11-8-1885

Typescript of Autobiography by Edmund Booth (Deaf Pioneer and California Gold Miner)

Edmund Booth

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"Nothing so difficult as a beginning, except to end it" says Byron. I have been frequently urged to write my autobiography, by my youngest son Byron, and have put it off till this moment, if only because this nervousness disinclines me to use the pen save when necessary.

Many years ago cousin Edwin Booth, of Springfield, Mass., son of my father's brother Joseph Booth, of Berlin, Conn., and grandson of Capt. Joseph Booth, of the Revolutionary War, gave considerable time to collecting and tracing up the names of the Booth family. His brother Harry Booth had among his children a son, Dr. Booth (The family reside in Milwaukee, Wisconsin) who took up those materials, added his own, and published the whole in book form. Edwin's son, Dr. Alfred Booth, now living in New York City, I think, sent me a copy of the book. It shows the fragments of the Booth family up to Adam De Booth in England, born 1675, or 610 years ago. In the book is a letter (autograph) by Edwin to his eldest son Thomas Ayr Booth, and in that letter is printed a facsimile of the Booth coat of arms. I need not go further into the history of the family at the present.

I was born in Chickopee, Mass., August 24th, 1830. Chickopee was then 46 years ago, a parish of Springfield. About the year 1820 my mother and I rode out to Ludlow, a few miles from Springfield, to visit one of the eldest being Aunt Jane, a sister of my father. Returning, we took a road that led through the middle street of the village of Chickopee. My mother (the horse was allowed to go slowly and she said nothing) pointed out the house in which I was born. It was of the kind commonly built a hundred and more years ago—large square, door in center of the front, two story high, and large square chimney in center of highest part of roof. The large chimneys were internally divided into smaller or flues, a floe for each fire place in the rooms below. Of course the fire places in the various rooms of a house centered as it were, around one point on each floor, stove and stove pipes in that day being unknown for general use.

When my daughter Harriet was attending school at South Hadley Seminary, she passed a part of her vacation at Ludlow, at the home of Elisha T. Parsons. His wife was cousin Hannah Parsons and was a daughter of "Aunt Panda" as we always called her, or, to make it more clear, Independence Booth, a sister of my father, and born in July 1790, her father, as already mentioned, being an officer (Captain) in the Revolution.

On one occasion Mrs. Parson and Harriet were riding from Ludlow to the Seminary and Mrs. P. pointed out to Harriet the house referred to. (Frank, you can ask Harriet.) My father in Chickopee was farming. Of this I know nothing except what was told me. My brother Henry was ten years old when I was born. Perhaps he can remember something of life there in the first years of the present century. He was born in the year 1830. (Edmund's comment to his son who had learned to write this history).

I remember an Indian Hoe found by my father when plowing in Chickopee. It remained in the family until 1858 when most of the house was burned, my mother was saved and also my old Revolutionary sword, and also of my old Revolutionary flint lock gun seemingly six feet long or nearly so. There was also a sword, old fashioned, and a field officer's hat and feather of the revolutionary days. All these went with the sale and were lost to me. I never read J. Fennimore Cooper's Leather Stocking Tales and "The Last of the Mohicans" and I was not interested in seeing the old revolutionary flint look gun. My uncle David, brother of my father, showed me about the year 1828, a compass, about five inches in diameter, that belonged to my father's grandfather. I presume it is still in the family. (I mentioned this in a letter to my son Alfrud Booth, June 21, 1888). The journal and commission, signed by Gov. Trumbull of Conn., of Capt. Joseph Booth (my grandfather) were left with his son Elwell in New York, on the banks of Lake George. I was in school in Hartford, Conn., at the time. I never saw the Indian Hoe since.

It was about two inches long, two and a half inches wide and over an inch thick at the back. It was fashioned from a branch and a neck cut around the thicker part, where by a withe could be bound for a handle. I have always regretted the loss of that relic and also of my old revolutionary flint look gun seemingly six feet long or nearly so. There was also a sword, old fashioned, and a field officer's hat and feather of the revolutionary days. All these went with the sale and were lost to me. I never read J. Fennimore Cooper's Leather Stocking Tales and "The Last of the Mohicans" and I was not interested in seeing the old revolutionary flint lock gun. My uncle David, brother of my father, showed me about the year 1828, a compass, about five inches in diameter, that belonged to my father's grandfather. I presume it is still in the family. The journal and commission, signed by Gov. Trumbull of Conn., of Capt. Joseph Booth (my grandfather) were left with his son Alfrud Booth, June 21, 1888. (Frank, you can ask him about it.)

*This commission is now in the possession of Helen Hackett, a niece of Uncle David, who is married to Charles Booth, the son of my brother Elwell. (Frank, you can ask Mr. Booth about it.)

Of life in Chickopee I know nothing save what my mother told me in subsequent years. I was born is the year 1830--25 years older than myself and my brother Danforth was born in the year 1854--22 years older than myself, and both born in Springfield, Conn., I conclude the story of Chickopee when I consult the "Genealogical Record" by J. H. Booth, referred to at

*Wima Hackett, niece of Uncle David, referred to at

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Mt. Holyoke

Harriet Booth, L.L.C.
the beginning of these writings, and find that of the family
William (died), Henry, Hannah, and Danforth Charles Booth were
born in Enfield, that my parents removed from Enfield to Spring-
field when I was three years afterward in 1808. The Record says of
Springfield, Chickopee was a parish of Spring-
field. As I was born in August, 1810, three years after this
removal to Longmeadow.

June 27, 1868. I resume this autobiography commenced on
the 6th of last Nov. It is Sunday evening and the reading
I care to work at are read. So there is nothing to do but to
read books or to write.

I find that as I advance in years my arm between the wrist
and elbow grows more inclined to be unsteady in the nerves whenever
I take the pen.

I have said that I remember nothing of life in Chickopee.
My earliest recollection, and the only thing I remember as having
occurred in my infancy, is this: A wagon, drawn by two horses,
two men sitting on the front seat, on the seat or in chairs
next behind were my mother and another woman or girl. That was
further back I do not know. I was standing at mother's knees
and against the wagon side. Mother touched me and pointed,
smiling to the scene below. It was a large stream two or three
rods wide and the water was rushing, white foaming and wild,
from over the dam and the saw mill in operation. We were
crossing a bridge. The wild appearance of the waters probably
awakened me fully as a young mind could be waked, and I noticed
mother's smile and almost laugh as she pointed at the brief
sight. I saw the men on the front seat and those on the second,
and also the wagon and horses. All this occupied but a moment
of, but the impression remained indelibly in my memory. I suppose one
of the two on the front seat was my father but I do not know.
The wildness of the water in motion had attracted my attention
sufficiently to arouse my young brain to more than wonted
action and hence the impression remained permanent till I now
write it. In after years, I crossed the stream many times and
the old memory came back. The stream was known as Hill River
and emptied into the Connecticut River a few rods from the bridge
referred to. On it, up above the saw mill mentioned are and
have been for many years, the United States Water Shops for
forging guns etc, to be perfect in the Armory in Springfield.
There was, and may be yet, a large papermill. I have repeatedly
in my boyhood, visited these shops. They are from the memory
a couple of miles or so. The use of steam for driving machinery
was then unknown and railroads had not been invented or thought
of. I remember only that one event—the crossing of the river
as described, as I was standing in the wagon at mother's
knees and against the wagon side. I conclude I must have been over
a year old at the time. She said it was when I was a baby.

This side is a removal of the family from Chickopee to
Long Meadow, the town next south of Springfield. In the family
were my brothers William, Henry and Charles and sister
tannah, but how they came, or whether they were with us in the wagon
I have no recollection. Of the two mentioned and Hannah, there
are only ones living. I also a sister, Martha at Bolton, N. Y., born
in the summer of 1816. The two sisters above are Mrs. Ford of
Hill River, Mont., and Martha in Mrs. Boyd, both widows, and
living with their children and grandchildren. Father had purchased
an interest in a print mill in Long Meadow and this
accounts for the removal of the family to that place. He at-
tended to the regulations of the mill, and the mill was a house on the
elevation that surrounded the pond. Of all this I was too young
to be able to remember or ever recollect, nor do I know how long
they lived there. Henry and Hannah may be able to tell me.
I never asked them. Ought to do it.

Mother once told me they had a dog at that place and that
when the dog saw her take the milk pail he (the dog) would go
down and drive up the cow to the barn or anywhere. She had only
to take the milk pail from its accustomed place and the dog was off
for the barn.

How long we lived at this place I never inquired or learned,
having never had an idea of writing my autobiography until
you, Father, urged it. From the incident of crossing Hill River, as
described above, I was about three or four years old I re-
member nothing until we were living in a large, square,
two-story house on what was called Down Iowa street, the first house
south of and some 60 or 100 rods away below Down Hills, the
paternal grandfather of Richard Saltor Storrs, late a teacher
in the American Asylum. The house was of the old style of
Revolutionary days, with big chimney in the center—in short
manner. In the basement was the barton, my father pointed out as we rode through the wide street. This I have al-
ready described. Of living in this big house I remember very
little. One evening only I describe as having impressed itself
on my memory. One man, one probably my father (one-name), and
perhaps the other my mother's father were sitting in front of
the wood fire, the latter in the big fireplace room at that time and looking as though we were in a grotto or grotto-like thing. (Note: March 29. Last November I was at Webster City, in Hamilton County, Iowa, visiting at my sister Hannah's and her children and grandchildren. She brought me a package of let-
ters from my cousin Mary Evans, my mother's brother and a daughter of Edmund Evans who married Aunt Ann, a sister of my father. In this letter Mary mentioned my grandfather Thomas Hyer as dying in Chicopee, aged past 90, and buried in Enfield, Conn., his former home. It is true, too, that I came of a long lived race, my mother dying at 94, and brother Henry and sister Hannah each at 87, the latter dying two or three years after the former and both being born in the same house, which no longer exists."

There is no concluding passage mentioned on the preceding page, for he must have died while my parents lived at Chicopee. My mother always kept a journal of our family and our lives, and it was lost in the great fire at Long Meadow to Bolton, N. Y., in 1851 or 1852."

Mother gave me in a letter that her grandmother had died in the same house and was buried there."

I looked at the two men, one just awakening and looking around in semi-consciousness, and arose and went to mother. What followed is entirely forgotten or rather not remembered.

Mother once told me that I was an old child, unlike the rest of the children of the family, that where they would be at play or busy in some way I sat or stood silent and lost in thought, and that I would sit with none save herself. I do not remember that my father ever held me in his lap or arms noticed me in any way whatever. There was a kindly gravity on his face so far as I have any recollection, but I do not know as he ever spoke to me in a voice. His look and the fear on his face was very near that of his brother, Uncle Eliphalet (Eliphaz), who lived in Luddow, a town east of Springfield, and adjoining Chicopee. These towns, with Long Meadow and several others were once a portion of Springfield.

Below (or south of) the house in which we lived, at a distance of thirty rods or so, was a smaller dwelling painted red, and belonging to a man named Stephen Keay. One day I was at play with two of his sons, twins and named David and Jonathan, a little older than myself. As we and probably two or three or four boys came near the door in the rear of the house, the mother and the door flying the broom, I saw, with a fixed look: "What did you bring so many children here for?" As I was one of the children the words impressed them- selves on my memory, and they are the only words I remember hearing at that age and while living in the big house already described. The woman was speaking to her twin boys.

On a day with these boys I strolled over to the orchard some distance back of the house. The orchard was in a field and the wagon wheels were plenty around. The woman was sitting under the tree eating raisins and I and the other boys joined in as a matter of course.

On another occasion an incident happened that I never forgot and nobody else knew how it happened, save as I have told it since. I wandered in some way to Neighbor Keay's. In front of his house his two horses were nibbling the short grass near the same, and he was being very mellow and wanted me to lead up a chip and then at one of the horses; then another chip went in the same way. Whether I hit the horse I do not know. But I noticed that he fixed his eye on me for a moment without stopping the operation of eating the grass. Next he approached a few steps, turned around and lost his heel not liking to be disturbed by a midget such as he doubtless deemed me. He then returned to his feeding. I went home cry ing and the blood running down my face and clothes. The horse had kicked me in the forehead. Whether the kick laid me senseless I never knew and nobody saw. I only know I entered our house as described, and that mother took and washed my face of the blood. Beyond that I never remembered.

