June 2018

Typescript of Thomas Eyre Booth's Remembrances of Father (Edmund Booth Deaf Pioneer and California Gold Miner)

Thomas Eyre Booth

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/grcc

Recommended Citation


This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Americana at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gold Rush Life by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgibney@pacific.edu.
THOMAS HYRF BOOTH’S REMEMBERANCES OF FATHER (EDMUND BOOTH)

By urgent request of my brother, Mr. Frank W. Booth, I have written some historical incidents supplementary to father’s autobiography.

In father’s story of his life up to 1854 he omits many interesting details that have come to me from various times and from other sources. A sense of modesty, no doubt, prevented him from placing such matters concerning himself on record. I had a similar feeling of reluctance as to the recording of many reminiscences of father, and mother also, because it involved more or less concerning myself. However, after long delay and considerable urging by my brother, I have written some recollections, many of them of course mere incidentals, of interest only to our family, beginning with father’s arrival at home from California, though many incidents ante-date that event.

Frank’s letter below, dated Omaha, Nov. 19, 1933, and another of Dec. 12, 1933, explain the situation as he views it, and some of his reasons for taking this step, and my reason—or rather excuse—for complying with his request:

Dear Bro. Tom:

What you say of getting matters relating to the family into a scrap book to be preserved I strongly approve of and I hope you will do it. But it reminds me of something I have had in mind to suggest and urge—that you write a biographical sketch of father covering the period 1854-1905. That is, the period since his return from California up to the time of his death. His splendid autobiography, that he took such pains to write, ends abruptly with his arrival home, I assume that he thought that was all we children wished for—that we would know the rest of the story as we were ourselves a part of it. But it should be written, and by you who know it best, being a much larger part of it than anyone else. I have in your recollections much, very much, of personal knowledge and of interesting details that do not now exist outside your memory. We shall all prize it, and likewise will our children and grandchildren. Indeed, I think it will be prized even more than what father himself wrote as it will cover the part of his life of, if not greatest interest, greatest accomplishment. I have it in mind to type the autobiography in triplicate for our three families, and to include your contribution.

Dear Bro. Tom:

I am glad you think well of my suggestion that you continue the family history started by father in his autobiography. Yes,
side of the house without asking any questions, I tagging pret­
ty closely at his heels, and I turned the corner just in time to see mother flap of the back door and throw her arms around
his neck and kiss him.

Hattie was not a year old when father went to California
and of course did not remember anything about him. I recall
that in one of her letters in later years she said that she and a
mother saw a man pass the east window and that she felt terribly
scandalized when mother's strange performance set her wondering
gaze! It is not remarkable that the six-year old was mentally
in a rather frazzled condition. But mother knew!

Father sat right down in the kitchen and fingers were flying
in an instant. I recollect that mother asked him how much he
brought home. Knowing that the children's eyes were taking in
everything, he simply replied: "Enough to be comfortable." I
never did know definitely, though it was not difficult to approxi­
mate the amount by his payments for the farm, a yoke of oxen,
wagon, and so on, with something to meet ordinary expenses for a
somewhat indefinite period. I have heard father say at different
times that his mining success was better than the average. Mining
is a lottery and many a day's hard work brought little—perhaps
no returns. His best "find," if I remember correctly, was a nug­
et worth three hundred dollars, or thereabouts, and others of
less value. Every miner had a partner, perhaps two, and I have
often thought that father, strictly honest himself and unusually
unsuspicious, may have been cheated by dishonest partners—no
noting how often or to what extent.

But I am getting a little way from my story. After feasting
my eyes on father's and mother's happy faces for a brief time, I
was seized with the natural impulse to run over and tell "gramma"
father had come home. Of course she and uncle Henry and Julia
were greatly pleased—overjoyed, in fact. It was fortunate that
father did not prolong his stay beyond five years in California,
for grandma died of appoplexy in June or July following, at the
age of 84. Uncle Henry lived in a little house on the adjoining
five acres east, where Keefe's brick block was afterwards built.
Father, you may be certain, did not delay too long in going over
to see his mother and the rest.

HOW MOTHER AND I CARRIED ON.

