroyed by fire it was generally thought that the last had been seen of the famous tavern.

Very recently efforts were made to obtain photographs of this old house in order to perpetuate its memory in some permanent form. The search for photographs led to an investigation regarding the authenticity of the structure. There resulted the interesting discovery of evidence, first, that this was not the Havens house at all; second, that the original house was pulled down about thirty years ago, and, third, that the original house still existed.

#### Story of the Tavern.

It was found that over the site occupied by the tavern now pass the rails of the West Shore railroad, whose construction in the early '50s brought about the demolition of the Havens house. Old residents, however, have recalled that the building was not destroyed at the time; but was carefully taken apart and carried up the hill. What happened was recently told by two sons of the man who bought the Havens house and took it away. They aided in the work and are still living in the vicinity of the Havens site.

#### Their father owned a farm five miles back in the mountains southwest of the military reservation, and there the house was set up again and still stands, nearly a hundred years old, in surroundings very different from its original situation. How within three or four years of the death of Benny himself it should have gone on its travels without attracting any special attention is no less curious than the transfer of public attention to an entirely alien structure.

The writer recently visited the new site and found the house to be according to the statements of men who knew Havens and have been entertained beneath his roof, essentially the same structure what stood on the river bank. The original bricks are in the doors, the iron hooks from which hung lamps are in place in the ceilings and even the dormer window near the roof, according to the testimony of the present owner, is out of plumb just as it was in the first place.

The bar is gone, needless to say, and the basement where the drinks were mostly served, and which was originally a long open room has been divided into two rooms. What was formerly the kitchen wing of the house has been transferred from the north to the south end of the house. With these two exceptions there is no important change evident. The piazza, with its railings and two flights of steps, is said to be the identical one which once fronted the Hudson.

Now it fronts the green floor of a quiet mountain cove. Behind the house rises Long Pond mountain. Across the valley and a lake lies Listening Hill, a part of the four or five hundred acre mountain farm, mostly under forest, to which the dwelling now belongs. Southwestward the valley winds gently among the hills for a few miles to Forest of Dean, where the old iron mines are, close to the northern projection of the tract recently offered by Mrs. Harriman as a state park.

In the opposite direction one looks from a bend in the road near the house down

the length of Long Pond and directly into the military reservation of West Point.

#### Sketch of One Burned.

The only sketch of the Benny Havens house the writer could discover is one made for the cadet's camp illumination of 1897 by a graduate of the military academy who is now a brigadier general, retired. It was drawn partly from memory and the influence of the little house recently burned is seen in the location of the house in the sketch at a point on the bank approximately the same as that occupied by the house long supposed to be the real one. It happened that the artist was aware that that house was not the Benny Havens tavern, but for some reason he does not seem to have communicated his knowledge to his brother officers to any great extent.

Actually, according to the new witnesses, the Havens house stood a little south of the more modern structure and on the extreme edge of the bank, so that it almost overhung the water, its front and the influence of the little house recently burned is seen in the location of the house in the sketch at a point on the bank approximately the same as that occupied by the house long supposed to be the real one. It happened that the artist was aware that that house was not the Benny Havens tavern, but for some reason he does not seem to have communicated his knowledge to his brother officers to any great extent.

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#### Benny an Institution.

Fully to understand who Benny Havens was and why his name is so closely associated with West Point it would be necessary to visit a class reunion or similar gathering and hear the ringing song of "Benny Havens, oh!" Havens was a veteran of the war of 1812, being first lieutenant of a company organized and captained by a resident of Highland Falls. Shortly after the war he established a place on the military reservation where he sold liquid refreshments of various kinds and sundry eatables. It soon became the thing among the members of the cadet corps to visit Benny's, and these visits were not necessarily confined to the limited daytime hours of respite from academic duties.

Last year frequently meant, not bed, but Benny's. He is said to have dispensed good cheer in comparative secrecy for a long time in his little retreat, being virtually a squatter on the national domain, but the authorities of the military academy finally were unable to overlook him longer and he was expelled. Then it was that he took up his residence at the river bank overlooking a mile or more further south.

There were three things in particular that drew the cadets to Benny's tavern. It is not to be denied that the character of the libations offered there was not the least of them. Neither, perhaps, was it the greatest. Almost equally famous with the flip verse the pancakes and the other edibles offered by his board. The cadets were some times glad to get a square meal, or at least one that was appetizing, for mess in the old days was the opposite of that of today with its high class kitchen arrangements. Mess was described during the Havens' regime as being "almost exclusively of beef, boiled, roasted or baked for dinner; cold, sliced or smoked for breakfast and supper; soup twice a week, and bread pudding with molasses on soup days." And so, although the orders were forbidden to do so, Benny's the provisioner

was not effective, and great became his fame as the feeding place.