I have forgotten to speak of the conclusion of my father's connection with the great mill property. A flood came, broke the dam and injured the mill. It went into other hands and for years it was built and rebuilt; the floods— Pc. 1839, the railroad and the dam were all tuned around and lost his heel not liking to be disturbed by a midget such as he doubtless deemed me. He then returned to his feeding. I went home crying and the blood running down my face and clothes. The horse had kicked me in the forehead. Whether the kick laid me senseless I never knew and nobody saw. I only know I entered our house as described, and that mother took and washed my face of the blood. Beyond that I never remembered.

I have forgotten to speak of the conclusion of my father's connection with the great mill property. A flood came, broke the dam and injured the mill. It went into other hands and for years it was built and rebuilt; the floods—from heavy rains—being destructive till a new plan was devised, the building of a railroad and the dam and the power half a mile by means of a canal. Being thus out of the course of the stream it was safe.

The next move of the family was to half mile up street. Long Meadow street is very wide except at three places where brooks cross it; and in I think, four miles long. Trees, such as elm mostly, like the two sides, and houses far enough set to be in not too close proximity with neighbors. Since I left the east in 1859 I am told, trees have been set in abundance in the street and that it wears a park-like appearance.

Feb. 27, 1857. It is again Sunday evening. Months have gone since I last wrote in this book. It has pressed on my mind from time to time that I ought to begin if Frank's urging is to bear fruit. I find a reason to do so, as the pencil in easier. Recently a Philadelphia Health Journal came in my way and "stabling" the paper was discussed in one of its articles. The cause given was a hereditary ten-
dency or what was termed "writer's cramp" or "smentioned palate". In my case hardness may have most to do with it, for my brother Harry, now 60, told me ten years ago that he could
remember one evening at some neighbor's when holding the
pen. On the other hand my sisters Hannah, now 62, and Martha,
now 58, write with no sign of trembling nerves. Still it may
be hereditary, for I remember that once my mother had
troubled at some neighbor's my father was sitting before the
fire, the candle on the stand behind his shoulder and I sitting
in my child's chair near him. I noticed that the newspaper he held between his face and the fire was reading, trembling
slightly but constantly as an aspen leaf. The singularity of
the thing fixed my attention for some moments and recur-aced to
memory since, and so I have not forgotten it. And yet his
troubles were far from being over, for I remember that one evening, when father was sitting slightly
unsteady and clear. This leads me to think that while it may
be hereditary in me the trouble may also be aggravated by use of
the pen or pencil for so many years.

We had now moved up town and into a house opposite the
house (old-fashioned, large square, etc.) of Hanah Jiles and
show widow in later years married Colton. It was a
medium-sized family house and comfortable. It was
long since disappeared, now I do not know. Of the incidents of the removal I recollect nothing, and but little of the events of life thereafter. The incident of the trembling
newspaper occurred in this house, and the two rooms, one the
kitchen, was, as was the custom a hundred and more years ago, a
large, morsom as it looks to me now, with the morsom old-fashioned fireplace.
The other two rooms, one of them a little living room. It had a smaller but sufficient fire
place. My oldest brother was living at Hannah Howell's,
learning the trade of stone cutting, brother Harry, now in age
and wisdom of Beth Israel in Enfield, the town and
his office of Long Meadow, learning the better's trade, my sister Hannah was living in the
family of Capt. old Colton, a half mile south. Brother Perch
Charles was in the family of Aunt Jones in Ludlow. I do not
know whether they left home before or after father's death,
last event happening March 5th, 1816. He was 42 years
old at the time, and I was 4 years and a little over six months.
At that age, or before, only striking occurrences are firmly
impressed on my mind, as my memory. It was Sunday, as I
remembered, was sick in the morning, did not get up. She
prepared breakfast and called him. He replied, "Don't tell I have
taken that medicine." She was alarmed and sent brother Charles
out to the physician. Other brother living in London across the
street. He came and decided it was a case of spotted fever.
Mr. Elle, living two doors further north from of Uncle David,
was sent for, and at noon father died. I remember nothing of all
this, but was two men lay him in the coffin and the long procession
of the funeral from the house to the cemetery, my mother in the
procession and leading by the hand, I following away occasionally
to look back and waving her hand. We were there two days after father's death. We went down with the same disease. It was
at that time prevailing generally in New England. Of that sickness
of three months duration I know nothing whatever beyond what I have
been told. Death was expected and my grave clothes were made ready.
They tell me my brain was affected and that I was insane. I
only know that I lost hearing save a little in the left ear, and the left
eye was closed. Towards my recovery mother and Hannah placed me in the
big rocking chair, as I remember, and pushed the chair along the
floor back and forth, calling me to look behind you and see William
driving the horses," they the while laughing and enjoying the
sport. William was my oldest brother but I did not know, had
close to know him. I looked behind as they told me but saw nobody
but mother and Hannah. Hannah told me, or told me thirty years
ago, that I was cured by eating flag tonic, that one day I cried for
flag tonic. Mrs. Elles told them to let me have what I wanted, as I
would die anyway. So Hannah and Mary, the last two daughters of Aunt Swarts, a sister of my father, and eleven years
older than myself, went down into the single room twenty or thirty
years older and gathered the flag tonic. These I ate and Hannah says I
came to send from that time, possibly Nature was a better phys-
ician than the Doctor and knew when to call for a change in the
treatment. Hannah says I could not hear but that one day she ran
and threw her hands against the bed and said "Boo," and that I
prunted. This gave them an idea and from that time they made me
hear in the left ear by speaking close to that ear in a loud voice.
It so continued until the age of seven or eight when, with another
brother, we were playing in an old codfish box. Having to
read I was totally deaf and have so continued since. This last was after
my mother's second marriage.

May 8th, 1837.

Time passes rapidly with me, more rapidly, it seems, than
in my younger years. Your letters, Frank, urge me to continue my autobiographic, and out for your pleasure, I should never have been.

Franklin's character, I think it was fully formed. Washington's
strong self-esteem, self-respect prevented his writing his own life,
and that Franklin's appetiveness, also strong, led him to write
his own.

My boyhood was much like that of boys generally of sixty
and seventy years ago, mostly in play, fishing, batting in summer
amusements with club and ball, and generally I did as I pleased.
To remember Uncle David's (brother of my father), a man
more in one direction, or at the mill pond, a couple of miles
in another, going off on the spur of the moment and without notice to
anyone and coming home at night, mother only asking where I had been. Getting there, I gave no notice of going, or any thoughtfulness on my part. By stepfather then and for some years had been raising tobacco west of the Connecticut River, distance from one to four miles. In this he was associated with a neighbor named Levi Colton and settled on the bank of the river, east side.

They owned a skiff and crossed over every morning returning at night. The fancy of going with them took possession of me but father would not consent, deeming the distance too great for my young legs and I of no use in the field. Then the time for cutting tobacco came he asked me if I wished to go with him. I said yes and was glad to go. My age must have been seven. We started the next morning. Reaching the field of operations I found my business was to hand him the tobacco on the stalk as he tied it to the poles. The summer following I took the hoe and worked between the rows, a son of Levi Colton, a year younger than myself, did the same for father and thus continued summer after summer until I was twelve. Horse plows were used in corn, but not in tobacco, why I never knew. I was a boy then and not very tired at night. I don't remember ever being fatigued in my boyhood days.

How I learned to read I don't know (Note added later—Thinking more closely on this matter I have a dim recollection or impression of my mother taking a straw from the broom, setting me on her lap and pointing to each letter of the alphabet and naming it, but remember taking Noah Webster's spelling book and running down the A.B.C.'s, repeating three letters at a time, and in poetical measure—Alla, Baby, Bill, and so on as fast as I could speak and this was soon after my father's death or when I was five years old. It seems to have been the poetical jingle that fixed this in my memory. Mother afterwards said she sent me to school but the teachers were young, not very old, and taught me the one syllable words—be, bi, bo, bu, by, etc. This too, was so like poetry that I soon memorized the whole. I could hear a little in the left ear at the time, and until eight years or so it left me in a night as already described.

A favorite pastime of mine was fishing. At first I went with older boys to the still pond, two miles or so away. As a rule we caught nothing. My stepfather had a notion that fish would bite only in rainy weather, so when too rainy to work he and I put on overcoats and went on two or three occasions. Instead of going to the pond as everyone else, he led me to a brook running through a wide valley and coming into the pond at least fifteen feet long. To these we fixed our lines and, on the first occasion, as soon as his hook and bait touched the water a hungry trout seized it and was drawn out. I was wild with the novelty of the feat. He caught two or three more and the fish ceased to bite.

The same thing happened again on another rainy day the same or the next year. He met with no success, said, "They won't bite today" and went home. I stayed and when near night caught fish after fish, bringing home a long string of the finny ones. By this time I had thought the matter out and told the family the fish had their hours for breakfast, dinner and supper, and would eat at no other time.

June 26, 1887.

My boyhood passed much like the boyhood of others around. I attended school, mostly in summer and winter, staying out in summer only when "going over the river" so we called it and as already described. In school, before losing hearing entirely, only two teachers ever spoke to me. It required too close proximity of mouth and ear to be convenient or perhaps pleasant. These two school teachers were young ladies. One was Enice Cooley, afterward Mrs. Dixon Colton. Both are dead. She was an active woman, in all the benevolent associations and labors of the town and seems one of the chief leaders in that line. She was of kindly nature and had a kindly and active expression of face. In the later year or two of her life she became insane and died. I never knew the reason, but thought her insanity might be due to excessive mental activity combined with trouble, for she was a widower, though well off. The other lady was a cousin, Margaret Booth, a daughter of Uncle David, brother of my father and son of Capt. Joseph Booth. Like Enice Cooley, Margaret heard me in the spelling class which none of the others did. She went south about the year 1830 to teach school (in Virginia) after having taught in long Decker schools about ten years. She married in Virginia a young clergyman named Bartlett and is now a widow living at Coolville, Ohio, with her children. She finally removed from Virginia and settled in Ohio many years ago.

When twelve years old my mother and Uncle David agreed that I should have a farm of my own that I might learn to manage and farm for myself. There was a large farm of 400 acres and a small farm of 50 acres. I went to work on the larger farm. As soon as I was able to work for myself I purchased the small farm and farmed it. I did not greatly relish the arrangement but, my own father being dead, and my stepfather having only a small farm and no steady work for me, I needed the money. In Uncle David's family I stayed four years. Then he died, and in the spring of the following year three of my five daughters, only one son, Samuel now living in L.C., being younger than myself by one year. Margaret, mentioned above, and Sarah, the youngest daughter, now Mrs. Rev. Cable and a widow, living at Denmark, Iowa,
June 17, 1880.

For some months I have neglected this journal or autobiography, having no fancy for the work, and doing it only because so urged by the writer. The record of the history of another Joseph Booth who carried on a copiously and in one of the expeditions to Canada. The journal he kept at the time fell to his son Eliphat and is now in possession of his (Eliphat's) son Edwin Booth and who lives in Philadelphia. Joseph, the brother Joseph Booth of Capt. Joseph Booth was my great grandfather and was the son of Capt. Joseph Booth of the Revolution. This latter, therefore, was my grandfather. The record to which I refer is a thin printed volume of 88 pages by John H. Booth of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This John is a cousin one remove, a son of Henry B. who was a son of a third Joseph, and the last named a brother of my father Peter Booth.

Captain Joseph Booth married Mary Hale Oct. 21, 1703. His commission as captain was given him by Gov. Jonathan Trumbull, of Connecticut, and dated at Hartford, that state, 30th June, 1703. That commission is now in possession of Edwin Booth of Philadelphia. He was a brave soldier in the old French and Indian wars. His diary, camp chest, etc., were in the hands of George Booth of Ludlow, Mass. George is dead and I do not know what has become of the relics.

The children of Joseph B. and Mary Hale Booth were:

Mary, born Sept. 15, 1702. Married Israel Chapin, afterwards Jones.

David, born March 3d, 1705. Married Margaret Cotton, Colton.

Annis, born Oct. 1st, 1706. Married Edmund Forands, from whom I was named.

Lydia, born Aug. 13th, 1708. Married Henry Colton, Sr., Maynard of Washington, D.C. is one of her grandsons.


