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Article Summary: Emily Doane's reminiscences cover sixty years of life in Omaha, including many dances and special occasions. Known for her high spirits and good humor, she recounts amusements where others might have emphasized discomforts.

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*Emily Greenhow Doane*

# Territorial Bride

By RALPH M. WARDLE

October 25, 1859, was a busy day in the household of Hugh Thompson Reid of Keokuk, Iowa;<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Reid's young cousin, Emily Russell Greenhow, was to be married that evening to George William Doane, District Attorney of the Third Territorial District of Nebraska. By late afternoon the bride's gown of white satin with a billowing white tulle overskirt was laid out, the church was decorated, and the Reids' staff was in the final throes of preparations for the reception to follow the ceremony.<sup>2</sup>

Then, just at the last minute, a crisis occurred: trouble developed at the local gas works, and lights all over town went down to a flicker. Immediately an appeal went out: would townspeople economize as much as possible on gas so that there would be enough pressure to light the church that evening? Of course everyone cooperated and the young couple was married as planned. They went from the church to the Reids' house, where they received their guests by candlelight.

They were a remarkable couple by any standards: both came from substantial families which had gradually

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worked their way west from the Atlantic seaboard. The bride, a vivacious twenty-year-old, was the great-granddaughter of John Greenhow, merchant, of Williamsburg, Virginia, who had supplied Patrick Henry with china for the Governor's Palace at Williamsburg. Her father, James W. Greenhow, son of a Richmond physician, had married Augusta Emily Russell, born in Louisville, Kentucky, of a family which hailed from Boston. The couple had moved to Vincennes, Indiana, where James Greenhow served as contractor for the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad and the Wabash and Erie Canal. One of the family's cherished possessions was a painting of Greenhow as a boy with his brother, his two sisters, and the little mulatto boy who had attended them.<sup>3</sup> Emily had been born and had grown up in Vincennes. But both her parents now lay buried in Bruton Parish churchyard in Williamsburg, and she had been living in Keokuk with the Reids.

Her husband, fifteen years older than she, was the third of the ten children of Charlotte Thrall Doane, a native Vermonter educated at the Emma Willard School in Troy, New York, and Guy William Doane, who was born in New Milford, Connecticut, was graduated from Union College at Schenectady, New York, and attended law school in Albany. He settled then in Circleville, Ohio, where he practiced law and eventually was elected to the state legislature. Young William (He was called by his second name.) had graduated from Marietta (Ohio) College, then read and practiced law in his father's office in Circleville. Eventually, he grew restless, and in the spring of 1857 traveled west to Kansas, intending to settle there. He soon decided that there was more opportunity for a man of his talents in the Territory of Nebraska, and so he traveled north by river boat to Omaha. On the way he made friends with another young lawyer, Eleazar Wakeley, and the two set out from Omaha with a party of young men intending to lay out a new town site farther north in Burt County. They settled at Decatur,<sup>4</sup> and for four months young William tried his hand at farming—just long enough to assure himself that he was destined to be a

lawyer. Yet he was still convinced that his future lay in the new territory, and he stood for election as District Attorney of the Third District.

Before the results of the election were known he traveled to Ohio to settle his affairs, then returned to Nebraska. His new job was no sinecure. The Third District, for which he was responsible, stretched from the Douglas County line northward to the Canadian border and from the Missouri River westward to the Rockies. There were no courthouses in the district and cases were tried in houses, stores, taverns, or any shelter that might be available. However, he was ambitious, he relished hard work, and he had his friend, Eleazar Wakeley,<sup>5</sup> now judge of the district, as a colleague. Voters in the district were soon convinced that Doane was a man to be trusted; in August, 1858, they elected him representative to the Territorial Council from Burt, Washington, and Sarpy counties, and in the following year he was re-elected District Attorney for another two-year period. He had prospered uncommonly well during his brief stay in the West, and he felt confident enough of his future to ask young Emily Greenhow to share it with him. He could see for himself that, though gently bred, she had a hardy spirit and a lively sense of humor which would fortify her in the years ahead.

The morning after the wedding the young couple set out from Keokuk on their wedding journey—not east to Niagara Falls, but west by a roundabout route to Nebraska. They went first southeast to St. Louis, then took a train heading northwest to St. Joseph. There they boarded a third train which ran north to the end of the line at Savannah, Missouri. The trip thus far had taken several days—days that were at best uncomfortable and at worst terrifying, as when they traveled through prairie fires on the trip from St. Joseph to Savannah and the flames flared up “as high as a good-sized house on both sides of the train.” It was at Savannah that the really arduous part of the trip began. For three days they traveled by mule train north to Council Bluffs. Yet Emily



*George William Doane*

seems to have taken it all calmly. "I was quite proud of my new silk poplin dress, the traveling dress of my bridal outfit, which was made with a cape and wide skirts draped over voluminous hoops," she recalled later. And she remembered fondly the kindness of Colonel North, "a very kind and jolly man," who "was going to Council Bluffs, and said that he would take us along."