"Home at last" were wonderfully welcome words to me. Mother
bought this five acres from J. H. Fisher in 1851 for $90 and im­
mediately made arrangements with John Handy to put up a dwelling
for $180. That is as I remember it. We moved in that fall. I
always felt that at twenty-one, being the father of five of age this was doubled and quadrupled as time passed. The wood
to be cut with an axe. Probably there was not a wood saw or
a saw buck in town. The nearest well was at Pratt Skinner's, on
the hill, away beyond uncle Henry's, and the next nearest was at
Dr. Sales', at the corner turning from Main street toward Fisher­
ville, a half mile distant. In the winter time I had to haul ice
on my little瞒d wagon from Farm creek, a half mile east—often
bitter cold and the road snowy, or worse—lumpy, from alternate
thawing and freezing. No overcoats or overshirts then for boys.
My first overcoat mother brought to me at the printing office
down town in the fall of 1868 or '59. It cost five dollars and
was a pretty fair garment for warmth and wear, and of course I
was very proud of it.

No sooner had mother attended to the building of a rail
fence around the five acres than she began to plan for a garden.
That meant the cutting of a big patch of hazel brush and the
digging up of numberless scrub oaks of all sizes. Finally L. W.
Pertins (deaf) was hired for the latter job. But an axe for the
hazel brush cutting was a dismal failure, and not a brush scythe
to be had. Mother came out to encourage me. She had large vis­
ions of the future, and I remember how picturequely she signed
it out, that sometime a man would come and take one thousand
dollars out of his pocket—please imagine her oratorical air—
and hand it over to us for that five acres!

That seemed to me the cap-sheaf of absurdities—perhaps one
of mother's schemes to keep me cutting brush with an axe! I
finally persuaded her to let me try setting fire to the brush
and grass. Well, that was a success all right, and you can guess
I was a terrified boy when the flames, seemingly caught by a
fresh wind, swept southeasterly over the premises and the hills
and valleys south of the Military and the Wyoming road, all day
long, clear down to the river bank and eastward for at least a
mile, and it may have been much further. Uncle George Halworth,
previously and perhaps then, owned what must have been a tract
of several hundred acres, some of it extending from or near Main
street to the river. However, I am not definitely certain about
his holdings, but it was all burned over and four or five years
later I hauled many loads of blackened rails from Shaw's hill
with the white oxen.

But mother was more than justified as to her estimate of the
future value of the five acres. A single illustration is suffi­
cient to demonstrate that. In 1861 father, on solicitation, do­
nated ground at the north-east corner of the block, perhaps 48 ft front, or a little more, to the Congregational society for a church. A brick edifice was erected. In 1903 that ground brought $4,000 net and it went into the building fund of the new church on the corner of Booth and First streets. This five acre tract of brush, grass, scrub oaks and scattering forest trees, with a big pond and sometimes two or three, became the most important public block in Anamosa, with its post-office in place of the old church, its opera house, Eureka printing office, city hall, fire department, American Legion hall, public library building and business blocks and residences. That $90 that father dug out of California soil by hard knocks, mother, by the most rigid economy and good judgment saved for wise investment, made choice of this five acres may out on the military road—as it seemed to me and others, the few buildings of the place being almost entirely 'down town' then—and the results of that choice have followed, with corresponding benefits to the Booth family ever since, to say nothing of the Congregational church. Of course the first lots sold went at a very low price and buyers were few and far between. Father was always annoyed when anyone wished to purchase a lot. I think W. H. Warren bought the first one in 1856—a half lot in length—and built a barn, afterwards Millard Rigby's wagon shop, west side, on Ford street. The price I think was $40. Perhaps the next disposal was a lot to First Parrott, on Booth street. Parrott was father's partner in the printing office, was married at 33 or 33, wanted to build, and father, if I mistake not, gave him the lot and the then quite neat little house Parrott put up is now a part of the old Nebraska. As the value of the property slowly advanced the taxes increased, and I could not hazard even an approximate estimate of the total we paid during those years—and are paying yet for that matter, on the home place.