Peter, born July 27th, 1717. Married Martha Eyre. This Peter was my father. He died March 6th, 1815, aged 43. His disease was spotted fever then prevalent in England. Was taken sick in the morning and died at noon. My sickness commenced three days later and resulted in loss of hearing and the left eye.


Peter, born July 17th, 1776. Her name shows the spirit of her father and of the times. We always called her Aunt Penda for short. She was granddaughter of Mrs. H. Bodfish, of Washington, D.C. Aunt Susan M. Bartlett, of Coolville, Ohio, and Sarah in or was in Denmark, Iowa.

All the above named children of Capt. Joseph Booth were known to me, except Hannah, the last in the list, and all were good and kindly people, and were well liked by the small crowd of cousins that came after them. Of all these cousins now living I know of only Edwin of Phila., Samuel, of Long Meadow, Mass., Margaret Bartlett, of Coolville, Ohio, and Sarah in or was in Denmark, Iowa. The first of these four is a son of Eliphat, the other three were children of David. I should include among the living myself and my only daughter, Martha Ford, at Webster City, Iowa, and Martha Loyd, at Colton, New York. Both are widows. Now at the age of nearly 78 I can count only two sisters and four cousins living, and all I have just named on this page. My brother Henry died on the 16th of last month, and as a sketch of him and his funeral services will be found in the Anamosa Eureka of the week following.

* A commission as Captain of the 3rd Company of the Alarm List, in the 17th Regiment of Militia, was given him by Sir Jonathan Trumbull of Conn. and dated at 2d day, 2d month, 1777. This commission is in the possession of Helen A. Hinkleshaw as of Feb. 26, 1930.
I now come to the family of my father Peter Booth. He was a resident of Enfield, Conn., at the time of his marriage to Martha Eyre, Oct. 10th, 1797. Resided in Enfield till 1808. Then removed to Chicopee Parish, Springfield, where he was born. Chicopee parish was set off as an independent town about 40 years ago, as Long Meadow had been near a hundred years previously. The next removal was to Long Meadow as already described in these papers. His widow married Jan. 14, 1817, Levi Burrill, a widower who had two grown up sons, Levi and Loring, and four daughters, Betsey, Nanny, Miranda and Sophia. All are dead. Martha Eyre's father came from England (Liverpool). He was of wealthy parents, was liberally educated, a great reader, etc. Disagreed with his father, came to America, furnished with funds by his mother, and settled at New London or Norwich, Conn. My mother was born in Norwich. The Revolution and the worthless currency ruined his finances—his wife died in 1823. He was a school teacher and among his pupils was the late Daniel Wadsworth, of Hartford, a school mate of my mother's. He removed to Enfield, Conn., and followed his avocation of teaching. I do not remember ever seeing him. I read my mother's journal that she kept for many years was lost when father Burrill and mother removed to Bolton, N.Y., to live with or near the children by his first wife. I was then in my fourth and closing year in Hartford as a pupil.

The children of Peter Booth and Martha Eyre Booth were:

William, born June 6th, 1798. Never married. Died at Bolton, N.Y., March 6th, 1853. He was a stone cutter or mason, and his disease consumption from exposure.

Henry, born Aug. 26th, 1800. Married Lucy Calkins. She died 44 years ago at Fairview, Iowa, leaving one daughter Julia, now in Colorado. Henry died May 15th, 1880, of old age after some weeks of ill health.

Hannah, born Nov. 11, 1803. Married Col. David Wood at Springfield, Mass., removed to Anamosa, Iowa, in the spring of 1840. He died in the following winter of illness in the river, leaving two boys, Charles Danforth and William. His widow married Eben H. Ford, from Pembroke, Mass., and who settled here in 1838, having purchased the entire claim of the first settlers of the place and who came in 1837. His claim embraces what is now Anamosa and Fisherville. It was a mill claim. In 1866 (wrong, possibly 1869) note by F. H. Booth. I think it was, Ford and his family removed to land which he owned near Debster, Ill., having exchanged the Wapsipinic Hotel in Anamosa for the Hebard farm. He died there, leaving three sons, Harlow and a daughter, Maria, were the result of this union. Maria was the first child born in Anamosa. She is now Mrs Joseph Fitch.

Danforth Charles, born Jan. 15th, 1807. Never married. Died at Waterbury Connecticut, Dec. 27th, 1834. He was named from Aunt Fanny's husband, and was a great lover of musical instruments. It injured his lungs.

To the family of my mother's brother Joseph Pyke. He was an educated, a great reader, etc. He married a native of Massachusetts, furnished with funds by his mother, and settled at Fairview, Conn., a village? ed his avocation of teaching. He did not give up nor rest till I mentioned it next day. The objection was repeated and opposition manifested. What they wanted was my work on the farm. Mother did not give up nor rest till a letter was written to the governor of the state, signed by the Clergyman, Mr. Merriken, Esq., Justice of the Peace, of two or three lines only. Came from the Secretary of State that the quota of the Massachusetts was full and that I should have the next vacancy. In the spring following a certificate of admission came from the state, and in May I entered the State Normal School, 23 miles to Hartford.

On arrival at the hotel in Hartford Charles saw a friend on the sidewalk. This latter entered the coach and rode with us to the "Asylum" it was and still is called. Years later I sometimes thought it was a school for the education of the deaf and an "asylum" for Yale college and imbeciles, for all the hearing teachers were graduates of Yale, and most of them were but ordinary men mentally—that is, in mental capacity and requirements. A pint cup could never hold a barrel and they did not think so in their case.

The coach stopped at the front door and we emerged therefrom. A few small boys came around with curious looks, the nearest, with bright, eager face and quick eyes scanned me from head to foot, glanced at Charles who was talking and attending to baggage, mentioned

June 24, 1889. I resume on my autobiography after months of delay, being urged thereto by all my children, Tom, Hattie, and Frank.

While living at Uncle David's, brother to my father, in the spring of 1869 a man called and wished to see me. His name was Flavel Goldswain, furnished with funds by his mother, and settled at Long Meadow had been near a hundred years previously. The next removal was to Long Meadow as already described in these papers. The objection was repeated and opposition manifested. What they wanted was my work on the farm. Mother did not give up nor rest till a letter was written to the governor of the state, signed by the Clergyman, Mr. Merriken, Esq., Justice of the Peace, of two or three lines only. Came from the Secretary of State that the quota of the Massachusetts was full and that I should have the next vacancy. In the spring following a certificate of admission came from the state, and in May I entered the State Normal School, 23 miles to Hartford.

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The coach stopped at the front door and we emerged therefrom. A few small boys came around with curious looks, the nearest, with bright, eager face and quick eyes scanned me from head to foot, glanced at Charles who was talking and attending to baggage, mentioned
to the next nearest boy, then to me and said I was a poor pupil, I did not understand then but guessed and remembered these simple signs.

We entered the hall, and in a few minutes Mr. Gallaudet, the Principal, came. He talked with Charles, wrote down some notes, made a few signs to me to ascertain if I understood, and I did not, and left. Charles and I went into the boys' and, next, the girls' study or sitting room. It was all new to me and to Charles it was amusing, the innumerable motions of hands and arms. After dinner he left and I was among strangers but knew X was at home. School opened for the term next day. In my communications to the Iowa Hawkeye, published at the Iowa school at Council Bluffs, I have given something of all this.

June 1st, 1839.

Near two years have passed since I last wrote in this book. The inclination to use the pen has become chronic, the pencil being more manageable, though scarcely more clear, save now and then, the printers manage to make out the sense and so it is tolerably well.

Commencing in school in Hartford I was placed in the third class, of two and a half years, W.W. Turner teacher, the first of highest class being that of the Principal, J.H. Gallaudet, the second being Laurent Clerc. The mode of teaching was by natural signs and sentences dictated by word signs. The idea, of all except Clerc, seemed to be that the deaf of all ages, from 14 to 30, should learn language as hearing babies learned, the bringing out and forward the verbal memory but not the reasoning faculties. It was, in fact, a parrot system. Phrenology, a division of faculties, in that fact, a parrot system. Phrenology, a division of faculties, in that

The time in school was limited to four years. That time expired, with my class in a year and a half. The Legislature of Massachusetts had been asked and had granted an extension of one year to those pupils best qualified, and with these I entered Clerc's, or first class, Mr. Gallaudet resigning and Lewis Weld taking his place. Weld was an old Hartford teacher but had been principal of the Philadelphia school four years. (My hand is so much more nervous than usual that I will try the pencil for awhile). In Clerc's 2nd class I saw for the first time that written language has its laws. Still even he did not make these laws clear. As in other classes a word given received its grammar sign, but what that sign meant or how it affected other words or was affected by others was told. Language was given to me parrot like, hodge podge, thrown at us with a pitchfork. The children had been graduating year after year without being told that the verb governs or hits the noun, that the adjective qualifies the noun, that the adverb qualifies or affects the action of the verb and so on. Punctuation, save in the use of the period at the end of a sentence, was not thought of. In fact no teacher understood the reasoning of punctuation, looked on it as a mess of fly specks. No convention of teachers or writer of books for the deaf or in the Annals ever mentioned punctuation. I sent the Annals a communication upon a few years ago. All newspaper men know next to nothing of punctuation. For the deaf it is indispensable.

Of teachers of those days I have written and published in the Council Bluffs' Hawkeye and it is enough. These articles in that paper gave offense in Hartford and Principal Williams, in the Jacksonsville convention, sort of contradicted them. Sup't Gillette, however, knew teachers well enough to speak bluntly and plainly of poor teachers. When having a year more to stay and complete the four allowed by law, I proposed to Mr. Weld to retire and begin life for myself. He objected and persuaded me to remain, he to have John Q. David, Williams Kemmet and myself reside to his one hour daily, my parents (mother and stepfather) had removed from Long Meadow, Mass., to Bolton, on Lake George, New York. I stayed of course. We retired to Mr. Weld. It gave me a clearer insight into his real nature. Kindly at bottom, and honest, with whatever sternness appeared on his exterior. In two weeks F. A. P. Barnard, a new teacher of a new class, became poor in health and obtained a two weeks leave of absence. J. Q. David was sent to teach Barnard's pupils. After two days Mr. Weld sent me to take David's place. This was in the last days of the summer term, 1833. Barnard stayed away longer and, after a four weeks vacation, I resumed the work of teaching his class until spring. My time, four years, was now out, and I had picked to leave next term. In the evening Mr. Weld came into the boys' room and beckoned me to follow him to his office. There he proposed that I return at the close of the then commencing vacation of four weeks, and he would make a position as permanent teacher. And so it came about. The P.A. Barnard, who died recently, aged 80, having been president of Columbia College, New York City, for 35 years. He was a superior man and could not stand subordination to anyone. Neither could Mr. H. P. Pest, and Barnard was under and quarreled with and left both.

In this class of Barnard's and which I, still being a pupil, taught eight months, was the girl, Mary Ann Belknap, 14 years old, that year. 1840, Barnard returned and resumed his old class and a new one was assigned me.

Weld introduced a new system, reducing the old hodge podge as taught, to order. This was for two younger classes, leaving the old teachers with their iron bound notions to go on in their old
way. In teaching this I soon saw the full extent of the fact that the sign language was a language of laws. Teachers had never understood that a boy or girl could be taught to understand the laws of language. The parrot system caused then to lose half their time in many cases and teachers never knew it.

The "Asylum" being a corporation, state legislation had no control. The directors never visited or inspected and the principal alone was the medium that connected the school and the executive committee. I began teaching on the old established salary for those who had been pupils, such as Whiton, Loring, and Spofford, $250 a year and was told that paying more would cause dissatisfaction in the three names mentioned and all of us ran into debt. Board, and its attendants, fuel, lights, washing and traveling expenses more than took up the amount. It worked like the policy of keeping men by compelling them to live on today the earning of tomorrow. It was dishonest and my sisters and I were conflicting the position under the circumstances. The salary was increased yearly $100 until it reached $650 and then $50 was added. Loring and Spofford resigned inside a year after I commenced, in 1834. Mr. Weld urged the executive committee to increase my salary. The lion in the way was the pay of Whiton, and all the other deaf teachers in the hereafter would have to be raised also. So nothing was done.