#### His Personality.

A third reason why they went there was the personality of Benny himself and this has become the great source of the tavern's fame. He was a host of the old-fashioned kind and was looked on as a friend and comrade. As may be guessed, the hero of a song whose verses are legion and are sung today all over the globe, was a good deal of a character. Old residents of Highland Falls who knew him as a neighbor, with that shortness of vision common when a prophet arises, describe him as a plain, ordinary sort of man, but he was unquestionably a host of unusual parts and is said to have been an accomplished raconteur. It is related that once when a student at West Point was infatuated with him and would steal away from the academy and spend hours conversing with him. In later years Havens told many a story in turn about Poe, the famous.

The fame of Benny Havens is recorded, of course, primarily in an endless army of songs, "Benny Havens, oh!" seldom, if ever, is it found in published form intact. There is the official version and then there is what may be termed the unexpurgated version. To the former it has long been the custom to add a verse a year; to the latter it is no limit.

#### First Verse of Famous Song.

O'Brien had just been commissioned a lieutenant in the Eighth infantry, and before joining his regiment he stopped at West Point to visit a friend, Major Ripley Arnold, then a first class man. They made many excursions to Benny's, and then arose the song, which was set to the tune of "The Weir" or "The Green," and of which the opening verse is: Come, fill your glasses, fellows, and stand up in a row. To singing sentimentally we're going for in the army there's sobriety, promotion's very slow. So we'll sing our reminiscences of Benny Oh, Benny Havens, oh! Oh, Benny Havens, oh!

#### One Benny Havens Story.

The large majority of Benny Havens' stories have never found their way into print. One of those has to do with a certain cadet who later became a general. He was captain of his company when a member of the first class, which in itself is evidence of high standing. A few days before he was to be graduated he paid a visit to Benny Havens and got caught. He was not dismissed, but reduced to the ranks.

The final dress parade, when the members of the first class march out on the plain for the last time as a body, was carried out with the disgraced cadet marching in the ranks instead of leading them. It was very successful, and impressive, and one of the board of visitors remarked that it could scarcely have been finer, adding that he doubted, however, whether the members of the corps could do so well unaided by the officers.

The superintendent of the academy took up the issue, asserting that the parade would have been quite as well carried out had anyone of the young men the visitor saw before him taken charge. "In order that you may have proof of this," he said, "I beg you to pass down the line of cadets with me and pick from the ranks any one of them you may be pleased to select, and if you are not tired we will then have the parade all over again under this cadet's command."

#### Death of O'Brien.

Soon the singing began, and finally came this verse, dedicated to the originator of the Benny Havens song, who had just died for his country in Florida: There comes a voice from Florida, from Tampa's deadly shores, Oh, O'Brien is no more: In the land of sun and flowers his head lies pillowed low. No more to sing "Petite Coquette" at Benny Havens, Oh!

As all uncovered the host, "with that same pipe whose stem was proportioned as short as himself and one of the invariable emblems of his identity, contracted that horizontally expansive coun-



BENNY HAVENS.

tenance that always appeared to have made a treaty of peace with all mankind in general and all reckless cadets in particular into a preponderance of vertical dimension, drawn downward by a sincerely heavy heart." Who was the relator of this story in the West Point scrap book is not generally known, but it might have been any army officer later become famous, for scarcely a man who studied at West Point during Benny's days failed to cultivate his acquaintance.

#### Some of the Song.

Here are a very few of the countless verses of the famous song: To the ladies of the Empire state, whose hearts, and abdomens too, Bear a remembrance of the wrongs we're stripping soldiers do, We bid a fond adieu, my boys; our hearts are in a sorrow flow. Our loves and rhyming had their source at Benny Havens, oh!

To the army's brave commanders, let now our glasses flow. We'll drink to Grant and Sherman and to the subs also; To Thomas, Meade and Sheridan (these count in a proposal). Who hesitates to drink to them at Benny Havens, oh!

To our comrades who have fallen, one cup before we go. They poured their life blood freely out pro bono publico; No marble points the stranger to where they lie neglected far away from Benny Havens, oh!

When you and I and Benny, and all the others too, Are about to face the "final board" our course of life to view. May we never "fess" on any point, but there are few things more exhausting than having to pretend to be amused by a funny man.

#### A Bachelor's Reflections.

Woman suffers and man groans. Going into politics is climbing a greased pole. The time a man wants to back his judgment the hardest is when it's wrong. There are few things more exhausting than having to pretend to be amused by a funny man. The fascinating thing about an argument is your hope that when the other fellow is right you might make somebody think he is wrong.—New York Press.