At Council Bluffs the young couple crossed the Missouri River, presumably by ferry,<sup>6</sup> to Omaha. It was a typical late autumn day: "The sun shone, the wind blew a fierce gale across the prairie," and to Emily "the little settlement of houses, clustered about the new Herndon House at Ninth and Farnam streets, looked as though fallen down from the skies on to the bare plains." Just as she took her first step on to Nebraska soil, a gust of wind blew the cape of her poplin dress over her head—"and when I pulled it down and looked about me, I saw streets that were mostly a sea of mud, for there were no pavements and only one sidewalk in the town, a makeshift affair that surrounded the Herndon House.<sup>7</sup> Here and there, a thoughtful citizen had laid a plank or two for the comfort of pedestrians, but these were few and far between."

She was not obliged to wade through the mud; there was a carriage waiting to carry her and her husband to the Herndon House, "considered a real palace for this part of the world." But her stay there was brief; "the day after our arrival we secured a fine span of horses and a buggy and left for the Indian agency in the northern part of the state, just beyond the town of Decatur." Her husband was carrying with him \$40,000 in gold which he had been commissioned by the Federal Government to distribute among the Indians in the Omaha Indian Reservation. "We drove along the lonely prairie, not a tree and scarcely a house in sight," Emily wrote later. At dinner time they stopped near DeSoto at the home Charles Powell "on a high bluff and noted for its hospitality. The Powells had the only cistern and icehouse for miles around. Ice cream was frozen in the tin butter churn, but I will say it was the best I ever tasted."

They pushed on then through Tekamah, and Emily had her first glimpse of "Bishop Spring," so named by some Eastern friends of her husband, who had dubbed him Bishop after the well-known Bishop Doane of Albany, New York. At length they reached Decatur, where they put up at the new Fuller Hotel, built of cottonwood with its rooms separated only by thin canvas partitions, "which proved a regular whispering gallery for the inmates."

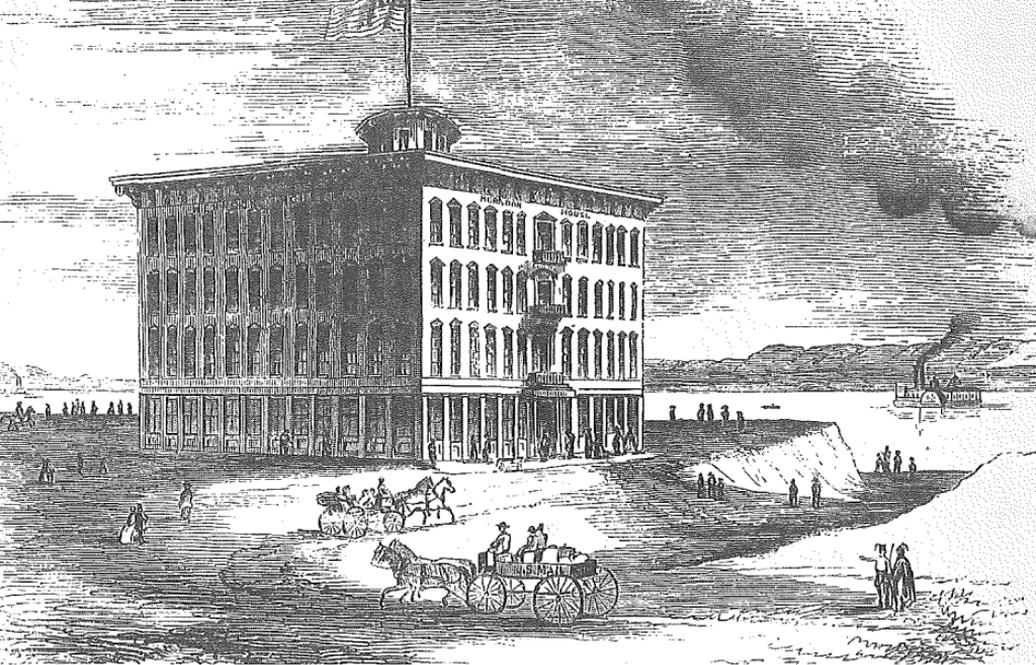
The following day they drove on to the Indian agency. Captain Moore, the agent in charge, turned over to them his own quarters in Matt Wilbur's farmhouse nearby—a first-floor room with five large windows "slightly protected by shades that were several inches too narrow." The next morning her husband busied himself about affairs at the agency. [I sat] "leisurely combing my hair, which was very light in color and of which I possessed quite a large amount," Emily wrote. Suddenly "I felt there were eyes upon me, and looking toward the windows I saw every gap between the shades crowded with dark faces gazing curiously at me." This was her first contact with an Indian, and she reacted instinctively: "I rushed to the bed, drew it from the wall, and seated myself behind it." And there she

stayed until her husband returned and assured her that "the visitors were only squaws and children, that they were harmless but filled with curiosity about a white woman, whom they seldom saw."

