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Among the early comers was Jehu Perkins Saylor, born May Eleventh, 1823, near Valparaiso, Indiana, of German descent on the father's side and English on that of the mother. He came with his father, Benjamin, to Van Buren County in 1836, and helped to clear and improve a small farm. His father was a brick mason, and Government Trader, living always a frontier life. Jehu's youthful days were therefore a part of it, with very limited advantages to acquire an education, two months in a common country school being all that was afforded him.

In 1844, he formed a partnership with John B. Saylor to furnish beef and hay for Government supplies for the garrison at Raccoon Forks, as Des Moines was then called. He arrived February Twentieth, with Thomas Saylor and Austin Branen. The first white man to greet them was Alex. Scott, who was a distinguished personage in those days. The trio secured quarters in a cabin near the officers' headquarters, and did their own cooking and washing.

As the time for the removal of the Indians to Kansas, and the abandonment of the garrison approached, Jehu began prospecting for a land claim. He selected a tract about one mile west of what is now Saylor Grove, skirted with heavy timber on the north, and extending across the valley to Des Moines River, as an ideal location for a farm and home.

At midnight, October Eleventh, 1845, was the hour set for the expiration of the Indian title to land in Polk County. Many "squatters" had come in to wait the event, and an eager crowd was scattered around the country that day, making elaborate preparations to secure the coveted tracts which had been prospected. Land-grabbers and claim-jumpers were also watching their chances to outwit the bona fide settler. Sentinels were stationed at different points, instructed to begin the measurement of claims so soon as the cannon boom at The Fort should sound the tocsin, or the minute hand of the clock reached the midnight hour.

Jehu often related his experience of that event. So intently was his mind fixed upon it, and so uncertain the outcome, that all through the day of the Eleventh he did not lie down to rest, as was his custom, but got candles and tallow dips ready, his hatchet sharpened and in good order, and anxiously counted the laggard passing hours. When the hands of the clock passed the twelve spot, he plunged into the darkness and heavy timber, cutting and blazing the trees, or driving a stake to mark the boundary of his claim. Away in the distance, in all directions, could be seen the dancing, flickering flare of candles, lanterns and torches of those on the same rushing errand, a weird, fantastic spectacle. It was no child's play nor frolic. It was serious business, with brain and nerve under severe tension. Before the rising sun appeared, thousands of acres were staked out, to be immediately occupied by families and household goods, which had been waiting nearby therefor. The plowshare took the place of the sword, and Civilization was commenced.

Under the land laws, no title to the claims made could be obtained until the Government survey had been made, which was done in 1847, and Jehu's claim became, in Land Office parlance, the "nw qr of nw sec 3, the s hf of ne qr and ne of ne qr sec 4, T 79, R 24." It embraced one hundred and sixty acres.

To understand this description, an explanation of the Government survey is necessary. As a starting-point, or base line, the mouth of the Arkansas River was selected, from which a line was run due north and south, to be known as the Principal Meridian. Six miles west of it another line was run parallel to it, and the land between the two lines was called "One West," and so on. By that rule, the east line of Polk County is twenty-two west, or one hundred and thirty-two miles west of the Principal Meridian.

Starting at the same point, a line was run due east and west as a base line. Six miles north of it, another line was run. That divided the land into squares of six miles on each side, which were designated as Congressional Townships, and numbered from the base line, the south line of Polk County being the seventy-seventh. Jehu's land, therefore, was in the forty-ninth range of townships north and twenty-four west. The townships were again subdivided into thirty-six sections, or squares, containing six hundred and

forty acres each, and, beginning at the northeast corner, numbered alternately west and east, so that, knowing the number of a section, the location of a man's farm could be easily determined and found. The land was sold by the Government in tracts of a whole, half or quarter section.

When the midnight race for land was made, the course was, in some cases, decidedly crooked, and the strides in pacing off the rods, not a little stretched, but under the by-laws of the Claim-Holders' Club, all irregularities, overlapping of claims, and discrepancies disclosed by the survey were amicably adjusted. There were no courts, the settlers being a law unto themselves.