Mother possessed the Walworth mechanical constructiveness as well as a first class business head. She contrived and set up in the front yard a cheese press, with a peck measure for the cheese mould, a heavy ten-foot plank for a lever, and big rocks for pressure—a combination that must have excited the wonder of the passer-by. For several years she turned out annually a dozen or more excellent cheeses about half the size of what was the standard Western boiler. I think we had two cows, and you would have smiled at, as well as admired, the double-mull shed that she and I built, with straw packed in between the double mulls on three sides and the top covered with the same material to keep out a passer-by and all the snow. The south side was open to the sun, and likewise the cold, as I realized when bunched fingers so often drove me houseward.

Speaking of cows reminds me of the fact that after dark I haven't the time to start out on the lonely cow paths or timber roads toward the river unless mother is always afraid of wildcats. I once had a personal experience with Will Wood and Harlow Ford—cousins—and several dogs in routing one out of the Buffalo bottom. We bravely pursued—at a safe distance—fiercely brandished our more or less decrepit jackknives, and followed the savage little fighter along the Wapsie bank and across the ice to an island of willows and drift-wood, where he was shot by a fisherman whose rifle happened not to be far away. It was lucky for us that the dog's run didn't turn the ugly "varmint" toward us instead of in the other direction, for I am painfully conscious of the fact that we would have filed like white-horses the moment he revealed his intention to eat us up. Another bobcat was killed later near Scroggs' residence on north Carnavillo street. Twenty or thirty years ago or so, four were shot out of one tree down the Wapsie.

But mother wasn't afraid of wild cats or anything else, and never hesitated a moment to go with me on a hunt for the cows on dark nights. And that reminds me also of a story aunt Emily Field, mother's sister, used to tell with much gusto and elaborate details about mother. Their childhood days, on the New Hampshire farm, it was their business to drive a half dozen cows to and from a distant pasture over a road with heavy timber on either side. A woodchuck, mother said, this was regarded as a decidedly spooky proposition. On one occasion it fell to Clark and Emily to go after the cows. She admits that she was afraid, but finally started. Deep in the woods it seemed as though a bear or spook might stop them at any moment. Ascending a hill she was surprised and overjoyed at seeing one of the cows quietly meandering home-ward. "I thank you, Betty," she said to herself from the bottom of her heart. Then another cow came to view. "Oh, Rosie, how I thank you too." And presently, one after another, appeared the rest of them, each the unconscious recipient of copious exclama-tions of increasing surprise and gratitude from Emily, until, last of all, Mary Ann, as she always called mother, came trudging along, seemingly oblivious of either pale-visaged spook or consuming bear. That was a youthful sample of mother's fearlessness and independent spirit.

After all, mother's quality of courage and independence, I may be pardoned for suggesting, was a characteristic of the family. It required a lot of pluck and optimism for George, Clark and Denison Walworth, with their father and mother, to come into...
this wilderness in 1839, when the population of the entire county was less than 400, for the purpose of building grist and saw mills. It required much royal stamina for the brothers and sisters to decide upon a three days’ "mising" with the inevitable liquor jug banished and coffee, cream and sugar substituted by the "girls" Emily, mother and Carrie—the first practical temperance sermon in this part of Iowa. It required courage for George Walworth, afterwards member of the Iowa legislature four terms, to stand by and defend Elijah Lovejoy, the martyr, when the mob took his life at Alton, Ill., and throe his press and type into the river because of his anti-slavery sentiments. Harry Walworth was noted for his steadfast courage and fiery advocacy of the Union cause during the civil war. Denison never flinched in his patriotism or in leadership in the sometimes critical emergencies of the pioneer days, and confidence in his judgment was never misplaced. That his father-in-law, Mason, built the first heating plant in the White House in Washington, in their establishment in Boston was placed one end of the first experimental telegraph wire. Clark's many conspicuous and valuable inventions revealed the genius of the independent mind and gave him place among the leading inventors of his time.

FATHER ATTACKED BY A COW.