They traveled next day several miles across the reservation to the home of Chief Joseph LaFlesche, where the gold was to be distributed because the Chief had broken his leg and could not be moved. Emily was fascinated by the Indians' "circular mud houses, with a buffalo robe for a door and beds made of boughs of trees. . . . In the center of the top was a hole to let out the smoke," she observed, "and to give a little light, which served, among other purposes, to light a favorite occupation of the squaws, that of hunting the little live animals from the children's heads and popping them into their mouths." She had conquered her first fears; her sense of humor had revived, and she was obviously enjoying her unconventional honeymoon. She remarked that among the noble savages "the women of the reservation did all of the work while the men loafed."

Doling out the \$40,000 at LaFlesche's house took one whole day. "It was a very serious occasion for the Indians, who gathered about with tense faces" and watched with interest as the eleven chiefs and other braves were given their share. Then, when the squaws' turn came, Emily, as the only white woman present, took upon herself the task of counting out the \$25 allowed each of them.

Before supper Captain Moore took her to the kitchen where a beef was being barbecued under the direction of Mary,<sup>8</sup> LaFlesche's "principal wife . . . large, handsome, dignified woman, half French and half Indian, as were LaFlesche and the Fontenelles."<sup>9</sup> Elaborate preparations were under way, some of them a bit unsettling. "One thing I made up my mind I would pass by at dinner," Emily declared, "and that was the potatoes that I watched a small boy peeling. Every little Indian seemed to be suffering from a cold, and there wasn't a handkerchief on the place, evidently. They wiped their noses on their hands and just con-



*Sketch of the Herndon House as it appeared in Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, 1858.*

tinued on with their work. The germ theory had not been heard of in those days.”

Presently Mary left the kitchen carrying with her the one tallow candle. Emily felt the other Indians gathering around her in the dark to examine her hair. Her “heart began to fail” her: “They picked up my gloves and looked at my clothes curiously. I was afraid to utter a word until she returned.”

Not until eleven o'clock at night were Emily and her party ready to set out on the trip to the agency. “The stream near by was so high that the bridge was almost flooded over. With three carriages and Henry Fontenelle<sup>10</sup> as guide, we started out. He led us down an embankment, which was almost perpendicular, and it was with difficulty that the carriages were kept from upsetting. At the bridge Henry Fontenelle motioned for me to get on the pony with him for safety, and I, being very fond of riding, was ready to do so.” But Captain Moore was not convinced that Henry could be trusted with a fair maiden, and he gave Emily a warning sign. Immediately Henry “whipped up his pony and, with an unearthly yell, was gone into the darkness and was not seen again for several days. Henry, they told me, had a way of celebrating on

state occasions, and this was one of them. . . . With the wolves howling round us," the party was left to find its way back to the agency without a guide.

Presently the Doanes set out again, this time for Dakota City,<sup>11</sup> "a tedious ride next day over the hills and valleys." To their surprise they found "a fine brick hotel at Dakota City, a rare thing in those days, in this part of the world." They put up for several days at the hotel, where they had a taste of more civilized living and enjoyed the company of J. N. H. Patrick and his wife, later to become their friends in Omaha. The day after Emily and her husband arrived, a United States District Attorney staying in Dakota City borrowed their buggy to do an errand in a nearby town. Unfortunately "it was another case of celebrating," and he did not return, as expected, that day or for several days thereafter. When the Doanes could wait no longer, they borrowed "an old black horse and buggy" from the Patricks and set off on the trip back to Omaha. "The Patrick horse was fearfully slow; in fact, he refused to do more than walk. We did our best and while Mr. Doane drove I applied the whip, to which the horse paid no attention. We were several days getting back to Omaha."

They settled at the Herndon House, and Emily was introduced to the social life of the new city. Much of it centered at the hotel where James Allan was host and the guest list included such notables as Governor and Mrs. Samuel W. Black; the Governor's secretary, John McConihe, and his staff; and the J. Sterling Mortons. Emily soon perceived that, though the new community "looked rough and unfinished," there was a "certain cosmopolitanism about the place, because the early settlers were mostly college bred men of fine family." Like her husband, their "adventurous spirit had guided them to the west," and many had "finely bred wives, who had known every luxury and advantage."

The Herndon House itself—that palace surrounded by a sea of mud—symbolized the kind of life which pre-

veiled in the little settlement. Ladies and gentlemen of the Doanes' circle clung steadfastly to the social amenities—perhaps more determinedly than if the odds had not been so heavily weighted against gracious living. Like the traditional Britisher in the tropics, they insisted on dressing for dinner: "At the dances and evening parties, it was most unusual to see a man not in full dress suit, while women wore the spreading skirts, containing yards and yards of material, and the low-cut bodices of Victorian times. The skirts were long and had trains, for no lady would have allowed an ankle to be seen in those days. In daytime their little bonnets were tied beneath their chins with ribbons."