The world was a mystery, no appeal or voice could be raised in a legislature and trustees elected who could and would decide. The excuse that we had been educated by charity was too shallow but was in accordance with the vision of the time. In 1830 I wrote Mr. Weld that the deaf and the blind had an equal right to education at public expense with the hearing and seeing, or the state legislation had found its mistake and had raised salaries of deaf teachers nearly to Springfield, at Albany open at the eastern end of the road. Arriving at Syracuse I learned I could go on by stage or by canal to Oswego on Lake Ontario. I chose the latter with a view to get sight of the renowned lake, the scene of Cooper's "Hawkeye." Reached Oswego in the morning. It was a small village, a few scattered dwellings, not a half dozen in all as I can remember now, after the lapse of 53 years. I eagerly embraced the opportunity to examine the water and the surroundings and was that Cooper had climbed the hill or mound that commanded the ménage and where, if I remember aright, a cannon was placed as the close of the winter term 1830.

John O. David did the same four months later and in 1834 Prof. Samuel Porter visited me here in Anamosa. Replying to my question he said, "The Board had found its mistake and had raised salaries of deaf teachers nearly to Springfield, at Albany was the eastern end of the road. Arriving at Syracuse I learned I could go on by stage or by canal to Oswego on Lake Ontario. I chose the latter with a view to get sight of the renowned lake, the scene of Cooper's "Hawkeye." Reached Oswego in the morning. It was a small village, a few scattered dwellings, not a half dozen in all as I can remember now, after the lapse of 53 years. I eagerly embraced the opportunity to examine the water and the surroundings and was that Cooper had climbed the hill or mound that commanded the ménage and where, if I remember aright, a cannon was placed as the close of the winter term 1830."

...to the present. Little more need be said of my Hartford life at this point. I shall dwell but to a small extent on the course of events in the next year and was pretty monotoneous. I was glad to quit and launch out for myself in the world. Hartford was exceedingly dull, so much so that I was never able to stay there two days after a vacation commenced. It was simply stupid. Find I have written eight pages this Sunday evening.

I was urged by all the children to go on with my autobiography and look on it as drudgery. And yet after beginning at an evening's task it is apt to grow easier, or rather less of the character of drudgery. What good it will do I do not know, but the children urge and I comply just to please them. It is now Sunday evening, eleven o'clock. Have slept in my chair an hour or more today and that fact will deprive me of sleep for some time after lying down.

I resigned as teacher in the Hartford school in May 1839, glad to be free and my own master. The world was open to me and the West was bounded only by the Pacific. I spent some weeks in Springfield and Suflield where parents and brother Henry resided, sister Hannah at Springfield. They all disapproved of my intentions of going west. Aunt Tvarts said, "You must not go west for you do not know the way." I had my own views and was weary of being under others whose ideas never extended beyond their own wants, wishes and immediate surroundings.

In June of that year (1839) I left Springfield by the regular stage coach, for Albany, New York. Travelled all night and nearly all the next day. Saw on the route the work of railroad building, an extension of the Boston Western railroad that had been completed nearly to Springfield. At Albany stopped at the Eagle Tavern, then the most noted tavern of the place. An hour or two later took a railroad cars for Syracuse, the then terminal of the road. Arriving at Syracuse I learned I could go on by stage or by canal to Oswego on Lake Ontario. I chose the latter with a view to get sight of the renowned lake, the scene of Cooper's "Hawkeye." Reached Oswego in the morning. It was a small village, a few scattered dwellings, not a half dozen in all as I can remember now, after the lapse of 53 years. I eagerly embraced the opportunity to examine the water and the surroundings and was that Cooper had climbed the hill or mound that commanded the ménage and where, if I remember aright, a cannon was placed as the close of the winter term 1830."

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the passage of boats in the center. In connection with Cooper's story, "The Hawkeye", everything was of interest. Late in the afternoon the regular steamer arrived from Kingston, Canada, and I went aboard for Lewiston situated at the south of the Niagara River. Unlike the round steamers which I had been accustomed to see in the east, it was of larger size and higher bulwarks. The advantage of this was soon manifest for the wind was dead against us, was fresh, and now and then as the steamer cut through the waves, the spray would dash over us. It was a good and comfortable boat and well managed. In the morning we reached Lewiston, entered the river, high and steep banks on both sides. On the Canadian side were red-coated soldiers looking listless and indifferent as having nothing to do. On the American side we left the boat and climbed the steep. A railroad train of two or three coaches was waiting. The town was almost nothing, or at least little was seen that gave sign of a town. The train proceeded, stopped at Niagara Falls and at Lewiston. Stayed a few hours and gave the whole place a full inspection. There were but few building at the time and the extortions of today were unknown. Went out on Goat Island on the bridge and felt thoroughly satisfied with my visit. In the afternoon another train was leaving for Buffalo and this I entered. At that time the only railroad west of New York City or Albany were from Albany to Syracuse and from Lockport to Buffalo. Not one foot of railroad existed west of Buffalo. Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, so well supplied now, were entirely bare of railroads. Frink's mud wagons, as the mail stages of this western section were called, were the only sure means of conveyance in land travel. (Note: Frink & Balke's stages, often called Frink and Balke and wagons at the time and, by way of jest, for years afterwards). It is one o'clock in the morning of March 30th and I will stop for the present, having written nine pages.

May 7th, 1891.

It is evening, near eleven o'clock, and I resume for an hour or two for I have had a run and north west, for three days, and frost has been felt in portions of the west. No serious damage here. Fruit trees are in bloom.

At Buffalo I made my way to the lake wharves where was a lake steamer for Chicago, went aboard. On inquiry learned price of passage with berth and board, was ten dollars. Secured a passage and took a look about the city for a few hours. It was a considerable city and compared with Chicago, seemed large. The hour came and I was aboard. The passage was pleasant from the first, fine weather, so little was known of the west, it was full of interest to me. We stopped at Detroit for perhaps an hour, landed some passengers and freight and went on. The city was of good size, not large and I thought of it as the home of Senator Lewis Cass and as figuring in Gen. Hull's surrender in the war of 1812. The Canadian shore was near enough for us to see everything clearly.

We kept our way through the strait and Lake Huron, the land, Michigan, appearing to my eye, a new thing to me, and wooded, no dwelling near the shore was too high, and a couple of flat boats came out loaded with wood for the steamer's furnace. Many of the passengers, and I with them, jumped into the boats and had an hour's stroll in the then infant city of Milwaukee. The water was not unfriendly and we were happy to spend the time in the city. It was a small struggling town, with perhaps not twenty buildings.

Continuing our course southward, we passed a bark canoe, in which an Indian and his wife were crossing from east to west. The man, apparently 40 years of age, and the woman corresponding, was paddling with a single paddle. They crossed our wake, seeming to take no notice of our steamer. They were the first Indians I had seen in their own portion of the country.

After this five days on the lakes our steamer reached Chicago. Of course I was intensely curious to know what sort of a place it was for it was then scarcely known, having but recently come into notice in the public prints. It was only a short time previously that a U.S. senator asked another, "Where the d— is Chicago?" (Note, May 7th: This afternoon Tom left for Cedar Rapids, to take train on the Northwestern for Marshfield. Convention of 5th congressional district editors there had yesterday, and he is to deliver an address by appointment).
Reaching Chicago the place seemed to be but a few feet above the water. The country was a treeless plain, not a tree in sight from house to house. The town itself was a sprawling mass of frame here and there, to the view hardly twenty buildings in all, not a sidewalk anywhere and hardly any semblance of streets. What I took to be the abandoned Fort Dearborn stood on the declivity towards the lake shore. It was an old double log building, double in length, not height, and dark with age. Entering one of the $26 stores was an Indian painted and standing motionless like a statue, stern looking and leaning against a pile of goods. Made a few inquiries and learned that this town was Chicago. Some like were of frame and wood. There was no inducement to stay. Had no idea of what the place would be in coming years. In the afternoon took stage, one of Frank and Walker's new wagons already referred to, for Galena on the Mississippi opposite Dubuque, Iowa. There was no mail and no sign of being inhabited. The men sent a hail cross and returned to the hotel for dinner. Hour and returned to the hotel for dinner. Found the piazza filled with a crowd, all standing and gazing at me as though they thought I was an ogre or some other monster. Thought here was another exhibit of western manners. Passed through the crowd without a word. The landlord wrote that it was all the work of the post office clerks. Asked to pass over it as a mistake. I may add my name did not correspond with that in the hand bill and that, meeting the doctor afterwards, I told him my hair was not black. His reply was, "Hair can be colored." He could not be much of a doctor and knew black hair cannot be colored white. Judge Smoker came to me later, and said when he saw me at dinner, he thought I was the man of the handbill and that he was satisfied he was mistaken. Apologized and asked me to let it pass as a mistake. This was my first adventure of the sensational kind in the west.

An hour or two later the landlord informed me a stage wagon would start for Dubuque that afternoon. It is half past twelve, and I want to stop for the present, having written five pages, and my hand more nervous than usual. I forgot to add to the above that the handbill offered a reward to $300 for the capture of the Ohio murderer and this doubtless provoked the cupidity of the two clerks. I may add my name did not correspond with that in the handbill and that, meeting the doctor afterwards, I told him my hair was not black. His reply was, "Hair can be colored." He could not be much of a doctor and knew black hair cannot be colored white. Judge Smoker came to me later, and said when he saw me at dinner, he thought I was the man of the handbill and that he was satisfied he was mistaken. Apologized and asked me to let it pass as a mistake. This was my first adventure of the sensational kind in the west.

June 19, 1892.

Half past ten o'clock evening. Since last writing in this book I have once or twice taken it from the book case with the intention of going on but the newspapers and monthlies were more attractive than tracing a route already traveled. The passing time and the coming were of more interest than the gone. Now it is summer, thermometer 82 today, lower now, a little fire in the acorn stove in the dining room for comfort in the early evening, and now with doors closed I am in a sweat. The past month of May has been unusually rainy. Floods have made havoc in nearly all the west, corn, wheat, etc. less than usual.

I resume my story. At Galena the stage wagon, carrying the mails started, in it with four or five other men. At dusk we reached the Mississippi opposite Dubuque, Iowa. There was a sort of shanty made of boards nailed perpendicular, open door, no windows or fire place and no sign of being inhabited. The men sent a hail across and
after a half hour a large skiff came over rowed by one man. We all entered with the sail bag, and arrived in Dubuque. The first thing was to obtain lodgings. One at least seemed to know the place, for he led us up Main Street and down again, and finally we stopped at Tim Fanning's double log two story tavern, the first house near the ferry and it was Tim that brought us over the river. Tim was a tall, lanky, good natured Irishman. His was the only hotel in the town. Being a double log cabin, that is, twice the usual length, and two stories high, it had sufficient accommodations for the travel of that day. A bar and sitting room in one end and a dining room in the other, with sleeping apartments above.

The next morning, after breakfast I inquired of Tim Fanning for George H. Walworth whose acquaintance I had made in Hartford, Conn. Tim could not tell, but made some inquiries, and in about an hour referred me to Timothy Davis, a lawyer and directed me to seek his office on the street. This I did. Found Davis in a small shanty of an office a little below, or south, of where the Julian House now stands. Davis informed me that Walworth and he were partners, that the former was at the "Buffalo Forks of the Quapaw" forty miles out from Dubuque and was building mills. This was aposer for the moment. My letters from the Halworths had always been dated Dubuque, and now I found they were forty miles out in the wilderness. Davis however was a sharp, shrewd and kind man and, without causing, told me he had a horse he wished to send to Walworth and that I could take it the next day. In the course of the day he came to Fanning's hotel where I was and informed me that the "Cumberland road", so called, was still building or near to completion, and this probably was all its originators intended or expected. The present Cumberland road, so called, was still building or near to completion.

The next morning, after the events named in the last page, I was at Davis' office. Two men, mounted on ponies, apparently not much larger than good sized donkeys, stopped there. Davis' boy had a horse saddled and ready. I mounted and we departed southward, a little westerly. The road was only a wagon track through the grass. On and along was a single furrow plowed and at every mile or so a mound of sod about four feet high. It was a new road and called the Military Road and still bears the name, laid out and under an appropriation by Congress, of $50,000. I think, to connect Fort Iowa with Fort Leavenworth, but the amount carried it no further than from Dubuque to Iowa City, and this probably was all its originators intended or expected. The great Cumberland road, so called, was still building or near to that time, and "River and Harbor" hills, such as we have nowadays, had not come into existence.