At Fairview we had a white faced cow that was fierce of temper and really dangerous with a new calf by her side. Informed by a neighbor that the cow and her calf were in the grove thirty or forty rods from the house, father decided to drive them home. I went along. The cow was not in sight and the calf was found under a small tree. My father picked up the calf, which of course commenced a frantic bleating. Almost instantly the cow plunged in through the thicket, struck father in the breast with her horns and thrust him against the tall, heavy hazel brush. I jumped behind the tree and fortunately the cow didn’t notice me. Father was a giant in strength, seized the horns of the cow and turned her aside, with no serious results to himself, though I remember most vividly how he was borne downward in the hazel brush and how frightened I was. When we brought the cow to Anamosa in the fall of 1850, I never saw a man or boy who would any more dare go into the yard where she was kept with her calf than into a lion’s cage. But mother was never afraid, and she was the only one who could milk her at such times. I have often thought of the perilous risk she incurred, but the cow seemed to have some sort of an intuition of her courage or perhaps a realization of her uniform kindness, and never harmed her.

A RATTLER IN THE HOUSE.

I wonder if Hattie remembers the rattlesnake in the south bedroom of the house on Main street. When small we slept in a trundle bed in that room. One morning when we woke, we heard a strange, strident noise which to me sounded like a rattlesnake. It did not seem possible, but there was that strange hiss and it was unmistakable, for I had heard it many times. I climbed out very carefully, got down on my knees and looked under the bed. There was the snake with its paralyzing rattle. It did not take long to dispatch the small but just as vicious intruder, which had entered through a mouse hole in the corner of the bedroom. Suppose that had been in the south bedroom, or father’s and mother’s afterwards, what might have happened?
Father started for California in the spring of 1849. By arrangement with uncle Henry, mother, Hattie and I went to live with him, grandma and Julia, his daughter. I remember somehow an impression that father did not expect to be away from home more than two years. That summer, at the age of seven, I was taken very ill. That trouble was I never knew. Mother, of course, was very anxious. Uncle Henry wanted Dr. Matson to see me; father and mother adhered to all doctors' Mandrake pills, more or less crude, or worse, and Perry Davis' pain killer, also, I believe, were the only family remedies for all manner of ailments for old and young. I grew worse, and finally in some way uncle Henry, who had no influence with mother, got word to uncle George Waldworth, perhaps in Dubuque. He came and mother, and uncle Henry, no doubt, told him their views of the situation. Uncle George took command and sent a half mile for Dr. Matson. He came. Mother was up in arms; didn't want him to see me and utterly refused to take his advice or his medicine. Finally uncle George forcibly put her out of the room and threw a box of pills far out in the grass at the back door. Then the doctor, I suppose, locked me over, prescribed and probably gave me some medicine and left more with uncle George. I don't know. I observed none of these persons or happenings. In fact that summer, to all intents and purposes, was a blank to me, and I am narrating only what afterwards was told me. Of course mother, poor soul, was doubly anxious and distressed, because father was on his six months' journey to California and she couldn't even write to him with any sure as to the road, finally I became so terror-stricken that, anywhere I was lost in that great forest extending four miles north and south, and perhaps, was the victim of a rattlesnake bite. From any viewpoint it was all a horrible uncertainty—and father in the thick of it.

Uncle Henry was with us, for all concerned. Uncle Henry wanted Dr. Matson to see me; father and mother adhered to all doctors' Mandrake pills, more or less crude, or worse, and Perry Davis' pain killer, also, I believe, were the only family remedies for all manner of ailments for old and young. I grew worse, and finally in some way uncle Henry, who had no influence with mother, got word to uncle George Waldworth, perhaps in Dubuque. He came and mother, and uncle Henry, no doubt, told him their views of the situation. Uncle George took command and sent a half mile for Dr. Matson. He came. Mother was up in arms; didn't want him to see me and utterly refused to take his advice or his medicine. Finally uncle George forcibly put her out of the room and threw a box of pills far out in the grass at the back door. Then the doctor, I suppose, locked me over, prescribed and probably gave me some medicine and left more with uncle George. I don't know. I observed none of these persons or happenings. In fact that summer, to all intents and purposes, was a blank to me, and I am narrating only what afterwards was told me. Of course mother, poor soul, was doubly anxious and distressed, because father was on his six months' journey to California and she couldn't even write to him with any sure as to the road, finally I became so terror-stricken that, anywhere I was lost in that great forest extending four miles north and south, and perhaps, was the victim of a rattlesnake bite. From any viewpoint it was all a horrible uncertainty—and father in the thick of it.