Emily's initial venture into the social whirl came during her first week in Omaha. The bachelor brothers Matt and Al Patrick and their sister Lyda, later Mrs. Joseph Barker, were giving a housewarming at their new residence on Davenport Street, between Sixteenth and Seventeenth streets. It was a major event of the social season—"a very elaborate supper," followed by dancing, "for that was the principal amusement of those days." It was Emily's favorite amusement, and she must have delighted in this sudden return to the sort of life she had known earlier. The trip to and from the party, however, was not at all in the style to which she was accustomed. The district attorney who had borrowed the Doanes' horse and buggy in Dakota City had still not returned them, and there was not a carriage available in any of the livery stables. But Emily loved a party, and no momentary inconvenience would keep her from one. Accordingly she did not disdain to pick her way in all her finery along the ten blocks of unpaved, unlighted streets from the hotel to the Patricks' house, guided by her husband in full dress who was carrying a lantern.

If the young couple sensed a hint of constraint in the air at the party, they soon discovered the reason: only a few of their Omaha acquaintances had been officially advised of their marriage. Emily had taken some pains to have her "wedding cards" properly addressed and had

arranged to have a messenger deliver them. She learned, however, that less than half the people on her list had received the announcements. Apologies were offered, and the apparent slight was soon forgotten. It was not until some weeks later that the mystery was solved: more than half the cards were found under the Herndon House sidewalk, where the messenger, tiring too soon, had flung them.

The Doanes were welcomed immediately into the best circles of the little town. When Algernon S. Paddock<sup>12</sup> and Emma Mack were married in a little Trinity Episcopal Church across from the Herndon House, they were among the select group invited. This time they had no need of a carriage (although their buggy had finally been returned), as the church was so conveniently located. Yet this too was a memorable occasion, for the bridegroom forgot to bring the marriage license and the ceremony was held up until it was fetched. Meanwhile "something funny happened"—probably one of the gentlemen made a facetious remark about the delay—and the guests were convulsed. "The more we laughed," Emily wrote later, "the funnier it became, (we were young and in gay spirits those days)." Finally the officiating clergyman, the Reverend Mr. Watson of Council Bluffs, "arose solemnly in the pulpit and reproved us, saying, 'You seem to forget that this is a church.'" Of course decorum was restored immediately.

But the gaiety of young Omaha was not long stifled. Emily and her husband were invited to the grand social event of the season, the legislative ball at the Herndon House. She decided that the occasion justified wearing her wedding gown of white tulle over satin. Unfortunately she entered so whole-heartedly into the dancing that by the end of the evening her tulle overskirt was in shreds. But she had no regrets; the fun had been worth the cost. She was amused next day to find "every chambermaid in the hotel wearing a white tulle bow at her throat, part of the wreckage from my skirts."

There were innumerable small dances during the win-

ter. The new Capitol,<sup>13</sup> though not completely finished, Emily recalled, was a favorite gathering-place: "A most imposing building of white brick with big iron pillars," it dominated the city from the hill above the river and could be seen for miles by those approaching the city. "There was no plaster on the walls, but that did not lessen the enjoyment of the dances we had there. And what a cold drive it was up that hill in wintertime. The men's moustaches would be white with frost when we arrived for those evening dances." At other times "we even moved the furniture out of the houses in the evenings in order to have a dance. We all liked the waltz better than anything else, and there was also the Polka which was very popular. There was a Spanish dance where two couples faced one another, and we always danced some square dances, with some one calling off the figures."

Sleighing parties were popular too. "The weather man may contradict me," Emily declared many years later, "but I am sure we had more snow in those days than now. The ground would be white for weeks in the winter, and what fun we had in sleighs and any other kind of conveyance that could be put on runners. At night the sleigh bells tinkled merrily as the parties dashed about, through the streets. . . . We used to get upset in the snow and laugh and think what fun we were having. There was great rivalry with Council Bluffs, an older and more prosperous city in those days than Omaha. In the winter we would drive over on the ice with a team of horses; Council Bluffs people would come over with four horses; then we would return with six horses drawing a sleigh; and Council Bluffs would reply with a whole string of sleighs a block long."

After a few months of the active life at the Herndon House the Doanes decided that they would be more comfortable in a smaller hotel. They moved then to the St. Charles Hotel<sup>14</sup> kept by Mr. and Mrs. Keith at Twelfth and Harney streets. If they were seeking quiet, they were doomed to be disappointed as the partitions between the rooms were of canvas, and "one was certainly in close

proximity with one's neighbors with nothing but canvas stretched between the rooms."