My fellow travellers, the name of one was Bartlett, a merchant in Dubuque of apparently 40, well built and a man of intelligence and business. The other was younger and smaller and a blacksmith, his name forgotten if I ever learned it. They rode ponies which went at a slow trot. The horse I was on was large and took longer steps. This compelled me to walk him, and I soon fell behind a quarter of a mile or so, then putting the horse to a trot came up very easily. This continued till about noon, when we came to a log dwelling (Note: The place was called "Wilton's") on the right, with a garden of two or three acres, stopped and got dinner. Only a woman, slender and little sad looking, was in the house. Paid her a half dollar each and went on two miles further and reached the north fork of the Maquoketa. Here was a new frame hotel nearly finished, and crossing the stream above the fall, another house stood, owned by a Kentuckyan named De Long. These and the log house where we took dinner were all the signs of civilization we had seen since leaving Dubuque that morning, unless we call the wagon track through the grass, the furrow and the sod mounds civilization. The place is, was then, and has since borne the name of Cascade, one of the lively towns of Dubuque County, noted now, for whisky shops and a portion of their summer vacation, three weeks, with us. They are a good couple. Have now gone to Monroe, and will start for Phila-

Philadelphia School for the Deaf two years. They have been passing a part of their summer vacation, three weeks, with us. They are a good couple. Have now gone to Monroe, and will start for Phila-

September 18, 1893.

Frank W. Booth, my youngest son, now thirty seven years old, was married to Miss Marion F. Hendershot, of Monroe, Michigan, on August third last. She has been a teacher of the deaf at Flint, Michigan, also two of her sisters, and been teacher in the Phila-
and the shadows began to gather, though not a tree or aught else save the grass and the wild sun flowers to cast a shade. Evening came and we entered a belt of timber, and indication that we were nearing a stream. I kept the horse near enough to keep them in sight by the light of the stars. After what seemed a mile through the timber, a welcome light through the unplastered or open chinks of a log cabin burst into view and we knew we were near human habitation. It was Daniel Varvell’s ranch, a Kentuckyman who had been a resident of Dubuque as appeared years later. Another man named Clark lived with him but it seems he was not then present.

We dismounted. Varvell took the horses to the stable and then prepared our supper. Sited around the room were some fifteen or twenty men employed by the government in laying out this road, the Military road, consisting of a chest brook of cheese on the jam, bread, and coffee, all very acceptable after our long day’s ride on horseback. An hour or so of talk followed, and Varvell took a lantern and led the way up a ladder to the stable loft by a big window made blankets on the hay, the horses feeding below, and slept the sleep of just till morning. The house being full of previous comers, men working on the road, there was no bed for us and we did the next best thing. The morning came and it was Sunday morning, weather fair as it had been all along. Have lost my journal long ago and do not know the movings and mutations of many years and do not give dates, but think it was July. Breakfast was the same as supper. Paid each a half dollar for two meals, horse keeping and a bed on the hay in the stable loft. Started on our journey, forded the stream, the South Fork of the Maquoketa, the place is now known as East Monticello, a part of the town of that name. It was then and for years afterward known by the name of Varvell’s. Pitifully it is writer’s “cramp” and commenced not twenty years ago, growing slowly since until now at the age of 82 it renders it impossible to write. It is Sunday evening. All well and ten o’clock.

Turning my horse into the road on the right I parted from my two companions, rode through the low bushes, composing an acre or two, between what is now High street and Iowa street, just west of the Park and the Penitentiary, and kept on, whither I could only guess and a ding gras at that. Crossed a small brook, near which was recently the brewery. Saw on the right of the road a piece of four or five acres broken by the plow at a cost of $5 an acre, and unfenced, and it never was fenced afterwards. Further on crossed another brook, and then descried a log cabin, then described a log cabin, then described a log cabin, and it was a mile, or rather less, away ahead. Along my left was the Buffalo Creek. Nearing the cabin I turned the horse’s head to the south side but he seemed to insist going on the north. Let him have his way. He gave me a fruitful view of the body of the day, the fronts of the newly settled mill, the parts of the old mill, the road and the corn. I walked up and down and read and climbed the cabin, and having seen some forty or fifty men working here, but Emily Walworth in the house saw and recognized me, ran out, shook hands, then around the corner beckoning me to follow. There stood a carriage at rest and her sister Mary Ann in it reading. The men were all lounging around at the newly settled mill, for it was Sunday and no work going on. These men, seeing a horse and rider, now came up to the place and I had an old friend’s welcome from George, Caleb and John Dennis Walworth. Of these I may have occasion to make mention hereafter.

The journey was ended. The time from leaving Springfield, my native town, till reaching the Buffalo Fork of the Wapsipinicon, as the Mathers call, was sixty miles and the time of the journey, eight days. This included stops and the time required by railroad now is but two and a half days.

In passing, I may mention now that my oldest son Thomas Frye reached the point which is where the Military road, Main Street, crosses Garnavillo and Ford street we saw a big, tall, heavy-looking man coming down the road towards us. The two men, my companions, stopped and questioned him. I was some way behind and usual. Reaching them they motioned me to turn off to the right when we came to where the road forked. I did so and we parted they for Iowa City to attend the first sale of town lots, and Dumars, I take it, to visit his claim and dream of its possibilities. He little foresaw it would be the Fair grounds and worth near a hundred fold what he had not paid for it, the government price, and no land in these parts had come into market.

November 20th, 1869.

I resume the pen, or rather the pencil. Find that as time moves on it becomes more difficult to keep the point of the pencil steady. Primarily it is writer’s “cramp” and commenced about twenty years ago, growing slowly since until now at the age of 82 it renders it impossible to write. It is Sunday evening. All well and ten o’clock.
Booth and family, wife and two daughters, live in the house on Ford Street. Battle, a9d_janl3gdau '-tor living. Mrs Genre* F. LeCipt-p

February 5th, 1893.

Eleven o'clock, Sunday evening, Mrs B. going to bed, as alone in the parlor by the acorn stove. Thermometer today zero, the first time it has risen so high since before Christmas. It is rare for the cold to hold on so long in a single winter.

Snow is a foot deep on the level and a sudden and persistent thaw will work mischief.

I resume my autobiography, a harder task than in the first pages, because my hand grows more unsteady and because the more varied life after arrival here is liable to confuse events and dates in my recollection. In the first years I kept a sort of journal and in the movements and changes of location it was lost.

Reaching the end of the journey with not five dollars in pocket and seventy in bible's Bank in Dubuque as a prevention against unfavorable chances and accidents, my first object was to find some kind of work that might be a help in the coming time and five

It is, rare for the cold to hold on so long in a single winter. The works had

up stream and sand, and laying on the log dam. In doing this I

The log house at the mills was too limited for convenience

housework, cooking and washing, but not

with the owner of the place to work at 75 cents a day and board.

It was regarded as pretty good wages at the time in view of the
general financial crisis of 1839 and from which the country was
slowly recovering. The work was chiefly in cutting and hauling
logs for the barn, bringing stone on a flat boat from the banks

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and Col. W. Reed, his mother, then 70 £egrs of are bpt still vigorous. They came by way

of Pittsburg, down the Ohio, up the Mississippi to Dubuque and
then by wagon to the "Buffalo Forks," arriving, I think, in June
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worth, now my wife, and at this writing, April 1893, 79 years of age, who considered himself general manager of the company, offered a choice of lots free if we built on it. We did so, getting the lumber at the mill and it was the first house built in Anamosa and the first in the county. In 1868, my mother, brother Henry, and sister Hannah, with John Daniel Woolworth and Emily, brother and sister of the bride and John G. Joelin, the Justice, who performed the ceremony. These, I believe, were all.

George and Clark, the bride's brothers, the first was at Burlington attending a session of the Territorial Legislature of which he was a member, and the second had not courage enough to attend in his buckskin dress and left on the day previous for Iowa City with a load of lumber. (Note: Clark (Caleb Clark) said he would go, but was rechecked by his sister Joelin by saying she would be ashamed of his dress. She said no, but he went.) He was not philosopher enough to know that dress, if only decent, was of small moment on the frontier, and we were emphatically on the frontier, there being no known white settlement five miles west of us. I afterwards, in speaking of the occurrence to Clark's wife and other members of the family, told them Clark was a fool. His entire suit was a buckskin coat, vest and pantaloons and all comparatively new and clean. The bride expectant had previously objected to the squire (Joelin) as wearing skin clothes. This put it into Clark's head to run away. Joelin, however, came well dressed in store clothes, having borrowed a dress of his son, Dr. John Clark Joelin. On the occasion the bride borrowed a pair of pantaloons of me to give her daughter Densan a decent appearance. I did not know till she told me afterwards. See account in History of Jones County, published by the Chicago Historical Society, page 1870. By accident my mother was omitted in the account. She died in 1854, aged 84.

April 16th, 1893.

To resume this rather tedious and desultory work of writing an autobiography, my brother Henry, after a few days, purchased the "claim" of Henry Van Buskirk, a half mile west of our cabin who had a claim on which was afterwards the town of Fairview. He paid for it $400. It had a good 1½ story log house and eight or ten acres in corn and well fenced. It was worth the money though not entered at the land office. Claims were then held under verbal protection by the settler's association and the lands here had come into market only a few weeks previous.

Col. Wood and I set about digging a well, went down about 30 feet and found solid rock. Dug five feet into the rock, tried to
cluding state and foreign buildings erected independent of the country, the amount is stated as high as thirty three millions.

I was now ready for farm life and had the advantage of knowledge of farming, having worked on a farm boyhood till the age of seventeen, the time when I went to school in Hartford. Hired Ambrose Parsons to break ten acres on my claim west of the Military road, the north end of the claim being about twenty rods west of the road and running south so far as to comprise 90 acres. It now, I believe, belongs to Matthew Porter who was then a young man and very grey beard and all his children grown up. Parsons, of whom I spoke and whom I bought a yoke of oxen, then hired a man and his hired man performed the work. The winter following I split rails enough to give the broken ten acres a stake and rider fence. When the spring of 1841 came I bought an iron plow, cast iron, and it proved a very good thing. Bought it of John Ford who was a lot of these on hand, left with him by Tim Davis, his old partner. With this plow I sort of fitted the ground for planting corn and raised a very heavy crop. So the summer went by. In the winter case, I built an ox sled and wood was plenty, had comfortable house and big fire in the capacious fireplace. Spring succeeded and David G. Damars sold the one cowed. A Scotch Grove, since called, giving three precincts, elected me county Recorder, nil the precincts. ex—

In August 1840 the people of the people of these precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grove, since called, giving me four precincts, elected me county Recorder, all the precincts, except the one in the north end, the one called Farm Creek, Scotch Grov
Iowa City would only control the journey and home via the little hamlet of a log house or two at Cedar Rapids. Traveling the distance from Davenport to Clifton was a day's work, stopped at the log cabin of Timothy Stive's at Clifton, an old acquaintance and he is still living, is now an old subscriber of the Eureka and one of the few old settlers whom I knew in 1840. He was then postmaster at Clifton, now Clin, and a man of intelligence. His sister now lives in Cass township and is Mrs. Benjamin Chaplin, now a widow.

Mrs. Booth, early in autumn, with the boy Thomas, came up the river to Dubuque and so advised me by letter. Clement Russell's son, William, was about to start for his place with a wagon, and I engaged a seat. Reaching Dubuque found Mrs. Booth and Mr. Stivers, a cousin of hers. Started for home next morning and the horses being a good team, we made the 44 miles that day. Before another winter demise, the first winter on the open prairie just south of Butch or Reed's Creek having proved rather too uncomfortable, I pulled down the log cabin and hauled the logs to the newly laid out town of Fairview, nearly one mile north within the borders of the timber, having purchased the lot of Clement Russell and in a few hours the logs were set in place and the roof and shingled shingles laid on the roof pole, fastened by other poles and no nails, as was the custom of the time. We moved in and enjoyed life about as much as is given to mortals to enjoy. In this house a girl was born, named Harriet, and died at 17 months of age. The log cabin was built in the same house and she is, and has been with us since the middle of last August. It is that midnight and another time must serve on this long drawn out journal.