Fortunately the use of one faculty I retained—my sense of direction. At the head of the valley I had observed a narrow but well defined path which we had crossed or followed when we turned down the hollow. During perhaps a half hour of my wanderings in search of mother I made two trips out to this path so I might be sure as to the road. Finally I became so terror-stricken that, very unwillingly of course, I started for home, taking the path that led to the highway and thence westerly, in due time passing Mrs. Olmstead's log cabin, a quarter of a mile east of Fairview, and on to uncle Henry's, a distance of probably a mile altogether.

Now try to imagine mother's state of mind when she missed me and frantically started running and calling in her piercing tone of voice for me. It may not have been more than ten or fifteen minutes after I had taken to the road. But it was an awful experience for her. Either I was lost in that great forest extending four miles to the river, or perhaps was the victim of a rattlesnake bite. From any viewpoint it was all a horrible uncertainty—and father in California!

At last mother, compelled by exhaustion, started for home. When she arrived at Olmstead's place she signed to Mrs. Olmstead, who happened to be standing in the door, asking if I had passed by. She replied by a sign in the affirmative and mother's terrible load of anxiety was lifted!

Probably we followed the road for half a mile or more, then turned northward down into the valley of dense undergrowth where we began to find berries. All was going well and we were doing better, no doubt, than if we had gone with the crowd into the more frequented Parsons neighborhood.
After all, what else could I do, a badly frightened boy of eight—frightened as much on mother's account as on my own—and in the midst of a great and wholly unknown forest?

Mother accused me of leaving her because I was angry and wanted to go with the Fords. That was not the fact at all, and I strenuously denied it, for I had not thought of such a thing, but I have always suspected that she never felt quite sure I was telling the truth. One thing she didn't do, and that was to write father about it. This I found out to my surprise when I happened to mention it to him several years before his death.

HATTIE HAS A HARD FALL.

While we were at uncle Henry's, little Hattie, between two and three, was racing back and forth one evening over the not very clean puncheon floor and having a glorious good time. The other members of the household were in another room. She stubbed her toe, fell, and exclamations of delight suddenly ceased. A moment of silence passed and some of us rushed in and found Hattie unconscious. The hard fall had knocked the breath out of her and she appeared as one dead. Water was dashed into her face and, to the great relief of all, she soon revived and in due time was herself again.

A TRIP BACKWARDS.

This reminds me of a narrow escape from what would probably have been a serious injury to me. Danforth Wood, and I think his brother William, were at uncle Henry's for a day. The latter had his oxen and wagon out in the field. Danforth and I were in the wagon, both standing up, I at the back end and he next. The oxen, after a halt of a few minutes, suddenly started forward and over the endgate I went. Danforth with a quick grasp caught my ankles and pulled me—my head still downward—back into the wagon. If he had not been just at that spot I would have struck squarely on my head, with possible paralysis, or worse, as a result. Perhaps he saved my life.

STARTING FOR CALIFORNIA.

Father's covered wagon stood for some days in front of the log house in Fairview before it was loaded and equipped. The wagon bed was new and of unusual depth, being nicely divided into several apartments for salt pork, hams, potatoes, hard crackers and other staples and a variety of baking necessities. We had only a fireplace, with swinging crane for boiling and frying, and it must have been used in a way for bread baking. But the hardest proposition was handled at uncle Henry's. He had an ordinary box stove, with tin side ovens shaped like two halves of a barrel split lengthwise. For many days mother baked crackers, batch after batch, and filled a good part of the wagon box with them.

A deaf and dumb man by the name of Clough was father's associate, but I think Perkins did the wagon work. Father had a rifle or plains, I don't remember which, but it was fun for me to mould bullets, and father must have had enough to kill a score of Indians and a hundred buffaloes. I recall that I was eager to melt the bullets on the bottom of mother's pretty panter syrup-cup, but to my surprise mother wouldn't let me! I never knew father to fire a gun, his mother being entirely averse to his using firearms, lest he should lose his only eye.