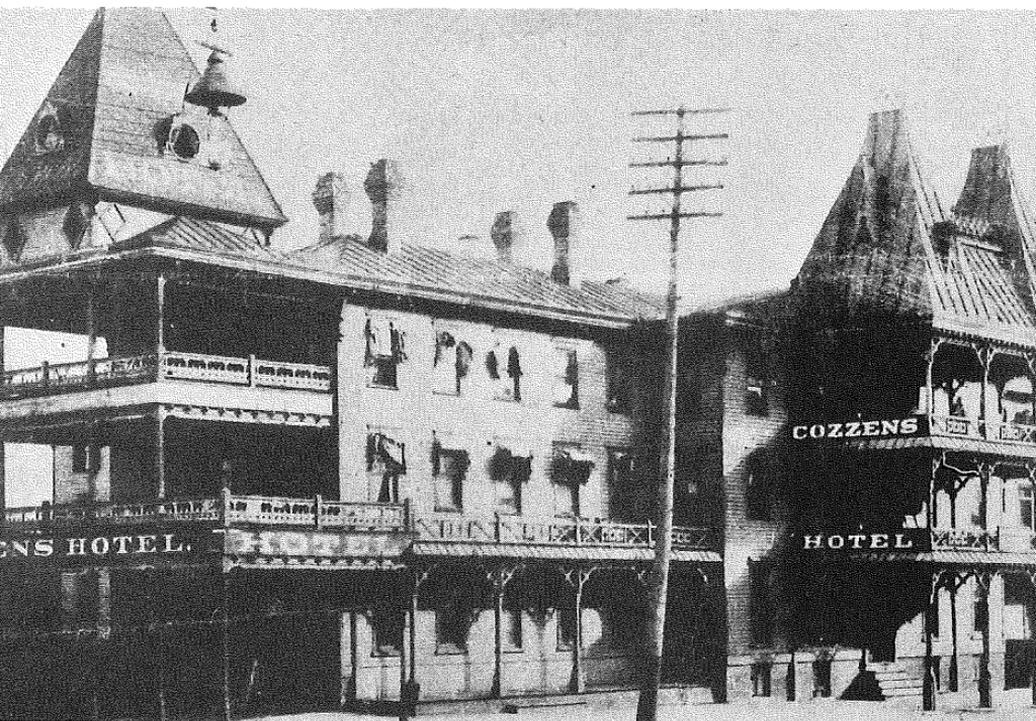
When spring came and the river was free of ice, everyone looked forward to the arrival from St. Louis of the first river boat of the season. It brought fresh foods—"and such a luxury they were after a winter of eating canned fruits and vegetables. . . . The oranges and lemons, brought by those boats, tasted better to me," Emily recalled, "than any I've eaten since." Such an occasion called for a celebration—which was, naturally enough, a dance aboard the river boat.

During the summer there were picnics at Pries' Lake, overlooking the river, and when the heat was not too intense, more dances. There were theater parties too—at first for an occasional performance at the courthouse by a traveling company, later when the Academy of Music<sup>15</sup> was opened, by "what we thought was a very fine stock company. Nights at the theatre were like a party. Everyone knew everyone else, we all wore our best clothes," and the air was charged with gaiety.

Inevitably there grew up over the years a treasury of folklore within this little circle—private jokes and stories that were told and retold for years to come. There was the unforgettable party at Mrs. John McCormick's home one wintry night when Luther Kountze, the bashful one of the five brothers from Ohio who lived on "the Kountze reservation" north of town, "came in very nervously and sat down on the stove. The poor young man jumped up, rushed out of the house, and stepped into a nearby basement filled with water. We did not see him again at that party." There were stories too about the fabulous George Francis Train,<sup>16</sup> who stalked out of the Herndon House when the management failed to repair a broken window. He vowed he would build a rival hotel of his own within sixty days—and, true to his word, he opened the Cozzens House at Ninth and Harney,<sup>17</sup> just one block from the Herndon House, within the specified time. Of course these stories seemed more humorous in later years when

Luther Kountze made a fortune as a banker in New York and Train ran for the Presidency of the United States. (He had anticipated his future prominence while still in Omaha and had distributed calling cards on New Year's Day describing himself as "President of the United States in 1872.")

Always the river was a source of interest and speculation "because we never knew what it would do next. It was before the time of breakwaters and other contrivances for controlling rivers. With its numerous sandbars the Missouri was a most treacherous stream, and bags of coal and sand were used to stem the tide when it took a notion to go in some other direction." The bottom land behind the Herndon House was steadily being washed away; people claimed that the tracks laid there for hauling goods from the boats were moved closer to the bluff every day.



*Cozzens Hotel was built by George Francis Train in retaliation for poor service he received at the Herndon House.*

One of the favorite river stories concerned "a very nice old gentleman from Washington, who braved the terrors of this wild western country because he had a patent on land near the river"—only to discover that every inch of it was below water. He returned at once to a "more stable and civilized home."

There were sad stories too, like that of another of the Kountze brothers, William, who fell sick suddenly and was taken by his brothers in a skiff down the Missouri. They were heading for St. Louis, hoping to carry him by train back to Ohio. But young William died aboard the skiff.

There was pathos again in the stories of the Mormons<sup>18</sup> who came to Florence<sup>19</sup> each summer. "They pushed two-wheeled carts which were filled with their belongings, and most of them, both men and women, were walking. The camp resembled the Tower of Babel, so many nationalities were represented. There were many Norwegians, Danes, and English among them, and the children were very numerous. We used to drive out to the hill behind Florence, which they had chosen as their resting place. There were no trees around Florence at that time—only bare hills. They built fires in the side of the hill, and then made two holes on top for cooking." In the spring they would move on, but they left traces behind them. There were girls, repulsed by the prospect of polygamous marriages, who ran away from the camp or were smuggled out under carriage robes—and were usually snapped up as housemaids by Omaha matrons. And there were the sunflowers which sprang up in the wake of the strange caravan. "They were six feet tall in some instances, bore enormous flowers. Some people said the overturning of the soil on the Mormon Trail, by the tramping of so many feet, was responsible for them. Others said the Mormons themselves scattered the seed, but at least, the Mormons made this picturesque contribution to Nebraska."

