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February 13, 2013

THIS WEEK:

Repealing the Iowa State Census: Looking Back at the 1858 Census

BACKGROUND: 45TH IOWA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Forty-fifth Iowa General Assembly convened January 9 and adjourned April 20, 1933—a 102-day session. Nelson G. Kraschel was the Lieutenant Governor presiding in the Senate. The Senate was evenly divided with 25 Democrats and 25 Republican members. George E. Miller was Speaker of the House. The House of Representatives had 76 Democratic members and 32 Republican members. Daniel Turner finished out his term as Governor and Clyde Herring was inaugurated January 12, 1933, at the age of 53. The federal census of 1930 showed Iowa's population at 2,470,939.

Repealing the Iowa State Census

Senate Joint Resolution 5 proposed an amendment to Article III of the Constitution of the State of Iowa by repealing section 33 relating to the state census.

The state census was repealed in 1936 by the citizens of Iowa after ratifying the 17th Amendment to the Iowa Constitution:

An amendment to the constitution may be proposed by either the House of Representatives or the Senate and must be entered in their journals including the yeas and nays. It is then referred to the next General Assembly

chosen at the next election. The proposed amendment also must be published. If it is passed by a majority at the next General Assembly the proposed amendment is then submitted to the people for ratification.

Looking Back at the 1858 Census of Iowa

1836---1880.

CENSUS OF IOWA

FOR 1880,

AND THE SAME COMPARED WITH THE FINDINGS OF EACH OF
THE OTHER STATES, AND ALSO WITH ALL FORMER
ENUMERATIONS OF THE TERRITORY
NOW EMBRACED WITHIN THE
LIMITS OF THE STATE
OF IOWA,

WITH OTHER HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL DATA,

BY

JOHN A. T. HULL, Secretary of State.

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DES MOINES:
F. M. MILLS, STATE PRINTER, TO PAGE 368.
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GEO. E. ROBERTS, STATE PRINTER.
1883.



Francis Springer
President of the 1857 Constitutional Convention of Iowa
(b. April 15, 1811 – d. October 2, 1898)

The present constitution, adopted in 1857, provided that enumerations of the state should be taken in the years 1859, 1863, 1865, 1867, 1869, and 1875, and every tenth year after 1875. The Seventh General Assembly passed an act (chapter 138) to carry out this provision.

The expense attending the publication of the census of 1856 had been so great that the legislature, when making provision for the future enumerations, directed that thenceforth the returns should be made by the assessors to the clerk of the district court, by whom abstracts thereof were to be prepared and transmitted to the Secretary of State. The schedules contemplated the following information:

- The total number of males;
- The total number of females;
- The number of persons entitled to vote;
- The number of the militia;

The number of foreigners not naturalized;
The total number of children between five and twenty-one years of age;
The number of families and the number of dwelling-houses;
The number of acres of improved and unimproved lands;
An enumeration of agricultural, mining, and manufacturing statistics, including the value of the products of the farm, herd, orchard, and dairy each, and the value of manufactured articles, and of mineral sold the year preceding the census;
The number of miles of railroad finished and unfinished;
The number of colleges and universities, with the number of pupils therein.

The Census Board was also authorized to require such other facts to be ascertained and returned as it might deem expedient. The law as thus amended has remained unaltered to the present time; and every census since taken by the State, except the special one of 1873, has been compiled under its provisions.

When preparing the schedule for the census of 1859, the Census Board determined to add largely to the scope of the inquiries specified in the statute. As the schedule then adopted is the basis of those used in the succeeding enumerations, it is here given in full, with the instructions communicated by the Board.

Schedule (1859)

1st—Dwellings numbered in the order of visitation. Under this head insert the number of dwelling-houses as they are visited. The first house visited to be numbered 1; the second one visited, 2; and so on to the last house visited in the district. By a dwelling-house is meant a separate inhabited tenement having one or more families under one roof. Where several tenements are in one block, with brick or wood walls to divide them, having separate entrances, they are each to be numbered as separate houses. If a house is used partly for a store, shop, office, or other purposes, and partly for a dwelling, it is to be numbered as a dwelling-house. Hotels, poor-houses, hospitals, asylums, jails, and penitentiaries are each to be numbered as a dwelling-house.

2d—Name of each head of family. Under this head insert, the name of the head of each family visited. By the term family is meant either one person living separately in a house or part of a house and providing for him or herself; a widow living alone, and separately providing for herself, or two hundred individuals living together and provided for by a common head, should each be considered as one family. And by the term head of a family is meant the person having the principal charge and care of an institution of private family.

3d—Number of males. In this column insert the number of males in each family.

4th—Number of females. In this column insert the number of females in each family.

5th—Number entitled to vote. In this column insert the number of voters, both native and naturalized, without distinction.

6th—Number of militia. In this column you will write the number of all white male persons between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years of age, capable of bearing arms.