Early in 1848, Jehu began cutting logs for a cabin. They were then hewed, an innovation in cabin building in those days. It contained but one room. There was a fireplace, with a chimney built of sticks plastered with mud. The floor was of the puncheon variety, laid on the ground. The roofing was long shingles rived out of timber by hand. For a door, a heavy wool blanket was hung. The windows were latticed with narrow strips of wood, without frames or glass. The cooking was done in a fireplace, in pots hung on an iron crane, and in shallow kettles on the hearth, covered with hot coals. The walls were plastered with clay mud, and made smooth with a trowel. When completed, it was the largest and most pretentious cabin in the settlement. To secure a mistress of it, Jehu wedded Martha A. Bales, who came to the county in 1846, with her father, Solomon, on horseback, driving a herd of cattle and sheep. (See page 201, Volume II.)

The cabin was not very elaborately furnished. Jehu made a table out of rived boards, also several stools and benches. A "one-post." bedstead was planted in one corner, composed of a post from which a rail was fastened to the wall at the foot, and another rail at the side made fast to the wall at the head. The slats were rived from timber. Spring beds and mattresses had not materialized then. There were no wardrobes nor bureaus. Clothing was hung on the walls, and covered with a sheet. The young wife's wedding gown and lingerie were carefully folded, and laid away in a new flour barrel.

The passing of a few years brought a wonderful change. A new house, barns, sheds, fruit trees, ornamental and flowering shrubbery, added comfort and beauty to the place, for Jehu was a man of good taste, a generous provider, energetic and active. He raised fine stock, especially horses. A fine, well-matched team was his ideal, and he usually had them ready for delivery, and sale. Isaac Kuhn, who was selling clothing down on Second Street, used to say: "If you want to buy a good horse, go up to Jay Saylor's farm. He can give you the pedigree of it so close as to give the number of white hairs in its forehead and on its hoofs."

In 1854, Jehu built a store and stocked it with dry goods and groceries hauled by teams from Keokuk, and joined the boosters of the settlement, which was assuming some consequence. Manifest Destiny was in the air. The removal of the Capital from Iowa City was stirring the public mind. The activities of the Saylor, who gave notice that they had provided a site for the Capitol—a beautiful spot, etc., and so forth—disturbed the staid and stately old-timers at The Forks considerably, and caused hurried conferences with Judge Casady, the State Senator from this district, with a warning to keep his eye on the Saylor.

In 1861, when the Civil War came on, Jehu, conscious of his physical weakness, yet desiring to do what he could to aid the Government, traversed the country to raise recruits for the Tenth Iowa Infantry, but after four weeks' exposure and toil, broke down, and was confined to his house for four months.

In 1864, under a call for more troops, it was found that some of the townships in Polk County were short of their quota, and that a draft would be necessary to fill it. Immediately, there was a hegira of able-bodied men to other states. Government officers were sent here to corral the delinquents. Jehu was caught in their net as a reserve for a fellow who had skedaddled. He promptly presented himself (sic) at the office of the Government Enrolling Board, in the building adjoining the *Register and Leader* office, to wait further orders. The army surgeons, however, rejected him for physical disability, and he went back to his farm.

In 1870, he sold out and sought a location more congenial to his health, in Kansas, but the drouths and grasshoppers were too much for him. In

1873, he returned and bought the Carpenter farm, one mile south of the Army Post, where he lived until 1882, when he was laid to rest in Woodland Cemetery.

Politically, he was a Republican, but not a politician. He had no taste for politics, nor desire for public office. He used to say: "You cannot get an office, from Road Supervisor to President of the United States, without having your pedigree published all over the country," yet so actively and zealously interested was he in the school and church he was several times unanimously elected School Director.

Characteristic traits of him were public spirit, integrity and honesty. His word was as good as his promissory note.

Socially, he was of nervous, sanguine temperament, so acute it overworked the physical supply of force to keep the machine running. He was benevolent, genial, social, and companionable; ever ready to aid in all good works. He was a special favorite with young people. Nothing gave him more pleasure than, with his smart teams, carry them to church on Sunday, to singing and spelling-schools in the neighboring districts, and, in bad weather, to gather up the little tots and carry them to the day school. His home life was an ideal one. To promote the weal of his family and neighbors was his paramount object.

Religiously, he was an active and exemplary member of the Methodist Church.

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