There were other travelers moving through town in the summer months, many in covered wagons labeled "Pike's Peak or bust. . . . Sometimes there would be 150

wagons camped on the river bottoms, or on the vacant lot at Harney and Thirteenth streets." And Emily, keenly interested always in her fellow-man, watched as they headed west and wondered later whatever became of them. Life in Omaha might at times be trying, but it was never dull.

Sometime in 1861 her husband decided that he should take up his residence in the area which he was serving as District Attorney, and they moved up the river to Fort Calhoun, the closest settlement to Omaha within the Third District. Now for the first time in her married life she had a taste of housekeeping, for they occupied the Algernon S. Paddock house. She was pleased to discover that "the usual canvas walls" were "covered with wall paper so that it presented an attractive appearance."

There were fewer dances now, necessarily, and more contact with the unpredictable Indians. In fact they made their presence felt even before the Doanes' arrival. A neighbor had invited several guests to a welcome dinner "which consisted of every delicacy on the market. Just before the guests arrived, but after the table was completely set, a crowd of Indians arrived, and in the space of one moment the table was swept clean of everything eatable."

Emily soon learned to take the Indians as calmly as she had taken so many other novelties. When her brother came out from Virginia to visit her at Fort Calhoun, she took obvious delight in exposing him to his first contact with the redskin: "He was wishing to see an Indian, and the first day of his visit he chanced to be reading a very exciting Indian tale, in a magazine, and had just reached the tomahawk stage, when I said, 'Will look behind you.' There, in the window, was framed the old Chief, Sleeping Buffalo, with his red blanket and painted face, wearing a mirror around his neck, and an old stove-pipe hat upon his head. My brother jumped nearly to the ceiling when his eyes met this sight." But Emily merely shooed the old fellow away with the cry "Pukachi," the Indian equivalent of the modern *scram*.

One of the highlights of the Doanes' stay at Fort Calhoun was the visit of Bishop Joseph C. Talbot, Missionary Bishop of the Northwest, who came up from his headquarters at Nebraska City to officiate at the first Episcopal service held in Fort Calhoun. Emily served him a dinner of prairie chicken (available from local farmers at \$1.25 per dozen) and wild strawberry shortcake, and he stayed overnight at the house—a night which saw a major crisis in the little community. A family named Vanears, keepers of a flour mill, had failed to meet payments on their mortgage and had been subjected to foreclosure. Before the new owners could take possession, the Vanearses stole in by night, seized the machinery, and carted it away to hide it in the bluffs along the river. Shortly after midnight an alarm went out, and all able-bodied men in the area were summoned to foil the thieves. "Mr. Doane, being District Attorney, was one of the first called," Emily reported. "We were careful not to awaken the Bishop. I did not see Mr. Doane again for twenty-four hours. The rest of the men were out all night and too exhausted to go to church, so the first Episcopal service in Fort Calhoun, held in the little schoolhouse, by the way, had only women for its congregation."

One of the advantages of Fort Calhoun was its accessibility to Omaha. Emily and her husband were able to keep in touch with their friends there. When he had produce to carry to town, he often chartered a river boat—and, when the cargo was discharged, invited friends aboard for the evening. The church women would decorate the boat, a fiddler would be hired, and, of course, the evening would be spent dancing. On one occasion no fiddler was to be found—except one who was locked up in the city jail. However, that was not an insuperable barrier to the District Attorney of the Third Territorial District, who was also the close friend of Judge Eleazar Wakeley. The dignitaries pulled the proper strings, the fiddler was released, and the dance proceeded as planned.

In 1862 the Doanes left Fort Calhoun and traveled back to Ohio. They had second thoughts about the future

of their adopted territory. But they were presently dissolved by President Lincoln's decision that Council Bluffs should be the eastern terminus of the new Union Pacific Railroad, and in 1864 they returned to Nebraska and settled again in Omaha. Old Judge James M. Love of Keokuk had proved to be right when he had told them, "Don't worry about Omaha. The city on the west bank of the river is always the most successful."

Then began a long series of years of growing prosperity—for Nebraska, for Omaha, and for the Doane family. Emily shared her husband's success as he rose in his profession and in public life. He was elected Prosecuting Attorney for Douglas County in 1865, a member of the last Territorial Legislature in 1867, and a member of the Omaha City Council in 1868.<sup>20</sup> In 1869 when plans were made for the Golden Spike celebration to mark the completion of the transcontinental railroad, he and his wife were among the prominent Omahans invited to join the party traveling to Promontory Point, Utah.<sup>21</sup>

It was a gala occasion; Mr. and Mrs. George M. Pullman themselves were among the travelers on the special train. But Emily and her husband refused to take either the occasion or themselves too seriously, although they were now thirty and forty-five years old respectively and the parents of three children. When they reached Mt. Sherman, Wyoming, they climbed down from the train and, with two other ladies, Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Jordan, insisted on riding down the western slope of the mountain and into Laramie on the cow-catcher.