Thursday evening. Looking at last date I find nothing has been written since Nov. 5. The first part of this month has been spring-like and vegetation had a good start. With the past two weeks it has been winterish. Now again it is fair and like spring.

To resume and carry on this long story of the past. I with your mother and Thomas in the log house referred to until 1849. Harriet, your only living sister, was born June 17, 1848. I had 15 acres in crops, usually good, no bad failures, but no good market for anything. The nearest market was at Dubuque, its connection with larger markets was by the Mississippi River to St. Louis and New Orleans. Brother Henry and I each carried hogs to Dubuque in fall or winter by wagon and a yoke of oxen. Sold at 50 cents a pound, and —

Stivers?
was near and I went to that now and then to warn my hands. Suspected that I had the choler or that it was coming on. Went to the wagon and took out a box of Mandrake pills. The cold feeling increasing I took a half dozen, thought I might as well die of pills as of cholera. Cold still increasing, but no chill or shaking at all, increased the idea I had the cholera. It would not do to give up. Thought of the family at home and by daylight had taken over 20 pills. As light came I entered the wagon and covered up in the blankets. Still no warmth. Sped my partner and asked him to go to Capt. Compton and borrow a couple of buffalo robes. We went. Compton came. Asked him for the buffalo robes telling him I was cold. He looked gravely at me. Went and brought a bottle of Pain Compton came. Asked him for the buffalo robes telling him I was cold. He looked gravely at me. Went and brought a bottle of Pain. He marked it as a French physician, addressing a body of physicians, 'Tame-wash basin and vomited plenty of cold water. In so doing began to grow warm and perspire and then knew I was safe. Recollected the remark of a French physician, addressing a body of physicians, 'The cholera is an awful disease. It begins where other diseases end, in death.' I was not sick at all save a looseness of the bowels for some ten days, and felt no sickness or weakness. It was simply cold increasing as the minutes wore on. It needed heroic treatment and had it. I was the fourth of the company taken with the cholera. I was not sick at all except a looseness of the bowels. A new ax broke and to stand still it was impossible. The feet moved and the sand and the sand hills running past would carry away the sand around and let me down deeper.

After five hundred miles or so of this sort of moving along, with a day's hunt for buffalo meat, we were opposite Fort Laramie. The hunt referred to occurred where we descried a small herd of buffalo in and near an opening in the sand hills on our right and near a mile away. A few men and I among them, took our guns and started to get around them. Up the hills went and became seen. The herd took flight up the small valleys and some of the men in pursuit. I had snowed the river ran east and west, and by going south we should come in sight of the river and moving trains. John Bull is proverbially obstinate and he kept on his way, south east. I took the sun for my guide and was soon alone. It might be a half hour or an hour when the South Fork of the Platte and soon the North and the moving trains of teams and wagons were in view in the distance. As the sun sank in the western sky I came on the road, passed train after train till I came to our camp. There the balance of the company was aroused and as usual arose on another hill and stood in full view. The herd took flight up the small valleys and some of the men in pursuit. I had enough of the sort of fun and with an Englishman turned south for camp. The route was the sun. After awhile the Englishman took a cold course south east. I told him the river ran east and west, and by going south we should come in sight of the river and moving trains. John Bull is proverbially obstinate and he kept on his way, south east. I took the sun for my guide and was soon alone. It might be a half hour or an hour when the South Fork of the Platte and soon the North and the moving trains of teams and wagons were in view in the distance. As the sun sank in the western sky I came on the road, passed train after train till I came to our camp. There the balance of the men came in, bringing buffalo meat on a horse that one man had the precaution to take with him. They had chased the buffalo several miles. They gave me a share of the meat. It was the first fresh meat I had seen since leaving civilization.
the Laramie River or rather creek, on a level plain and perhaps a mile from the Platte. This creek is a confluent of the Platte and is on its right. We were on the left of the Platte. There was a sort of a ferry boat on this we hauled our wagons, driving the cattle into the water and they swam across. The river was but a few rods wide and apparently pretty deep and to travel quite rapid. Having crossed, the cattle were left to get whatever grass they could find and we enjoyed a day of rest and looking around. The fort was a board stockade with sentry boxes on the corners, a broad gateway for teams, and a large dwelling house inside for men and officers. A regiment of white men could take it with ease, but it was a pretty good defence against Indians such as they were away in the wilderness five hundred miles from the Mississippi and armed mostly with bows and arrows.

It is eleven o'clock. I am tired and will stop for the present.

December 23, 1894. Saturday.

It is ten o'clock at night and I resume. Am rather unwell and have been for a month, but I go to the office regularly about noon and stay two or three hours. On publication day stay till the packages or bundles of papers are made up and sent to the post office.

After a night camping near Fort Laramie, with country feed for cattle, we started on our way. I had read Fremont's book and had it with me and knew what to expect. Not so with most of the men. In a few minutes the road led us into the sage brush and sand. I saw many faces blank at sight of the prospect before them, but Capt. Compton and others kept on and we were soon into a wall of sage brush and sage brush all along till late in the afternoon when we stopped at a small spring near the road. Here was some grass and the animals were refreshed. Thus it continued for some days. One of these days we stopped at night. Grass pretty good but no water. In the evening a heavy rain fell and the lack was supplied. Deer Creek was our next camping place of any note. A day there. A quantity of wood was burned for coal for the blacksmith and some wagon tires reset. Here in the high banks of the valley coal was cropping out in abundance, but not good for blacksmith's use.

After a day's rest we crossed the creek on a raft left by previous teams and were on our way as before; sand and sage brush the distinctive features of the country. Note: A mistake. We crossed the Platte, North Fork, and after that saw no more of the Platte. In the afternoon we stopped at a little before sunset and set up a big blaze. This gave warmth to the hands of the men. We ascended the rock from its west side where it was low enough. It was ten o'clock at night and I resume. Am rather unwell and have been for a month, but I go to the office regularly about noon and stay two or three hours. On publication day stay till the packages or bundles of papers are made up and sent to the post office.

The night was cool almost cold, and the men in advance collected sage brush at intervals and set it on fire. The brush, although alive, was so dry as tinder and so little rain had fallen that these and the other stacks were set on fire as desired. At one of these fires the train stopped. Coffee was warmed and breakfast eaten. The cattle had a little grass and water brought in the wagon and the march was resumed. For the first time in the journey the teams scattered along the road, each one desirous of getting to Green River as soon as possible. Some were a

and plenty of grass in it. The storm was brief and we corked our supper and started on the long march. As we crossed half a mile deep. Nothing worthy of notice occurred until we struck the Sweetwater River at Independence Rock. We stopped a little and I ascended the rock from its west side, where it was low enough. It was ten o'clock at night and I resume. Am rather unwell and have been for a month, but I go to the office regularly about noon and stay two or three hours. On publication day stay till the packages or bundles of papers are made up and sent to the post office.

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miles ahead of us and some miles behind. About the middle of the afternoon the road turned to the left and a long descent led us into the valley of Green River. Some distance further and the fork was reached. I jumped into the wagon and the cattle plunged into the river and drank their fill.

CROSSING over we unyoked and turned loose. There was scanty grass and willow bushes. Next morning yoked up for a nine mile drive to Fontanellia Valley. Reached there and turned the cattle loose for 24 hours. The grass was a foot high and luxuriant. Some white men, squaw men, lived there, and told there was no danger from the Indians and so we were at night. A day passed and a night and we moved on over a rather wild region. We knew we were nearing the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Finally after a few days travel at ten miles in the short September or early October days, we knew were at the foot of the last steep ascent and camped for the night. None of the men, the road was what they called the range. Reached the summit of the pass a large lake a half mile or so away on our right, and from that time the way was down hill for seven days, I think, and we struck the mining camp on the route. Our journey of five and a half months was ended.

Last Thursday evening, Frank, after urging me to continue this autobiography, left for Philadelphia.

To give my California experience of four years and four months is something that comes in too much of ups and downs, too much of failures and disappointments to be wholly pleasant. It was the same life as with most others. The reports sent east had been largely colored, or at least the successful only had been reported. It did not take me long to see that an industrious man and economical could, in the long run, do pretty well and stand a chance of doing better. As out of my early partners expressed it in a letter to his brother in New York, Gold mining is like clams gathering. You will always get a few, and sometimes a great many. So we could always get a little gold by digging and washing and sometimes a great deal. The great deal was the rarer case.

Where we struck the first camp, as above noted, the first impulse was to look to the animals and grass seemed rather scanty. The rainy season had not commenced, but old grass served for the nonce. We camped as before, among a few scattered wagons, tents of those who kept the eating stand, a pleasant looking man, kindly acted as auctioneer. I forget what I received but it was satisfactory, and three or four who were with me on the long journey were going to Sacramento City with me next morning. They kindly offered me a mule to carry my baggage. It was not necessary but I accepted. A blanket and a carpet bag only was all I reserved from sale, on these served my mother to write in summer on direct to me at Sacramento City.

Well, that is, I and party of three or four who crossed the plains with me, reached Sacramento City towards dusk. Just on the outskirts of the city of scattered tents and a few shanties we were about to pass a large sycamore tree when we saw camped under it a middle aged man, also a young man, and all three had been with us on the long journey. Here we stopped for the night. I asked the woman how she liked the journey. "Oh, it was hard," she said and looked it. The rainy season had not commenced but November was close at hand. We prepared our supper in the usual way, talked all evening, spread our blankets on the ground and slept soundly till morning. Morning came and, after breakfast, I went for the post office. It was in a board shanty, found it after some inquiry, and asked the postmaster for letters. I stood by his side as he shewed and grabbed at one with the name of Booth. I had written my name as X. Booth.
The postmaster held it back and showed it had a different given name. I was greatly disappointed of course. Five months from home, after a journey across deserts and through uncertainties, I found a route unknown save by Fremont's book of explorations only a very few miles before; and wife and Tom, seven years old, and Hattie, the baby of one year, all left behind, I had requested wife to write me once or twice and direct to Sacramento City. I now wrote my first letter to her and mailed it. Know I would have no answer for at least two months or more as the mail steamers made only monthly trips, later semi-monthly.

What to do was the question. The young man with me engaged to drive a mule team, one of two teams, for another, to go up the Sacramento River about 150 miles to the diggings, and I agreed to accompany him. All around and the rainy season set in. No more help here. The rain was not heavy and we kept on, sleeping at night in a tent we carried. Rain every day, but light. After a week or so we camped as usual. The miles were let loose on a small island in the river. Heavy rain covered with water and morning found the mules gone. The jip was up. Owner of teams went for help of to look for mules. I do not know the result but turned about and started south. Had set many teams going south every day. Kept on the road till nearly night. Then turned off to the left for a range of forest. Knew there was a road, had come by it, that would lead me to a couple of adobe houses, and beyond that, a few miles, was a town of Fremont. Reached the timber. It was cloudy and slightly rainy. Started to cross the timber for the road running through it. After a half hour or so found myself where I had entered. Ran my eyes among the trees and tree tops and tried again. Enedis as before. No use. No company. Took off carpet bag and tree tops and tried again. Found as before. No use. No company. The mules were let loose on a small island in the river. Growing dusk. Took off carpet bag and running around and brought in a lot of trout. Repeating this three or four times till the night had enough for breakfast, then gathered up and went out. In a few seconds a dozen or so Indian men and boys, entirely naked, emerged from the fire and signified a wish to stop over night. They, Indians, readily assented, and I took a seat, drew out of the bag a few hard-tacks, offered one to each. They accepted and gave me the leg of a deer they had roasted and were eating. Soon all but one left. While my seat was open I took out a small bag of bread for breakfast, for bread I had brought. The Indian understood the use of pills and at once put out his hand for some of them. I gave him a dozen or more having no idea of ever using them to use on myself. His wife and some six children came in, he questioned me and mentioned the fact I had slept on the floor, hard earth, enjoy the fire, and left for the other house. I slept soundly. It was the first days of November and the Sierra Nevada range along the east were covered with snow, that is, on the summits. Awakening I arose. All was still. Rain had stopped. Went to the edge of the timber to take a survey. Down the timber, over a half mile, was a smoke. Picked up my baggage and set out for that aim of civilization. It proved to be a small encampment for the night, of a wagon team and three or four men that had been coming south, like myself, the day before. They had kept on the road from whence I had turned off. Their wet blankets were hanging before the fire to dry, and they proved their example there and soon was at ease among them, for I must here remark that of all my California life I found the men good natured, civil, and kindly. We were all much alike. All away from home and all knew what it was to be away from home.

