

Transcribed Excerpts from "Documentary. Iowa — Developments — Resources" Essay from *The Annals of Iowa, 1869*

DOCUMENTARY. Iowa—Development—Resources.

BY SAMUEL MERRILL, GOVERNOR.

We publish the following official communication with the view of giving it more permanency of preservation, and greater convenience of reference for our readers than it will find in the newspapers of the State in which it has received very general publications — EDITOR.

STATE OF IOWA, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
DES MOINES, NOV. 23, 1868.

PETER COOPER, Esq., President Citizens' National Association of New York:

Sir : — Your communication of September 23d, asking information as to the resources and advantages of Iowa, with a view of inducing immigration to the State, has been received ...

The State of Iowa is situated centrally in the Union, bounded east and west by the two great rivers of North America ... there is a constant succession of gentle elevations and depressions, and along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, bold eminences and picturesque valleys heighten the beauty of the scenery ...

The State has many fine streams. The Des Moines river, over three hundred miles long; the Iowa, the Cedar, and other streams flow into the Mississippi, while numerous tributaries of the Missouri drain the western counties. These streams are almost invariably skirted with timber, some of them heavily wooded ...

The first permanent settlement, in what is now Iowa, was made in the county of Lee, in the southeastern part of the State, less than forty years ago. The territory was detached from the territory of Wisconsin in 1838, and was admitted into the Union the twenty-ninth State, December 28, 1846. The population in 1836, was 10,531; in 1838, 22,859; in 1846, 97,588; in 1856, 519,055 ; in 1867, 902,040. It is now estimated at about 1,100,000; and yet much more than two-thirds of the State is still just as it came from the hand of nature ...

Iowa has some twelve railroads, with more than fourteen hundred miles of lines in operation. Several other companies have been organized, some of which are grading their road-beds, while others are engaged in preliminary work. Within a year, at least, three railroads will traverse the whole State from east to west, — one being already finished. Other roads in the same direction, and several north and

south roads are in progress. Telegraph lines accompany the railways, and an independent line, following the Mississippi river, has just been constructed across the State.

... I have thus endeavored to convey to you, in the fewest possible words, the information you desire. Permit me to add, that to this young but growing State, blessed as it is with a salubrious climate; with soil of unsurpassed richness; with an intelligent, progressive population; with a wise and efficient system of popular education; with many institutions of learning of a high grade; with rivers and railways bringing, or about to bring markets to the very homes, so to say, of all the citizens ... we most cordially invite upright citizens of all lands and creeds to come, here in this favored land to make themselves happy homes, and help us to build up the fabric of what is surely destined to be a mighty commonwealth.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL MERRILL , Governor of Iowa.