It proved to be a more thrilling ride than they had anticipated. The train gained momentum as it headed down the slope, and the four daredevils found themselves speeding along "at the rate of a mile a minute, clinging desperately to the cowcatcher, knowing if we weakened our hold, we would be dashed down the mountain side." Fortunately all four managed to retain their grip, and they had no regrets—"for we were a gay, adventuresome lot in those days, and the more danger, the more fun, we

thought." Messrs. Roberts and Jordan, however, were "fearfully angry and upset" at their wives' escapade; one of them even threatened to commit suicide to teach his lady a thing or two. But the incident was soon forgotten, and when the party reached Promontory Point, the two Doanes had their picture taken with others of the party standing about the engine—and Emily seated conspicuously on the cowcatcher.

Inevitably, as their responsibilities increased and the city grew, there were fewer colorful episodes in Emily's life. Her time was preempted by the demands of a family of five children. As their income increased, the Doanes moved from house to house, finally settling in a substantial residence well up Capitol Hill, at Twenty-first and Chicago streets, with a fine view over the city and the river to the Iowa bluffs. Emily supervised the household with the aid of a succession of housemaids (available in the sixties at \$2.00 per week), all of whom, good or bad, she treated with the kindness natural to one who loved her fellow-creatures and relished a good joke. One of them, a particularly good cook, was "somewhat given to the black bottle, but she was so perfect in her work that we even forgave her setting the house on fire occasionally. We just took out extra insurance and hoped for the best." Another, "a real treasure," left at short notice after she had received a call one Sunday from a perfect stranger, sent by her brother with the message that the bearer would make a good husband. After an hour's conversation the "treasure" announced to her mistress that she would be marrying her suitor the following Sunday.

Life was good to Emily. Her husband had a thriving practice and was one of the most highly respected men in the growing city. In 1880 he was elected a State Senator, in 1887 Judge of the Fourth Judicial District. In 1892 he ran for Congress on the Democratic ticket, but was defeated. When he retired from the bench to run for Congress, his colleagues presented him a silver berry dish. With it went a "memorial," which read in part: "Its sterling quality may be said to be emblematic of your

sterling character. The purity of its metal may symbolize your purity of purpose. You may observe that it is brightened by the polish and the splendor of gold, which may be emblematic of your urbanity and sweetness of manner."

Judge Doane lived until December 22, 1912, when he died at the age of eighty-eight, only a few weeks after he had attended the funeral of his long-time friend and colleague, Judge Wakeley. The two were hailed as the Damon and Pythias of the legal profession.

A set of resolutions on Judge Doane's death passed by the members of the Fourth Judicial Court included the following:

His career was long, unbroken, honorable, completely rounded. As a lawyer he was able, resourceful, diligent, devoted; a man of unflinching courtesy and rare courage. As a judge he was dignified yet gracious. Quick to grasp the the propositions involved, and bent upon the dispatch of business. He was particularly kind and tolerant toward the young practitioner.

The obligation of citizenship rested heavily upon him; and the service he rendered to the Territory and State of Nebraska in answer to the people's call, constitutes a rich legacy with which a mere commercial heritage cannot compare. As a public prosecutor, in a new land, he maintained the supremacy and majesty of the law with a power and fearlessness which made for civic righteousness and peace. As a member of the law-making councils of both Territory and State he stood forth a leader among strong men; and left the permanent impress of his virile intellect upon legislation.

He was a gentleman of the old school—with that innate breeding which wealth cannot acquire nor study impart. He lived to a patriarchal age: but it was character which lent a beauty to the lengthening years.

His wife survived him by more than twelve years, dying on April 16, 1925, in her eighty-sixth year. She was blessed in later life by a devoted family of children and grandchildren and by a wealth of happy memories. When in 1919 a young journalist suggested that she record her reminiscences, she at first demurred; she had been brought

up to believe that a lady's name should appear in the newspaper only three times in her lifetime: at birth, marriage, and death. She relented, however, when her daughter pointed out that this was an opportunity to aid an ambitious young person just beginning a career. And so, in unaffected, heart-warming words, she recorded her cherished memories. It was a pleasant task, surely, yet a poignant one too—those carefree days were so far in the past! "Sixty years have gone by since I became a resident of Omaha," she wrote wistfully. "I have seen the little town of less than two thousand souls grow into a prosperous city of over two hundred thousand. It has been a wonderful experience, and its only element of sadness is that but a few, if any, of those who lived here at that time, can enjoy it with me. They sowed the seed for the greater Omaha, but they passed to the great beyond before they fully realized what a magnificent harvest it would be."

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Before the Civil War Hugh Thompson Reid practiced law in Keokuk. In 1862 he commanded the 15th Iowa Infantry Regiment at Shiloh, where he was wounded. He was named a brigadier general in 1863. After the war he promoted the Des Moines Valley Railroad from Keokuk to Fort Dodge. Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* (New York: Century History Co., 1903), IV, 219.

