



IN the first county election, held at Juniata on December 12, 1871, the fight for the location of the county seat was between the people of Juniata and immediate vicinity on one side and those of the central and southeastern sections on the other. After Micklem's homestead was platted the Hastings Town Company began a campaign for the relocation of the county capital and newcomers as they arrived joined the movement to deprive Juniata of its last hope of remaining the metropolis of the county. Because of the superior railroad facilities at this place Hastings gained rapidly upon Juniata in point of population, and in trade importance, but with the seat of government Juniata hoped to still maintain its place as the county's leading town.

A mass meeting was held in Hastings on June 3, 1873, for the purpose of outlining a plan of action. On motion of Samuel Alexander a committee of ten persons was appointed to canvass each precinct in behalf of Hastings and members were assigned as follows: For Denver precinct, Thomas E. Farrell and R. V. Shockey; for Little Blue, G. W. Donahey and A. Berg; for Silver



Hastings Avenue, North from First Street.

Lake, C. K. Lawson and C. Kohl; for Kenesaw, A. D. Yocum and C. H. Paul, and for Juniata, B. H. Brown and S. S. Dow.

The activity of this committee alarmed the people of Juniata and early in 1874 they planned, with members of the county board, to forestall a possible removal of the county seat. Early in April the citizens of Juniata assembled at a mass meeting and adopted resolutions favoring the erection of a court house in that town, the obvious object being to make the location of the seat of government in Juniata permanent. On the morning of June 19, the county board instructed the sheriff to secure bids for the erection of a building to cost not less than \$15,000, nor more than \$20,000, and 4 o'clock of the same day was fixed as the time for the opening of proposals.

The citizens of Hastings were entirely unaware of the intention of the board and it was probably to prevent any interference that the board gave only a few hours' notice for the filing of bids. A. H. Cramer, of Hastings, was then county clerk. Soon after the instructions had been given by the board, Mr. Cramer met C. H. Paul, also of Hastings, and informed him of the plan, suggesting that he return to Hastings as quickly as possible and warn the citizens of the action about to be taken. Mr. Paul lost no time in executing the mission and before the time fixed for the opening of bids a large number of the people of Hastings had arrived in Juniata.

Several bids were filed, one presented by D. H. Freeman being accompanied by plans and specifications, and the others offering to duplicate buildings already finished in other parts of the state. All except Mr. Freeman's were rejected, and upon his action was postponed until the following day. The next morning the board accepted Mr. Freeman's proposal, which contemplated the erection of a building to cost \$14,000, and to make sure that there would be no delay in beginning the work the board transferred the sinking fund of the county to the general fund, prepared warrants for several thousand dollars, to be advanced to the contractor, and ordered Mr. Cramer to attach to them the official seal of the county.

Mr. Cramer insisted that the proceeding was irregular and declined to issue the warrants, whereupon the board declared his office vacant. He then declined to give up the keys to his office on the ground that he had not been legally ousted.

A few days later Judge Gant issued an order restraining the erection of the building under the Freeman contract. No further steps were taken to remove Mr. Cramer from office.

On the evening of June 22 an indignation meeting was held at Juniata which was attended by many persons from Hastings and various parts of the county. The assemblage was called to order by R. A. Batty, and Messrs. J. M. Ragan, W. M. West, Oliver Whitson, A. C. Moore and J. C. Wilson were appointed to draft resolutions concerning the action of the board in ordering the erection of a court house building. The report of the committee condemned the board in emphatic language, and endorsed Mr. Cramer for his determined refusal to issue the warrants. The meeting being made up almost wholly of supporters of Hastings' cause the resolutions were adopted by an overwhelming vote.

The citizens of Hastings then became more determined in their efforts to secure the removal of the county seat and early



Residence of Dr. F. C. Babcock.

in 1875 a petition signed by J. L. Parrott and 491 other citizens, asking for an election on the relocation matter, was presented to the board, and on March 5 the petition was granted, and an election ordered for April 1.

