

"A Great Work Completed" Newspaper Article, August 24, 1877

A GREAT WORK COMPLETED.

Keokuk, Iowa, August 16. - The Government canal around the Des Moines rapid of the Mississippi River, at this place, has been so far completed as to admit of the passage of boats, and will be formally opened at noon tomorrow. Preparations are being made by the City Council and citizens of Keokuk to celebrate the event in an imposing manner. The City Council has appropriated a liberal sum of money for that purpose, and various committees have been appointed to take charge of the affairs. Invitations are to be extended to the Mayors of the cities on the river from New Orleans to St. Paul.

Secretary of War McCrary and Governors, Congressmen and the press of the Mississippi Valley States have also been invited. The Merchant's Exchange of St. Louis will send a delegation, and a large party of other prominent citizens of that city is expected. The Keokuk Northern Line Packet Company will furnish three of its best steamers for the occasion, and Commodore Davidson will be here in person. At noon on the day in question the fleet of boats headed by the Government steamer Montana, which will be brought here expressly to take part in the demonstration, will pass through the canal and locks and return. On their return there will be addresses, music, etc.

The canal is seven and a half miles in length and 800 feet in width, with three locks each 850 feet in length. It was commenced October, 1867, and has been in progress most of the time since. The improvement has cost over \$4,000,000, and is the most important one on the Mississippi above New Orleans.