### Brandeis Theater

(Continued from Page Three.)

the space above, heightened by the slender lines of an ingenious system of electric wiring and controlling cordage operating the files. A wooden floor of wide, roomy expanse covers the stage surface, and, by way, this is the only kind of wood flooring in the house. The walls which enclose the three sides of the stage contain only iron, concrete and brick. In front hangs a stout asbestos curtain of exceptional weight. The stage is covered only by the roof above, a stretch of skylight in primaries wire reinforced glass in this covering are two broad movable spaces which can be raised by a simple mechanism. Thus the stage represents a space enclosed with walls like those of a furnace, with an opening at the top. In the event of fire, the only infirmities of material would be enclosed there by the fall of the asbestos curtain. The sections in the roof would open and the scenery could go up in smoke with the audience sitting before it in as much safety as at the grate fire in the sitting room.

#### Tribute to Benny.

Havens died on May 29, 1877, in his 90th year. It was not long before this toast was added to the song: But now the softest summer winds come whistling us low. That he of whom we oft have sung Death's hand lies on his brow!

The grand finale, surrounding us, by sun all set aglow, To them, our guardian angels, and to Benny Havens, oh!

At his death a member of the class of 1877 wrote the following, which reflects much of the affection in which Benny Havens was held by those who knew him: O'Brien's lark was sweetly strung And sang us then a long, long song. While we wait upon a willow branch And he of whom I sang lies low. No more our steps will seek his ranch. He's had his country—we all do that. And friendly smiles and friend and foe, But now the spark of life's gone out. No more will greet our "Havens, oh!" We lay his whitened locks beneath. The hardest east—no pomp, no show— But granite rocks give burial wreaths. And soft May winds chant "Havens, oh!" He's had his country—we all do that. God crowns the victor, high or low! To him we pray—Requiescat, oh! In peace—Benny Havens, oh!

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tive work and plaster. There is no unfinished or neglected corner. Special attention has been devoted to the sanitation of the section and even the lowest chorus girl in the back row is assured of a clean, comfortable dressing room well lighted and ventilated.

### FRATTEL OF THE YOUNGSTERS.

Papa—Mamma says you were a good boy today, so here's a penny. Little Fred—Make it two, papa, an I'll be gooder tomorrow.

"Nelle," said the teacher, "you may tell me how to make a suitable dress." "Step on its tail," answered Nelle promptly.

Old Gentleman (as funeral procession is passing)—My good boy, can you tell me who is dead? Good Boy—Yes, sir. The person inside the hearse, sir.

Teacher—You don't know what this word is? Pupil—No. Teacher—What is your coat made of? Pupil—Father's old pants.

"Well, my little man," queried the minister who was making a suitable dress for the juvenile Sunday school class. "Cause the fishes have to be fed," replied a small pupil.

Mother (sternly)—Tommy, who drank the milk in the pitcher? Tell the truth, now! Tommy—I drank it, mamma. I wanted to see if it was sour.

Mother—Well, suppose it had been sour; what then? Tommy—Why, then I wouldn't have drunk it, see?

"Why are we admonished to cast our bread upon the waters?" queried the teacher of the juvenile Sunday school class. "Cause the fishes have to be fed," replied a small pupil.

"Auntie," said Little Constance, "don't you want some of my candy?" "Thank you, dear," was the reply. "Sugared almonds are favorites of mine." "The pink or the white ones?" asked the little tot. "The white ones, please."

There was silence until the last piece had disappeared. "They were all pink at first, auntie," remarked Constance.

"Well, Harry," said the minister, who was making a call, "do you think you will be a better boy this year than you were last?" "I hope so," replied the little fellow. "I was sicker more than half the time last year."

Little Bessie—Mamma, how'll I know when I'm naughty? Mother—Your conscience will tell you, dear. Little Bessie—I don't care about what it tells me—I'll tell you!

Joe was a delicate little fellow who had never had any associates of his own age. Then, too, he was very modest. Missing him one day his mother went out into the back yard and this was what she saw: The turkey gobbler was strutting around with every feather stretched to its limit, and little Joe was trotting behind, snapping his gently once in a while and saying softly, "Put down your clothes! Put down your clothes!"

There is a lad of 10 living in a Pennsylvania town where the schoolmasters still employ the rod in order that the child may not be spoiled. One day he found himself liable to that form of chastisement at the hands of his teacher.

As the youngster approached the principal the fierce aspect of the latter's countenance, together with the sight of the upraised cane quite unnerved him and he began to sobber. Then, innocently, and doubtless with some vague recollection of a visit to the dentist, he stammered: "Please, sir; may—may I talk gas?"