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## An illustration of character

BY C.W. LATTIN

The following story appeared in the Medina Tribune on April 11, 1861 under the title Pioneer Reminiscences. It is a first-hand account written for the paper by General W.C. Tanner (1743-1869) about James Carpenter, a pioneer preacher in Orleans County.

"As an illustration of the character of the man, and the times, I will give and anecdote as it was related to me at the time, by one of my neighbors.

"It was in the year 1818. The people were assembled at Oak Orchard to attend a funeral. The preacher engaged, failed to be there at the appointed time, and there was a prospect of having no

sermon.

"After some delay, a person remarked there was a minister coming. All eyes were turned toward the newcomer, and some were disposed to laugh at the ideas of his being a preacher. He was a small dark man, very coarsely clad, with a large leather apron blackened with grease and dirt reaching nearly to his feet, and an old hat with the brim flapping over his eyes.

"He drove a diminutive yoke of cattle, on an apology for a cart with a trough or two on an axle filled with black salts, which he was carrying to market.

"An acquaintance went out and stated the circumstances

and invited him to come in and preach for them. He willingly consented, and driving his cattle into a fence-corner, without any preparation came in and was introduced as Elder Carpenter. He laid off his hat, named a text, and proceeded with his sermon, without a moment's delay.

"At its conclusion, he turned his cattle from the fence and went on to market. The feelings of the congregation underwent an entire change during his sermon, for he displayed a very high order of talents, taking them all by surprise for they judged the man by his appearance and thought him incapable of delivering so eloquent a sermon."