

THE INFORMATION BUREAU

ALBERT MILLER LEA

A dramatic incident is related by Greeley and by other writers on the Civil war that at the close of the Battle of Galveston Major Albert M. Lea, a retired officer of the old army, and then engaged as a civilian in the service of the confederacy, was one of a party which went out to receive the surrender of the Harriet Lane, the ship which had been disabled by the fire of the confederate batteries and gun boats, and on the deck of the Lane, Major Lea found his son, who was Lieutenant Commander of the Lane, lying mortally wounded. At the outbreak of the war the son had elected to remain with the north while the father went with the south. I believe the above is substantially correct. I am enclosing with this a poor photograph I have made of the stone standing at the head of the grave of the younger Lea in one of our cemeteries.

My reason for writing all this to you is that I have been told that the city of Albert Lea, Minn., was named for Major Lea.

I am one of the trustees of the Rosenberg Library of this city and am interested in adding to its collections of historical manuscripts and other material, and we would like to gather some facts regarding Major Lea, who was so long a prominent citizen of this city.

Have you in your published or other material anything regarding Major Lea which would help us out? We will greatly appreciate any help from you on this subject.

J. M. WINTERBOTHAM, Galveston, Texas

Lieutenant Albert Miller Lea became a figure in Minnesota history in 1835, when, as topographer for the expedition which explored a portion of the Northwest under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Stephen W. Kearney, he visited and mapped part of southern Minnesota, including the present area of Freeborn County. Lea's name was given to a lake in this county by Joseph N. Nicollet, whose map of the "Hydrographical Basin of the Upper Mississippi River" was published in 1843, and the city of Albert Lea was named for the lake near which it is located.

The Minnesota Historical Society possesses the original manuscript of an autobiography of Lea which was published in the *Freeborn County Standard* of Albert Lea for March 13, 1889. In this narrative Lea includes the story of the death of his son after the surrender of the "Harriet Lane." In 1869 Lea presented to the society a little notebook containing his "Journal of Operations on the Michigan Survey" in 1833 and 1834 and his original sketches, made in 1835, of the topography of the region "from the bank of the Mississippi, below Wabashaw's Village, to the mouth of the Raccoon fork of the Des Moines."

The society also has Lea's *Notes on the Wisconsin Territory; Particularly with Reference to the Iowa District or Black Hawk Purchase*, published in Philadelphia in 1836. This pamphlet of fifty-three pages is accompanied by the author's map of the region from Lake Pepin to northern Missouri and from the Mississippi to the Missouri River. The society's copy of Lea's *A Pacific Railroad*, a sixteen-page pamphlet issued at Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1858, is autographed by the author.

An account of the expedition with which Lea explored the present area of northern Iowa and southern Minnesota in 1835 is included in "A Journal of Marches by the First United States Dragoons, 1834-1835," by an unknown author, published in the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* for July, 1909. Some information about Lea may be found in the *History of Freeborn County, Minnesota*, by Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge (Chicago, 1911); and in Warren Upham's *Minnesota Geographic Names; Their Origin and Historic Significance* (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 17).

B. L. H.

THE EXCLUDED PORTION OF MINNESOTA, 1858-61

Will you please furnish me with the following data?

What was the western boundary of the territory of Minnesota, up to the time of its admission as a state in 1858?



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