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1885

Dr. Enos Lowe

W. W. Lowe

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Lowe, W. W., "Dr. Enos Lowe" (1885). *Transactions and Reports, Nebraska State Historical Society*. 59.  
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the services. This has been impracticable, but it is earnestly hoped that all classes of our citizens will be present, if not within the cathedral, at least in the yard when he is laid at rest. Large numbers of his friends and of the clergy from abroad, among them several of the bishops, have signified their intention to be present.

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### DR. ENOS LOWE.

The biography of Dr. Lowe, following, was furnished by his son Col. W. W. Lowe:

DR. ENOS LOWE was born at Guilford Court House, North Carolina, May 5th, 1804. When he was about ten years of age his parents moved to the territory of Indiana, locating at the small settlement known as Bloomington, in Monroe county, the community being mostly composed of quakers, his parents being of that denomination. When a mere boy he began the study of medicine, and soon began the practice of the profession in the midst of the many vicissitudes and privations incident to a new, wild, and sparsely settled country. Little by little, however, he accumulated enough from his practice to enable him to seek higher culture in the profession, and he entered the Ohio Medical College at Cincinnati, where, in due course, he graduated with honor and high standing. He now located as a practitioner at Greencastle, and some time after moved to Rockville, continuing in active practice there for some years, during which he was sent to the Indiana legislature. In 1836, the border country having gradually extended westward, he determined to spy out the new land, and accordingly made the journey on horseback to St. Louis; thence going up the Mississippi river to Flint Hills (now Burlington), then the home of Black-Hawk and his Sac and Fox Indians. Being favorably impressed with the new country, after a brief sojourn he returned to Indiana, and during the fall of 1837 moved, by wagons, across the country to Burlington, where he continued in active practice of his profession for the following ten years, his practice becoming so extended and laborious that the writer has known him to ride thirty and forty miles to visit the sick. During his residence in Burlington he was one of her most active and patri-

otic citizens, and was one of the leading spirits in laying strong and deep the foundations of that now beautiful and prosperous city.

Among his pioneer cotemporaries of that day were such men as Hons. A. C. Dodge, Chas. Mason, O. D. Browning, J. C. Hall, Robt. Lucas, B. Henn, V. P. VanAntwerp, Jas. W. Grimes, Henry W. Starr, and others who became distinguished in the history of the state and nation. In 1847 he received, from President VanBuren, the appointment of receiver of public moneys at the land office in Iowa City, to which place he removed at once, and held the office for four years. He was a member of the Iowa legislature, and president of the senate. He was a member of both constitutional conventions of Iowa, and president of the second. About the close of his term as receiver, he was tendered the position of collector of customs at Puget Sound, which he declined. In 1853 he was appointed receiver of public moneys at Kanesville (now Council Bluffs), whither he removed, held the office two years and resigned. In the meantime, he and a few friends created the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company, of which he became president, and he at once went to Alton, Ill., and bought the steam ferryboat "General Marion," had a full cargo put on board, and brought her to Council Bluffs. From this small beginning, the ferry company, under his guidance, became a strong organization and a most important factor in settling the great trans-Missouri country. They built several fine steamers (some of which were destroyed by ice), and during all the period preceding the advent of railways and the building of bridges, maintained a most efficient and satisfactory means of communication. Prior to the establishment of this company, or about that time, he and some few other gentlemen made a treaty with the chief, Logan Fontenelle, and his tribe, the Omahas, by virtue of which they were permitted to occupy a certain area on the west side of the river. The laying out of the town site of Omaha followed immediately, the surveying, mapping, and marking of the public highways and claim-lands being done by A. D. Jones, under Dr. Lowe's supervision as president of the ferry company. From this time he became identified with Omaha and Nebraska, and was ever active, energetic, and zealous in forwarding the public interest. No one in the community devoted more labor or gave more time gratuitously to the public weal than Dr. Lowe, and when the safety and future of the community were in

jeopardy he gave most liberally from his personal means and private property, besides devoting much of his time to the cause and making many journeys at his own expense and without reward. At this time he took a prominent and conspicuous part in the committees sent to New York and Boston to secure the building of the Union Pacific railway bridge at Omaha; and it may be well to record the fact here in the history of this pioneer, that, but for the persistent labors of those committees, *the Union Pacific bridge would not have been located at Omaha.* The citation of this fact alone is sufficient to show how great a debt we owe to such men as Dr. Lowe—a debt that can never be paid, and is all too likely to be forgotten by those who step in to fill the places of the fallen pioneers.

In 1866 the Old Settlers' Association was organized. Dr. Lowe was chosen president, and held the position until his death.

At the outbreak of the war of the rebellion, Dr. Lowe, though somewhat advanced in years, felt that every able-bodied man should aid in stamping out the attempt to destroy the Nation's life, and at once entered the service as surgeon of the First Nebraska regiment, going into the field in the department of the Missouri, under General Curtis (another eminent western pioneer who has ceased from his labors), but at the solicitation of his son, General W. W. Lowe, the Doctor was soon transferred to his command in the Army of the Cumberland, with whom he served as brigade and division surgeon until his health became so impaired that, upon recommendation of his son, his resignation was accepted, and he returned to his home in Omaha. The invigorating climate of Nebraska after a time restored him to health and comparative vigor, and he renewed his active labors in the community, only to cease when health and strength departed. Many important industries and enterprises owe their existence to his creative power, nerve, and courage, among which may be named: The Omaha Gas Manufacturing Company, of which he was president; the Omaha & Southwestern Railway Company, in which he was director; the organization of the State Bank of Nebraska, of which he was vice-president; the Grand Central Hotel Company, and many other enterprises of more or less note and significance, all going to show his faith in the future of Omaha and Nebraska, and his readiness to uphold his faith by his works. And still further back in the early days, long before the U. P. railway was thought of, he and

other incorporators succeeded in getting an act through the territorial legislature, approved March 1st, 1855, to incorporate the "Platte Valley & Pacific Railway Company," for the purpose of constructing and building a railroad, single or double track, from the Missouri river at Omaha City, and also a telegraph line up the North Platte river and on the north side of the south fork. I have in my possession the original record book of proceedings of this organization, and from a memoir in the book, written by Dr. Lowe, I quote this remarkable sentence: "Let it be remembered that this great work. (a Pacific railway) was actually commenced within the corporate limits of Omaha, in February, 1860." He made strenuous efforts to induce capitalists to put money into the enterprise, but they looked upon the idea of a trans-continental railway as visionary and impracticable. A few years later, however, it bore fruit, but the original projectors of the work were not participants in its benefits.

Dr. Lowe was also one of the incorporators of another pioneer railway, the Council Bluffs & St. Joseph R. R., in May, 1858.

"The character of Dr. Lowe, like his noble and stately form, dignified and commanding, never tainted by infidelity to public or private duty; always generous in service to friends and the community; wise in counsel as a citizen, and singularly gifted as a physician, with insight into disease, and a pre-vision of the thousand forms of its malignity, and of the issues of life and death, which wait upon it; is of right entitled to the veneration and perpetual remembrance of all who have made their homes in the city of Omaha, and among whose founders he was one of the first for twenty-five years of its history. After the full period allotted to man on earth, full of years and of honor, he laid himself down to rest in death."

On July 22d, 1828, Dr. Lowe was married to Kitty Ann Read, a native of Mercer county, Kentucky, who died at Burlington, Iowa, February 19th, 1870. The Doctor died at Omaha, Nebraska, in the afternoon of February 12th, 1880, of paralysis resulting from exposure. The only child, a son, Gen. W. W. Lowe, the writer hereof, now resides at Omaha, Nebraska.