<sup>2</sup> This article is based on the reminiscences of Mrs. George William Doane as recorded for the *Omaha Daily News* in 1919 and on other documents now in the possession of Mrs. Doane's granddaughter, Emily L. Keller of Omaha. Except when otherwise specified, all quotations in the text are from these reminiscences and documents.

<sup>3</sup> The painting now hangs in the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha on loan from Miss Keller.

<sup>4</sup> The town of Decatur was located about sixty miles north of Omaha in 1855 by the Decatur Town and Ferry Company, Lillian L. Fitzpatrick, *Nebraska Place-Names* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 28.

<sup>5</sup> Eleazar Wakeley served as associate justice of the territorial supreme court from 1857-61. He was appointed district judge in March, 1883; he was elected judge in November, 1883, serving in Districts 3 and 4 from 1883-1892. *Nebraska Blue Book, 1966* (Compiled by the Nebraska Legislative Council), 117, 142.

<sup>6</sup> In 1919 Mrs. Doane remembered: "We found the river frozen and the ferry stopped, so we tried to walk on planks, laid down for a path, but the wild winds made this impossible and most of the journey across was made on the ice." However, she must have had a later crossing in mind; items in the *Council Bluffs Bugle* for November 2 and 16, 1859, reported that the river was low but still navigable on those dates.

<sup>7</sup> For origins of the Herndon House see Charles W. Martin, "Herndon House Register, 1865-66," *Nebraska History*, Vol. 48 (1967), 78-85.

<sup>8</sup> Mary LaFlesche was the daughter of Dr. John Gale, U.S. Army Surgeon who had served at Fort Atkinson, and Nicomi, his Indian wife, who later married Peter Sarpy. *Four Sisters: Daughters of Joseph LaFlesche, Nebraska History*, Vol. 45 No. 2 (June 1964) 165-68.

<sup>9</sup> Born of a Sioux mother and a French father, Joseph LaFlesche succeeded Big Elk as Chief of the Omaha Indians. He was active in negotiations, accompanying the Omaha delegation to Washington, D.C. to complete a treaty in 1854. He demanded that the tribe receive money for their land. *27th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1905-1906*. (Washington: Government Printing Office: 1911), 631-33.

<sup>10</sup> Described as a reliable, intelligent, educated half-breed, Henry Fontenelle often served as interpreter and agent for the Omaha Indians. Robert W. Furnas, "History of the Omaha Indians," *Transactions of the Nebraska State Historical Society*, 1, (1885), 76-85.

<sup>11</sup> Dakota City Land Company surveyed and platted the town on the Missouri River in Northeast Nebraska in 1855-56. It derived its name from the Dakota Indians. Fitzpatrick, *Nebraska Place-Names*, 48.

<sup>12</sup> Paddock was Nebraska's U.S. Senator for two terms, 1875-81 and 1887-93. He was acting governor of territorial Nebraska May 6-15, 1861 and territorial secretary 1861-67. *Nebraska Blue Book*, 1966, pp. 116, 145.

<sup>13</sup> The capital was located at Omaha when Nebraska became a territory, and remained there until removed to Lincoln in 1867. *Nebraska Blue Book*, 1966, pp. 113-14.

<sup>14</sup> The St. Charles, one of the city's earliest hotels, was one of many acquired by hotelman George Canfield. Alfred Sorenson, *The Story of Omaha*, (Omaha: National Printing Co., 1923), 231-33.

<sup>15</sup> The Academy of Music figured prominently in theatrical amusement of Omahans. Col. John Y. Clopper was one of its promoter-owners. Later Henry Corri, veteran theatrical man, became manager, organizing one of the best stock companies in the United States. It continued as Omaha's only theatre until 1881. Sorenson, *The Story of Omaha*, 240-42.

<sup>16</sup> George Francis Train, noted for his eccentricities, spent considerable time and money unsuccessfully campaigning for the Presidential Nomination on the Democratic ticket in 1872. He then ran independently. Willis Thornton, *The Nine Lives of Citizen Train* (New York: Greenburg, 1948), 215-27.

<sup>17</sup> For more on the incident see A. T. Andreas, *History of the State of Nebraska* (Chicago, 1882), II, 703.

<sup>18</sup> Utah-bound Mormons had been sojourners in the Omaha area since 1845-46. Most of them settled permanently in Utah. Andreas, *History . . . I*, 98.

<sup>19</sup> Florence was platted in 1854 by James C. Mitchell, and named for Florence Kelbourne, his niece. The town is now a part of Omaha. Fitzpatrick, *Nebraska Place-Names*, 56.

<sup>20</sup> For Doane's career as a legislator see *Nebraska Blue Book* 1964, pp. 115, 118, 132, 156. He was district attorney in 1857; territorial legislator in 1858, 1859, and 1867; judge of Districts 3 and 4 between 1888-92; state senator in 1881.

<sup>21</sup> For a recent description of earliest railroading activity in Nebraska see Barry B. Combs, "The Union Pacific Railroad and Early Settlement in Nebraska, 1868-1880," *Nebraska History*, Vol. 50 No. 1 (1969), 1-26.