Juniata was victorious in the contest of 1875, but in 1877 the question was brought up again, when a petition signed by 635 citizens was presented. In March of that year the board ordered an election to be held April 9. The campaign which ensued was waged with great energy by the contending factions. Both towns had speakers and canvassing committees in the field and there was no let up in the fight until the last vote was polled. There were 844 votes cast in favor of Hastings and 535 for Juniata. The latter town made a last effort by contesting the election. The contest was taken to the district court and Judge Gaslin appointed a referee to take evidence. The inquiry extended over a considerable period and at its conclusion all papers and documents in the case were sent to Judge Gaslin at Lowell. Before the report was made the office of Judge Gaslin was destroyed by fire, none of the papers bearing on the election contest being saved. There was then no evidence before the court except the election returns but the matter was not reinvestigated and early in the following year Judge Gaslin gave a decision in favor of Hastings. Soon after the decision was given a party of Hastings citizens, wishing to avoid any unnecessary legal red tape, drove over to Juniata with wagons after sundown and "personally conducted" the removal. As the decision had been given in favor of this place the citizens felt they were entitled to the county seat without further delay and without waiting to secure the consent of the disappointed citizens of Juniata.

At a political meeting held in Liberal Hall, soon after the county seat matter was finally settled, Hon. James Laird announced that although disappointed in the outcome of the fight he was satisfied that the county seat had passed into good hands, and realizing that by the removal Hastings would become the important town of the county, as well as of this section of the state, declared he would change his residence from Juniata to Hastings. Mr. Laird, however, was not the only Juniata man who followed the county seat to Hastings. The Juniata colony in the Queen City forms a considerable part of the popu-

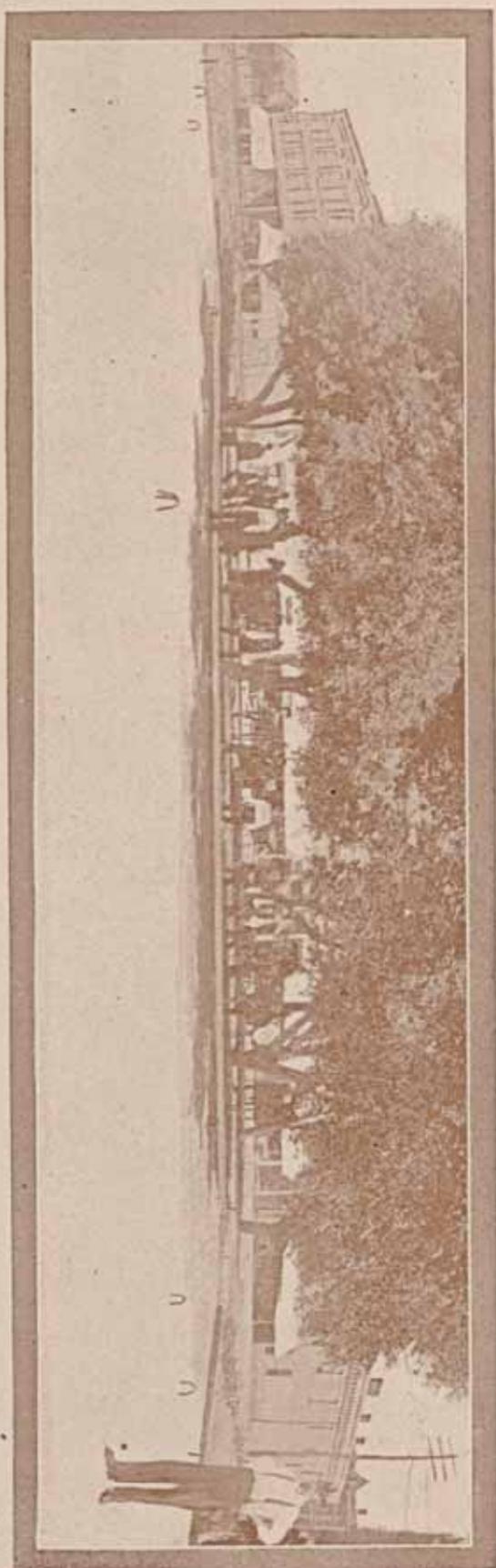
lation and their assistance in the development of Hastings has been of great benefit.

The vote by precinct on the county seat matter in the election of 1877 was as follows:

	Juniata	Hastings
Juniata	231	4
Kenesaw	65	13
Denver	26	491
Silver Lake	46	15
Little Blue	32	82
Cottonwood	90	7
Pawnee	27	130
West Blue	18	102
Total	535	844



Residence of C. E. Van Patten.



Former Playground of the Croquet Corps.