

**MEMORIAL ADDRESS ON  
THE LIFE AND  
CHARACTER OF  
JOHN JUDSON BAGLEY**

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Memorial address on the life and character of John Judson Bagley by George H. Hopkins

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**GEORGE H. HOPKINS**

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MEMORIAL ADDRESS

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

—OF—

JOHN JUDSON BAGLEY,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE MICHIGAN STATE PIONEER SOCIETY,  
AT THEIR REQUEST, IN REPRESENTATIVE  
HALL, LANSING,

—BY—

GEORGE H. HOPKINS,

ON THE

SEVENTH OF JUNE, 1882.

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DETROIT, MICH.:  
WM. GRAHAM, PRINTER, 52 BATES STREET.  
1882.

LANSING, December 14, 1881.

HON. GEO. H. HOPKINS,

Detroit, Mich.

DEAR SIR—At a meeting of the Committee of Historians and Executive Committee of the State Pioneer Society, held at the Capitol on the 6th inst., the following resolution was unanimously passed:

"Resolved, That the Corresponding Secretary of the State Pioneer Society be, and he is hereby directed to correspond with Hon. GEORGE H. HOPKINS, of Detroit, and request from him a memorial paper for publication in Vol. IV. of Pioneer Collections in reference to the late Gov. JOHN J. BAGLEY."

Gov. Bagley was a member of the Society, and such a paper is very much desired by the committees, and the matter was thoroughly discussed by them as to who would be the best person to prepare such a paper, and all agreed that you were the one.

Hoping a favorable reply from you,

I am, yours very truly,

GEO. H. GREENE,

*Corresponding Secretary.*

[The following letter was received in reply to one asking when it was expected to publish Vol. IV., referred to.]

KALAMAZOO, December 27, 1881.

HON. GEO. H. HOPKINS:

DEAR SIR—Mr. Geo. H. Greene, Corresponding Secretary of the State Pioneer Society, has forwarded me your letter of Dec. 21, inst., in reference to memorial paper of the late Governor Bagley. The 4th volume of "Pioneer Collections of Michigan" will not be printed until after the first Wednesday

in June next. At that time will occur the annual meeting of the "State Pioneer Society," at Lansing, and at that meeting it will gratify the officers of the Society and the people there assembled if you will read the memorial paper, which shall refresh our memories as to the noble qualities of head and heart of one now dead, who was in life the friend of all the people of Michigan.

Very respectfully yours,

H. G. WELLS,  
*Chairman Committee of Historians*  
*Michigan State Pioneer Society.*

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ON THE  
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JOHN JUDSON BAGLEY,  
BY  
GEORGE H. HOPKINS.

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A PIONEER SOCIETY is the Present looking at the Past—the Living communing with the Dead. As we advance in age the memories of our Fathers and Mothers grow more and more dear. We delight to recall their deeds and their virtues.

Go visit New England and the Eastern States, any pleasant day in summer or autumn, and you shall see the pilgrim from the West visiting the home of his father. You may see him in the lonely church-yard, at the graves of his ancestors, carefully deciphering on the tomb-stones, worn by the hand of time, the inscriptions, rudely carved, it may be, telling the story of those lying beneath—born, died; birth, death—between the two is gathered all there is of history.

What do the records of the Pioneer Society show? They tell of the toil and privation of him who would make for himself a home in the wilderness. Turning from the comforts and luxuries of the old home—a home to him no longer save in the memories of the past—he seeks towards the setting sun a new



home, and becomes a Pioneer, with all that word implies—and in its meaning it covers all the trials, the sufferings, the hopes and triumphs of the discoverer in the new-found land. With all this labor and privation the Pioneer is not an unfortunate man; he is not an unhappy man. I doubt if any class of men or women found more real enjoyment and pleasure than the Pioneers of our early days. The fact that for themselves they chose to forsake the old for the new, made their daily toil a pleasure. None the less do we owe them. They made it possible for us to live in a veritable land of promise. Through their toil came our rest. By their pain comes our pleasure. Through their want comes our plenty.