By this time I had learned that gold digging was with many a man a matter of chance. He told what he had heard of locations and it was of value to the hearer, for as well I had little opportunity for learning, having just arrived in the country. He and I together took our way, same as the wagon had taken and came into the road I started for the night previous. One day went on and we thought the two adobe houses on the bank of the Sacramento. As Fremont was some miles away yet I concluded to stop for the night. The young man went on. The mules of Indians and Fremont was murdered. I concluded to stay for the night. I had no fear of Indians and Fremont had stated the California Indians ware tame. The door of one of the adobe houses being open I entered, made the salutation stern to the three or four men sitting around the fire and signified a wish to stop over night. They, Indians, readily assented, and I took a seat, drew out of the bag a few hard-tacks, offered one to each. They accepted and gave me the leg of a deer they had roasted and were eating. Soon all but one left. While my seat was open I took out a small bag of bread for breakfast, for bread I had brought. The Indian understood the use of pills and at once put out his hand for some of them. I gave him a dozen or more having no idea of ever using them to use on myself. His wife and some six children came in, he questioned me and mentioned the fact I had slept on the floor, hard earth, enjoy the fire, and left for the other house. I slept soundly. It was the first days of November and the Sierra Nevada range along the east were covered with snow, that is, on the summits. Awakening I arose. All was still. Rain had stopped. Went to the edge of the timber to take a survey. Down the timber, over a half mile, was a smoke. Picked up my baggage and set out for that aim of civilization. It proved to be a small encampment for the night, of a wagon team and three or four men that had been coming south, like myself, the day before. They had kept on the road from whence I had turned off. Their wet blankets were hanging before the fire to dry, and they proved their example there and soon was at ease among them, for I must here remark that of all my California life I found the men good natured, civil, and kindly. We were all much alike. All away from home and all knew what it was to be away from home.
after a walk of two or three hours. It was a town of a few shanties and tents, a boarding house, shanty, a couple of stores where were a limited supply of groceries and eatables brought from around the Horn, that is, the Atlantic ports such as New York, Boston, etc., and we were all sociable and had some enjoyment in our strange mode of life. The Sacramento River, on the banks of which the town was situated, was very high, in fact it was brim full and a levee, a foot high, was hastily constructed to keep the water out. In two days there was a fall and no further danger. Here the scurvy broke out on my legs from so many months living on salt provisions. It was not very bad, but caused some lame walking. Among the provisions sold I saw a bunch of sour kraut and ate it ravenously, a butter plateful and a couple of eggs. I got an axe and cut a few cords of wood, sold to a business man at four dollars a cord, he to do all the hauling. A stern wheel steamboat ran daily from Sacramento to Marysville, at the mouth of Feather River, filled with miners coming or going. It always stopped at Fremont and always had a newspaper agent on board who sold New York papers two or four weeks old, each paper selling for twenty-five cents. By this means I was able to learn of the principal events of the east and in the world at large. To get hold of a newspaper was a great treat after so long silence and being so long shut out of the world. Of course only the most important events were printed, for the New York Tribune, Herald and one or two other papers printed special California editions. California papers came at first once a month, for only one steamer then left New York monthly, and later twice a month. The papers had not then grown beyond four pages to an issue, nor did they enlarge during my residence in the land of gold. Fremont contained less than a hundred inhabitants. It was a settlement, of course in my blankets, and the general dampness, I found trouble, soreness, in the lungs. At once I applied to a man who, with his wife, kept a boarding house and was admitted. They were from Illinois and had with them a deaf mute daughter eight or ten years of age. This was the only girl I ever saw in California. I told them to go back to Illinois and place her in the school at Jacksonville and they thought they would. The man and wife were a kindly couple, at my request and I desiring nothing more, the woman made me a cup of coffee and I sat on the floor in my blankets, by the stove all night. Better in the morning and after that had a bed and took my meals with the family. In a week the man sickened and died. The woman broke up housekeeping and I never knew what became of them after that. I regret that I cannot recall his name. In all my residence in California this was the only house I lived in and had a woman in it.

I was growing impatient to be in the mines and trying my luck with the general multitude. The water had fallen enough for men to work in the mines and the river bottoms. I found kindred spirits and just as I had concluded to take the next steamer for Marysville a friend informed me of a row boat going up and asked me to take it, help row and go free. (Note: The boat was a row boat for four oars and had a sail. Wind was light or none and the sail used when enough wind. As night approached the wind became heavy. Too heavy for safety. Went ashore and waited a few hours. Wind went down and we went on.) I accepted, reached Marysville next day. Shouldered my pack, carpet sack and blankets, and with a half dozen men, started on foot up the banks of Feather River. This river is about the size of the Buffalo at Anamosa. It is midnight and I will stop till another time.

November 3rd, 1856.

Sunday night, eleven o'clock. On the 25th (Oct.) we received a telegram from Frank, at Mount Airy, Philadelphia, announcing the birth of Edmund Booth Junior. This makes me eight grandchildren, besides two girls of Harriett in Texas, and who are dead. They were named Laura, of 18 years, and Emily or, I think, nine.

To resume my journey, we reached the mines on Feather River and looked around a few minutes. Engaged work for a couple of men from New Jersey. Good men, ambitious, intelligent. The work was on the river bottom or flat and but two feet above the water. One of the men worked the rocker and the rest of us, three or four, dug and wheeled the dirt to the water where I worked the pump to wash the dirt. The rest carried the water about two miles to the rocker. Then the day closed we went to supper. The two owners had built a shanty and kept a cook. We lived comfortably, each man receiving eight dollars a day and free board. The joke was we received the pay of a congressman and paid out nothing for board and lodgings.

Here I stayed two or three weeks. Then the claim gave out. Did not pay expenses of working and the two owners gave up the work. I had over a hundred dollars in gold dust in my pocket and concluded to go to Sacramento City for letters from home. It was February and not a word from home since I left there in May.

So I started for Marysville, at the junction of the Feather River with the Sacramento. Went alone and on foot, back on back as usual. It was but a few hours walk. On the way met a team of two or three yoke of oxen and wagon going up the mines. As I was about to pass I noticed the driver looking at my face and over my dress curiously as if in doubt. Then he held out his hand. It
was Clark of Monticello and who had been with me on the long journey across the plains. We talked a few minutes and went on. This Clark had been postmaster at Monticello and had settled there with Varrell in 1837 or 1838.

I reached Marysville. I think I stayed there that night. Learned that a man wanted hands to row a boat to Sacramento City. He proposed and I accepted. In all we were eight or ten men. Started in the morning. At noon landed at a wayside inn. All got dinner, paying a half dollar each, and went on. Reached Sacramento City in the evening. Dark and no sheriff. Bank high. One crawled up, took the end of an oar, the men, one by one, took the other end and pulled themselves up. No electric, gas or other lights save from the few windows of the few shanties scattered along the streets. The city had been burned more than Frémont and the only sidewalks were a few boats bottom up, flat bottoms. Over these we picked our way and finally found a sort of hotel and put up for the night, every man sleeping in his own blanket, if he had one. The weather was that of May at home. In the morning I hunted up the post office the first thing. Found a letter from wife and read it eagerly. Learned that all were well at home and was tolerably satisfied. In fact was thankful to hear from home at last.

A day in the city. The man who owned the boat met me and offered free passage if I would help him up the river again. I declined, thought I would strike out for myself at some of the southern mines on the American or other river, as I learned much of these. Then rain commenced and I waited two days. It was a California rain, not so heavy as steady and continuous. The Sierra Nevadas were a long north and south line of white against the eastern sky. It was snow as always from November till May, and the valleys below green and everything growing as in summer in the northern states, but, as yet, I had found nothing eatable growing except grapes and these only along the banks of the Sacramento in spots.

It is one o’clock, morning of Nov, 4th and I will stop. Tomorrow, Tuesday 5th, will bring the Iowa election. F. W. Drake is Republican candidate for governor and Matt Parrott for Lieutenant governor. Matt was a partner of mine on the Furanka nearly four years ago and returned to Coloma. The other man and I stayed and found nothing eatable except free passage if I would help him up the river again. After varying places for two or three days the landlord became discouraged and returned to Coloma. The other man and I stayed and found nothing eatable except gold by the rocker hyphhffh was slow work. We boarded at the leading hotels and lodgings were two of 35, a week and this was the case there and in San Francisco during the gold rush. Finally the miner with whom I was a partner from New York, Long Island, I started for Coloma where gold was first discovered. It was 60 miles distant. At night came we stopped at an expiring fire, a big log still burning, left by previous campers, ate our supper of crackers, lay down in blankets and slept undisturbed. Morning came and we breakfasted and went on. Stopped at the only house, a shanty, on the whole road from Sacramento to the mines, 60 miles. Going in, for we saw it was a house of entertainment, I was surprised to find the owners were the father and mother of the couple. I had met under the big sycamore tree on first reaching Sacramento about the first of November. To the two appeared to be between 50 and 60 years of age. She looked somewhat cross and churlish as he did all along the route, and his wife much better. I asked her how she liked California, and she gave me a vehement and decided "No," while the old man shook his head and looked savage. It was the third woman I had seen in California and she was a two or three American women after­wards. It was a state of men, all men and no women or children. Of course no schools, baseball or anything indicative of home life save the miner’s cabins scattered here and there for miles along the foot­hills of the Sierras.

On the second day we reached Coloma, put up at the only hotel in the place, a big two story, kept by a big hearted Missouri man who, like many of us, had left his wife behind and come for gold. At a little distance stood the skeleton of the Gold Hill and below it the race in which Marshall discovered the gold that brought about the settlement of California. A flat spread out on one side, many acres. On this many men were working, and it was pick, shovel and rocker. The Long Island man had brought or bought a sheet iron rocker, and next day the landlord joined us and we three went to work on the flat. We made a few dollars a day, two or five. It was unsatisfactory, and after a week or so we agreed to go over to Placerville, originally called "Hangtown." On one morn­ning the Long Islander shouldered his rocker and I my Engage­ment, and after a walk of a few miles we were in Placerville, a straggling village of log cabins. A little inquiry found no sole owners of a cabin, commodious and comfortable that had been abandoned by its builders. After trying various places for two or three days the landlord became discouraged and returned to Coloma. The other man and I stayed and found better luck but it was not great. For two or three weeks we worked two or three miles from two or three hotels to business and long term and sluices had not come into use. Washing gold by the rocker hyphhffh was slow work. We boarded at the only hotel in the place at $18 a week and slept in our cabin. My companion was an intelligent and genial man. After two or three weeks I grew tired of this slow success and concluded to go further south to Sonora, in Tuolumne County, 60 miles east of Stockton.
December 3d, 1895.

I resume. It is near eleven o’clock, evening. Not a long time for writing. For Stockton. No way of going save on foot, and the way generally level. Packed blanket and carpet bag, suspended from shoulders, and started. First day out set two Chincans going the same way. They carried their baggage, coffee pot, kettle, etc., suspended from the ends of poles resting on their shoulders. We all three walked leisurely along. At night came to an open shanty, a sort of stopping place for goods, lumber and teams and no owner visible, but a team had come in. The driver appeared intelligent and good natured. I ate my supper. The Chinese cooked and ate theirs, making tea, lay down and slept in perfect security. Morning came. Got breakfast. Tea again. Went on. No buildings and met nobody till reaching Stockton late in afternoon. Small city. Bought some crackers and went out a mile or so. It was a city like Sacramento, a city of a few scattering tents and a few trees. At night I camped under a sycamore tree and a few trees stood here and there. Took supper. The Chinese offered me tea and boiled rice. Took the tea, but one taste of the rice was enough. They had cooked it in large black boilers over an open fire. On one occasion I had told them I was going to Sonora and they said by signs, “We Too.” I walked at my usual natural gait, and they at theirs. I invariably unconnectedly passed far ahead, stopped and waited for them to come up. On reaching me they both tell me in urgent signs to not go ahead but to keep by them. I inferred they were afraid of being attacked and robbed, for we passed now and then a traveller or team coming from the mines. On one occasion I met a Mexican. Kept an open eye on him as he went about. He looked hungry, but the Chinese hunters, who made the sign of the cross, pointed slightly upward and then to me. I interpreted it to mean, “The Holy Virgin bless you.” It was rather a pleasant adventure and I sat down to see what he would do on meeting me. He came up, said “We Too.” I walked ahead a little way, and they came up they solemnized in their way for going so fast. It was evident they regarded me as a protection to them. The next day we reached Sonora and I lost track of that night. It is a quicker to 12 o’clock and I will stop for tonight.

