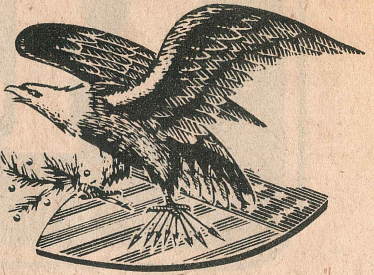


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BIG CENTENNIAL



1776-1976

"Remembrances of Days Gone By"

Boone County Named After Nathan Boone

Boone County takes its name from an early pioneer or "dragoon" who came to this area around the early 1800's and his pioneer father, has a road named after him in this immediate area.

Nathan Boone, well-known military man and frontiersman, possesses the honor of having this county named after him for the prominent part he played in this area. The county was established with its present boundaries by an act of Legislature on February, 1847 almost two months after the state was admitted. Nathan Boone was the Captain of Company H, First Regiment, United States Dragoons which marched from Old Fort Des Moines where Montrose, in Lee County now stands to Wabasha's village in Minnesota, located about where the city of Winona now stands.

The object of this expedition was to become acquainted with Wabasha, a great chief of the Sioux Indians and to make a treaty of peace with him. Following the completion of their assigned task, the soldiers marched almost due west for a few days, and then crossed the West Fork of the Des Moines River near the southeast corner of Palo Alto County, marched on south to the west side of the Des Moines River and ended their journey at their home base. On the return trip, the army encamped in the area now

known as Boone County, and according to records, these 300 dragoons must have made a lasting impression on the Indians.

The term "dragoon", meaning doughty champion of law and order, originated in England many years ago and was applied to certain types of cavalry soldiers who rode swift horses, went lightly armed and whose business it was to scour the King's dominion and by menace or actual deeds of violence, awe the obstinate Saxons into submission. They were commonly pictured as dignified and pompous, through brave and honorable persons who were a terror to the predatory savage and covetous claim hunter.

Their first appearance in America came during the Revolutionary War when they performed important services by making long and rapid excursions through the country within the American lines, thus keeping open a line of communication with the Tories, who were scattered throughout the country.

The term "dragoon" is no longer used, but from the organization of the United States army till sometime after the close of the Mexican War, the dragoon was an important and indispensable factor in the service. Their peculiar mission for over fifty years was to lead in the van of civilization and act as umpire in cases of dispute between the pioneer and the savage. In time of

war, they encircled the scattering settlements of the frontier like a wall of fire and many a defenseless settler owed the protection of his life and family to these men. They fully understood the Indian character and Indian tactics and under ordinary circumstances, one dragoon could match for five Indians in an open hand-to-hand combat. The dragoons, however, befriended the Indians in their time of need, such as a squatter who would ignore Indian treaties and erect cabins on Indian territory.

The name of Nathan Boone was one always spoke with respect and dignity on the American frontier. The son of Daniel Boone, he was born in Kentucky in 1772, in the settlement made by his father. He lived there for almost 30 years before moving to the Missouri Territory where on March 25, 1812, he was officially dubbed captain of the mounted rangers by the president of the United States. One of seven regiments, his company was made up of volunteer frontiersmen from the Missouri area. He was promoted to major in 1813, continued as captain in 1814 and remained in this capacity up to the time the group was disbanded in June of 1815 at the close of the war.

At the time of the Black Hawk War, he was once again called upon by the President to serve his country. He was to command one of six companies under the command of Major Henry Dodge.

In August of 1833, this same battalion of rangers was reorganized as the First regiment of the United States dragoons, and five of the captains were retained.

Boone was stationed at Fort Des Moines and at Leavenworth.

In 1830, he was called upon to survey the Neutral Ground, which was 40 miles wide and extended from the mouth of the upper Iowa River west to the Des Moines River. This is how he became familiar with this part of the state.

Boone continued his work for the government until 1853, when he resigned and returned to his family. After ten years of private life, he died at his home in Ash Grove, ten miles west of Springfield, Missouri in the summer of 1863, at the age of 81.

Facts About The County

Boone County is situated near the center of the State, being approximately 30 miles west and a little south of the geographical center. It is bounded on the north by Webster and Hamilton counties, on the east by Story County and on the south by Dallas and Polk counties and on the west by Greene County.

The county is square in shape, being twenty-four miles each way and has a superficial area of 576 square miles, containing 368,640 acres. It is comprised of the townships of Harrison, Dodge, Pilot Mound, Grant, Amaqua, Yell, Des Moines, Jackson, Colfax, Worth, Marcy, Beaver, Union, Peoples, Cass, Douglas and Garden. Dodge is the largest and Douglas is the smallest township.