And the duty we owe to them and ourselves as well, bids us cherish their memories. The Pioneer Society of Michigan, in thus honoring those who but a few short months since were of us, honors equally the living present. The pioneer roll of Michigan contains the names of many heroes—men and women who toiled and rested not—men whose first love and thought was for their family and home, the next state and country. They loved their state like as the mother loves her first-born. Of and among such was John Judson Bagley. Himself a pioneer, he came from a race of pioneers.

John Judson Bagley was born at Medina, Orleans county, New York, July 24, 1832. His father, John Bagley, was born in Durham, Green County, N. Y., Jan. 21, 1800. His grand-father, John Bagley, was born in Candia, New Hampshire, April 21, 1759, and was a descendant from the Bagley family who came from England early in the 17th century.

His father's mother was Olive Judson, a daughter of Capt. Timothy Judson, a soldier of the Revolution, and a descendant of William Judson, who came from Yorkshire, England, in 1634, and lived at Concord, Mass., a few years;

thence he moved to Stratford, Conn., at the first settlement of that town. Rev. Adoniram Judson, the noted foreign missionary, was a descendant of the same family.

His grand-father's mother was Sarah Hooker, a direct descendant in the third generation of Rev. Thos. Hooker, who came from Hartfordshire, England, in 1635, settled in Hartford, Conn., and planted the first church in Connecticut—an eloquent, able and faithful minister.

Very soon after the close of the Revolution his grand-father, Capt. John Bagley, and his brother, Cutting Bagley, left their father's home in New Hampshire with their young wives, making the journey across the country on horseback to Durham, Green County, N. Y., where they bought land on the eastern slope of the Catskill mountains, 18 miles from the Hudson river. The Bagley homestead there was on the bank of a beautiful mountain stream which falls in a fine cascade on the farm.

The brothers built a log cabin and the two families lived together several years, until, as their children grew up, the farm was divided and two homes made. While living on their farm the two young men were visited several times by their father and mother, who made the journey from their home in New Hampshire on horseback. The last visit was made in a buggy, which was the first vehicle of the kind seen in that part of New York. A few years later the father of Gov. Bagley moved to Medina, N. Y., and subsequently lived in Lockport, N. Y. When John was eight years of age his father removed with his family to Michigan, stopping a few months at Mottville, St. Joseph county, and then settled at Constantine, in that county. His father was a tanner in New York, and continued in the same business in Michigan. The family were in moderate circumstances, and John began his business career in a country store in St. Joseph county. A short time after we find him an inmate in the home of

their old family physician, while living in Lockport, N. Y., Dr. J. B. Barnes, then living in Owosso. For some months he remained in Dr. Barnes' family and attended school with his children. Shortly after the Bagley family followed John to Owosso, the father entering business with Mr. Rufus Colter, and John being engaged as clerk in the store of Dewey & Goodhue.

When about sixteen years of age he decided to leave Owosso and seek for himself a business engagement in Detroit. Friends and acquaintances he had none there, but what mattered that to him? Employment was the one thing he then sought, confident that all else desirable would soon follow. Who was to be his employer, or what his employment, were matters of secondary moment. The main thing was an *opportunity to work*. He had a strong hand, a willing heart, and a love for toil—capital, without which few succeed, with which few fail. He had not long to wait. Arising in the morning from his humble lodging, he went at once to the foot of Woodward avenue for a view of the river and spent some time there admiring the beauty of the stream, to him almost a lake in extent. As he watched the evidences of thrift, trade and successful business there and in the city behind him, he said to himself, "This is the place for me; I'll find something to do here." Turning on his heel, before he had reached Jefferson avenue, two streets away, he found what he sought—labor. Stopping in front of the store of Isaac S. Miller, looking at the display by the open door, the proprietor accosted him with, "Young man, what do you want?" He replied, "I want work." Mr. Miller invited him into the store, and before leaving it he had engaged for a year, and did not leave the employment of Mr. Miller till, five years after, at the age of twenty-one he entered upon business for himself.

His mother was a most remarkable woman. The