December 22, 1895.

It is forefather’s day. Mild weather. Little rain or snow has fallen here this month, but the newspapers report heavy snows further south and west, and overflow of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, with snow 10 to 12 inches west of town.

I found Sonora, a town of a few hundred miners, living in shanties along a single street and these mostly used as store buildings. A few log or slab shanties here and there, and adobe or two small brick dwellings, the residence of a doctor and his family. Two large gulches were here and being worked and plenty rooms for more men. I had some little experience already in mining and set out to work at once. While looking for a mine, I went into abandoned diggings on vacant ground I picked up a lump of gold that the rain had uncovered, perhaps worth a dollar. It had been thrown out of a hole with the dirt. I had to drive my horse and mule to carry the dirt a half mile away and it paid very well. At another time I worked alone. Piled up dirt. Hired the same man to haul it to water and found it profitable. This did not last. Thought I would try a place called “Yankee Hill,” where water was better. Had a little success at first and decided to work there and profitably, my only anxiety being about home. At first reaching Sonora I asked the express agent to look for letters for me at the Sacramento post office. He replied, “The Sacramento postmaster is a fool and will deliver no letters save to the persons addressed.” This would require two days in 150 miles travel and I concluded to wait till home letters came to Sonora. That postmaster was soon reformed out.

February 23, 1896.

Today your mother’s birthday and she reached her 79th year. The grip or influenza three years ago, wrecked her, or the doctor did through the agency of his drugs. She is not able to perform the usual housework except in a slow way and that only the lightest. We had a hired girl all last summer and until January. She left because of ill health and wife and I have since boarded at Tom’s on the next (Ford) street. My house is on Booth street and nothing between the two houses save the lawn and the alley. It is eleven o’clock at night and I resume. Always I have exchange papers or magazines, daily received, and abundance of reading matter that attracts my attention. These draw me off from writing autobiography.

In and the various localities around, Sonora I stayed about four years. Life in all these localities was much the same, one day, week or month was much like another and it is needless to go into particulars. At first I used the rocker and as the rainy season came the rocker was discarded for the “long Tom” or sluice as more expedients in work. After my first year in California I had no more to do with rockers. After the first summer and winter here men organized and a large brick dwelling, the residence of a doctor and his family. Two large gulches were here and being worked and plenty room for more men. I had some little experience already in mining and set out to work at once. While looking for a mine, I went into abandoned diggings on vacant ground I picked up a lump of gold that the rain had uncovered, perhaps worth a dollar. It had been thrown out of a hole with the dirt. I had to drive my horse and mule to carry the dirt a half mile away and it paid very well. At another time I worked alone. Piled up dirt. Hired the same man to haul it to water and found it profitable. This did not last. Thought I would try a place called “Yankee Hill,” where water was better. Had a little success at first and decided to work there and profitably, my only anxiety being about home. At first reaching Sonora I asked the express agent to look for letters for me at the Sacramento post office. He replied, “The Sacramento postmaster is a fool and will deliver no letters save to the persons addressed.” This would require two days in 150 miles travel and I concluded to wait till home letters came to Sonora. That postmaster was soon reformed out.

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ized companies of a few each and dug ditches, miles in length, from the river up the mountains and brought water to the many diggings below and a few or many miles away. For the use of this water each "long Tom", that is, the men working it, paid the water company three dollars a month in the summer or dry season. The mines could be worked only where there was water in streams or where water was brought through these ditches. Hence the dry season stopped work on many good claims. Hence the dry season stopped work on many good claims. The dry season required a heavy blow of the pick to penetrate the surface a half inch. When wet because of the wet season or from the ditches along the hill sides, it was easy enough.

August 16, 1896.

We expect Frank, his wife Marion, and the baby Edmund, Jr., on Monday of this week. They are now in Monroe, Michigan, with Marion's relatives. I must hurry up and close this account of my California life.

At last writing I was working at points around Sonora in Tuolumne County and had been there at work for nearly three years. In January or February a letter came from wife urging me to return home. It was very urgent and I concluded to return and no further delay. I was then working a good place at Camp Seco, Spanish for dry camp. As partners a fellow named Harry Paul and a fellow named Herman and perhaps one or two Frenchmen, I could never determine which, and thought he did not know himself. He was wholly uneducated but a smart fellow and a good worker. Then not at work he was a great story teller, most of his stories being on the gold mines in California. He came to Camp Seco from New York where he had French friends. I could not induce him to enter the N.Y. school on his return. He was ashamed of his age, being over thirty. The ground we were working was paying well. That is, we would spend a day in stripping off the top of say four feet wide, six feet long and three or five feet deep. Next day turn the water from the ditch into our Long Tom and dig and throw in the lower dirt till we reached rock. Then take a large two feet. We paid $3 a day for water and took out $10 to $20 each day we washed the dirt. Two of Noyli's partners before I joined had been pupils of the Philadelphia School. They were taken by the Australian gold stories and left for that country. I have forgotten their names. I ought to have remained there a few weeks longer and given the Mississippi river a chance to free itself from ice, but did not give that serious thought, being anxious to return home. So, proceeding to San Francisco by stage and steamer, I waited, with a few friends on the same course for home, a few days till the steamer, semi-monthly, sailed. We were twelve days at sea and reached port in due time.Crossed over to Virginia Bay in Lake Nicaragua on mulberry. We were in all 500 passengers. Took two steamers to foot of island and there changed to two steamers and then back to San Juan river and thence to its mouth on the Atlantic. Saw tropical vegetation and many curiosities on the way.

It is midnight. I am tired and will defer further for perhaps a day or two.

November 15, 1896.

Last Tuesday Edmund Le Clerc, a grandson, who is attending the Iowa State Agricultural College at Ames, arrived here to pass his first vacation. He is oldest son of my daughter Harriett. He sleeps in the large room upstairs and, like myself and wife, boards at Tom's, on the next (Ford) street in rear of our house on Booth street. The two streets are parallel.

The day or two have lengthened to three months and it is now Nov. 15, Sunday evening. The growing infirmities of age bid me go on and finish my journal of California life. Little is to be said under that head, for I had decided to return home without further delay. We remained at the Atlantic crossing with all the arrangements for an accident or detention. Waited some hours. Two large sea steamers were in the bay. One was for New Orleans and the other for New York. A large boat took us to the vessel for New Orleans, and another did the same for those bound for New York. The latter sailed first out of the bay, ours next. We headed north and the other northeast and was in sight for some hours. The weather was pleasant all along since leaving California, but in day or two something of a gale came on us. Steaming at the ship's side I was and the huge side wheel lifted out of the water with every rise of that side caused by wind and water. It was a side wheel steam, for the modern wheel or propeller had not been invented. In the evening the pilot, (he and I had been friends) pointed out the light of the lighthouse at the eastern extremity of the island of Cuba and today that island is fighting Spain for its independence. No one knows how it will end but the prospect for Cuban independence looks most favorable. Another night case. The gale abated and I am a sailor at the east head speaking.
to the pilot below. The latter turned the ship northwestward and soon
I saw the lights in the north. We were now steering for the north
of the river, which we had left long ago off and on. In the morn­ing
I found we were steaming up the big river, passed the forts,
Phillips and Jackson on either side, which cut something of a fig­
ure in the war of the rebellion. It was on this voyage up the river
that I got lots of newspapers showing new strife between north and
south. I told a couple of southern men of my California acquaint­
ance that if the south wished to go out of the Union, to go and be hanged.
They laughed but showed no anger. Told them I was tired of strife
and constant threats and complaints. This was in the spring of 1844
and the rebellion was seven years later.

On the voyage as in California people readily made acquaintance
and friends. Good nature prevailed. We were all going home. Reaching
New Orleans the crowds scattered. A wagonload of us were con­
veyed to a hotel, name forgotten, Two dollars a day. Next day some
who were bound north walked along the long line of river steam­
eras for a while studying advertisements for dates of departure for St. Louis.
Found one advertised to leave at two o’clock afternoon and engaged
passage, paying twenty dollars for stateroom, board and passage. Was
on board at the time but did not leave. After noon papers advertised
it would sail next morning at nine o’clock. Then next morning papers
said two o’clock p.m. and it continued for three days. The object
probably of promises and delay was to procure more passengers and
freight. We had had our regular meals however and good meals they
were and so did not grumble much. Finally when we lost all faith in
promises in the papers, the boat drew out and started up stream. We
saw others also on the way. It was a pleasant trip. When some dis­
tance from the boat grounded, we found too heavily loaded for
the state of the water. A passenger boat a mile below and follow­
ing us, was signalled and came alongside, took off such as wished at
four dollars a head. I went with them for there was no knowing when
I might reach St. Louis, and here I wished I had stayed in California
another month. The river above was closed by ice and only one steamer
was advertised to try to break through the next day for Davenport,
Iowa. It was in the closing days of February.

I took passage on that one steamer. It was easy enough for the
first few miles. After that it was pushing the boat and cutting away
some rocks, breaking out and rushing in again, until about three or
four miles below Keokuk, Iowa. There the contest was given up and we came
to land. A dozen of us went ashore, kindled a fire for comfort while
two men went inland on the hunt for a team to take the party forward to
town. This came after some time and we all packed into the two
horse wagon and reached Keokuk and the hotel in the course of the night.
Next day took conveyance to Burlington and thence by stage coach for

Iowa City, there being no other way to reach home, for it was before
the days of railroads in Iowa or anywhere this side of Lake Michigan.
Iowa City, then a moderate looking place and no university as now,
was reached, and next morning I took stage for Anamosa via Cedar
Rapids, then a small straggling village. I do not recollect that it
had more than one building, a two-story frame and there I got dinner.
Mounted the stage again and this time sat outside with the driver,
wishing to get a good view of the country while approaching home.

March 3, 1898.

I resume after an interval of nearly a year and a half. It is
time to finish this long story of one’s life.

The mother of the family, I should say your mother, for I am
writing at the request of my children and yet in speaking to them
I always called her “mother”. She died Jan. 25th last, and I now live
alone in the same house, 168 Booth street. It is a residence street,
well graded boulevard from Main to two blocks south of First
street. In this house, a brick one story, I live alone since your
mother’s death, my only living companion a black cat. Meals are
brought me daily from Tom’s family living on next street, Field,
and nearly opposite, only an alley and gardens between us. Mother has
been dead over five weeks and I still feel lonely and that, without
her, the house is desolate. She and I have lived together over 57
years. I shall reach my 88th year in August and she wanted but a
little over a month of 81. I am a natural reader and care more for
books and the daily papers than for the whims and gossip that
the world delights in. By living alone I also escape much annoyance from
other people and their curious notions. My mother’s father, Thomas
Wyze, lived till over 90. I do not expect to live to that age and may
probably die suddenly, having twice fallen unconscious to the floor
about fifteen months ago. Winter is pushing along and when good
weather comes I may take my meals at Tom’s house. Last Christmas
Frank and Hattle were with us, the first for a few days, and the sec­
ond for a month. It was a great comfort to mother. She died eight
days after Hattle left to return to Texas. A limited ticket cut her
visit short.

I have made some clippings from the newspaper notices called out
by your mother’s death and which possibly may be read by the children
of a later generation. Have placed them in the big family Bible as
the safest place and may also be found in the volume of the Eureka
of this year. A photograph was taken as she lay in her coffin in
Tom’s parlor and another in the church after the coffin was removed.
For the last few weeks her limbs were selected. And for the last few weeks could not walk at all. Had to be lifted
in all cases. After Hattle and Frank left she grew weak more rapidly
and her death seemed without a struggle. She had many times expressed
the wish to die and end her long spell of sickness. To quote Festus:

"She said she wished to die and so she died;
There was no discord. It was music ceased".