7th—Number of foreigners not naturalized.

8th—Number of persons between the ages of 5 and 21 years.

9, 10, 11, 12—Blind, deaf and dumb, insane, and idiotic. The inquiries to be entered in these columns are of the highest importance in connection with the benevolent institutions which have been established for the relief of these unfortunate classes, and the utmost care must be exercised in procuring accurate intelligence in each family. A sense of delicacy should not deter the assessor from procuring the necessary information. If the persons belonging to the family be resident in any special institution within this State devoted to the treatment of the infirmity to which they are subject, no entry should be made, as necessary facts will be obtained by the assessors in whose district such institution is located. A person is to be rated as "deaf and dumb" who was born without the sense of hearing, and consequently has not acquired the faculty of speech, or who lost the sense of hearing and the faculty of speech in his or her youth. Partial blindness, or a loss of one eye only, should not be noted. Insanity exists in every degree, from slight aberration of mind on some particular subject to raving madness; and the assessor may find it difficult at times to decide whether or not a person should be classed with the insane. In general, if a person is reported to be erratic on some particular subject, yet attends regularly to his business, and provides for his family, without evincing to an ordinary observer special symptoms of insanity, he should not be entered as insane. A person capable of self-support and the transaction of ordinary business should not be classed with the idiotic, although his grade of intellect may be below the general average. In no case should dementia from old age be so entered. In some cases it may be difficult to distinguish between passive insanity, or dementia, and idiocy. In cases of doubt the opinion of some physician in the township or neighborhood should be taken.

13th—No. of acres of improved land. In this column write the number of acres of improved land under cultivation or improvement, including pasture, meadow, arable land, and, in short, everything that has been reclaimed from a state of nature. In cases where a person owns more than one farm, carried on by different individuals, or where the owners are non-resident or absent, the persons in charge will give the agricultural statistics of each. A careful observance of this rule will prevent any farms from being twice taken.

14th—No. of acres unimproved land. In this column enter the number of acres in the state of nature, attached and properly regarded as belonging to the farm. Detached wild lands and not regarded as belonging to or used for the farm are not to be entered. The object is to ascertain the relative proportion of farms that are cultivated and uncultivated.

15th—No. of miles of railroad finished. In this column enter the number of miles of railroad completed.

16th—No. of miles of railroad unfinished. In this column enter the number of miles of railroad commenced, but not completed.

17th—No. of colleges and universities.

18th—No. of pupils attending college or university.

19th—No. of acres of sorghum.

20th—No. of gallons of molasses manufactured from sorghum. This refers to the sorghum or Chinese sugar-cane, grown and manufactured in the year 1858. It would here be well enough to remark that in many instances the amount of products will be but vague approximations, but farmers generally can pretty correctly estimate the amount of their products.

21st—No. of acres of orchard.

22d—Amount of orchard products in 1858.

23d—No. of acres of Hungarian grass in 1858.

24th—Tons of hay from Hungarian grass in 1858.

25th—Acres of meadow in 1858.

26th—Tons of hay in 1858.

27th—Bushels of grass-seed in 1858.

28th and 29th—Acres of spring wheat and bushels harvested in 1858.

30th and 31st—Acres of wheat sown in 1857 and harvested in 1858.

32d and 33d—Acres of oats sown and bushels harvested in 1858.

34th and 35th—Acres of corn planted and bushels harvested in 1858.

36th and 37th—Acres of potatoes planted and bushels harvested in 1858.

38th and 39th—No. of hogs sold in 1858 and their value.

40th and 41st—No. of cattle sold in 1858 and their value.

42d—Pounds of butter manufactured.

43d—Pounds of cheese manufactured.

44th—Pounds of wool shorn in 1858.

45th—Amount of mineral raised in 1858.

46th—Value of mineral sold in 1858.

47th—Value of domestic manufacturers for the year 1858. This includes: all household manufactures not included in dairy products; that is to say, fulled cloth, flannel, linen, and tow cloth, cotton and mixed goods, maple sugar, etc., etc.

48th—Value of general manufactures for the year 1858. This includes all kinds of manufactures, such as machinery, furniture, harnesses, cloths, etc., not manufactured in the dwelling and included in column 47, flour, ironwork, etc., etc.

49th—Value of all agricultural implements. This must include all implements on the farm which are used for agricultural purposes.

50th—Remarks. In these columns write the names and population of villages and parts of cities, as heretofore, and make such other memoranda as may be deemed important or necessary.

The undersigned again urgently request the assessors to pay implicit attention to the foregoing instructions, to make their returns promptly, and in a fair, legible handwriting devoid of blots and blemishes.

ELIJAH SELLS, *Secretary of State.*

JOHN PATTEE, *Auditor of State.*

M.L. MORRIS, *Treasurer of State.*

} *Census Board.*