I don't remember one thing about the start for the land of gold, and it seems to me almost as though I could not have been present when the hard trial of bidding goodbye had to be endured. And then father took my dog Tossie and I never saw him again. You can easily understand that it was proper and quite necessary in fact for father to have a good watch dog with him on account of his deafness. But of course I must have been there—strange though it be that all the circumstances were obliterated from my memory.

The journey was entered upon just as soon as there was some green grass for feed, probably the latter part of April. My impression is that the California movement in 1849 was comparatively light, but in 1850-1 it was very heavy—during a good part of the early season almost continuous.

A LOOTING SCHEME FAILS.

In passing through the Indian country the travelers moved in trains or companies for self protection. At one point in the journey the men in father's train were startled at seeing a body of Indians lined up in threatening array acres, the road. The teams were stopped. After consultation it was decided to load up the rifles. They were drawn from their loops and loaded. Each driver, with his gun across his arm, then picked up his whip and ordered the teams forward. All this in plain sight of the red rascals. As the head drivers, guns in place, approached the line ready for business, the redskins suddenly opened ranks, moved back from the road and the train passed through. No doubt the intention was to frighten the drivers, or create a panic among the horses and oxen and then go through their wagons and pockets of the men for loot. Probably small companies, in the presence of superior numbers of Indians, would be compelled to hand over more or less of their possessions. As a rule, however, they are great cowards, and the
danger of having their hides perforated by bullets almost invariably drove them to prompt and peaceful consideration of "safety first" in their individual cases.

AN OPTIMISTIC FISHERMAN.

On reaching the Platte—or some other similar stream where the water-flow finally sinks away in the sand—a stop was made for the night. Father took a stroll along the bank, and after a short tramp, was impressed with the thought that there were several pools where fish might be found. Thereupon he returned to his wagon and pulled out his fishpole and line for the purpose of testing that piscatorial proposition. The men knew there was no connection between the stream and any ordinary body of water. They smiled and one of them swelled up with an air of pompous ridicule and exaggerated gesticulation and prophesied that father would pull out fish as long as his arm.

But father never cared for ridicule or sarcasm and was not diverted from his purpose. He captured a grasshopper, adjusted it on his hook and quickly dropped it into an inviting pool. So soon done than he had a savage bite and out came a fine trout that reminded him of his New England boyhood experiences. Another grasshopper was found for the sacrifice, dropped into another pool and another trout landed. A third attempt, unfortunately, resulted in a snagged and broken line and the escape of what would have been his third prize. But when father walked into camp with his two fine trout and dangled them under the nose of his sarcastic friend, accompanied no doubt by a pertinent sarcasm or two of his own, the latter's discomfiture was complete and father was the hero of the hour.

CROSSING THE DESERT.

In the course of time the train arrived at the margin of the great American desert, as it was then called. Father said the faces of the men turned pale and there was a sense of solemnity never before realized. The journey through the blistering sands required three days, if I remember correctly. Everything that would hold water was filled. The teams were given extra time for feeding and watering also before starting on that journey of death, whose waysides, as the days passed, were strewn with dead and dying cattle and horses and abandoned wagons. When one animal gave out and could go no farther he was unhitched and left to his miserable fate and the wolves. There was no help for it. Father lost one or two out of his eleven oxen in their passage. At last the journey through the desert nearly at an end, they reached a pool about a mile from Green River, I believe it was. Suddenly the cattle seemed to be seized with a new energy and they quickened their gait at a surprising rate. They had smelled the water, father told me, and the nearer they approached the stream the more rapid was their speed, and when they reached the stream bank they plunged in, totally regardless of whips or imperatory voices of more or less alarmed drivers, who could not know the situation real situation as to the banks or the depth of the water. But everything was favorable, and I wonder if those animals thus suddenly rescued from the days and horrors of deadly thirst, didn't experience a certain sense of appreciation and gratitude as would the sons and daughters of mortals under like conditions.

Father never told me how he entered California, or what became of the other oxen or the wagon, or even Mr. Clough, or poor Tover. Except this, one night Tover was missing. He was so tired out, footsore, and probably discouraged, by the months of apparently unending travel, that he could no longer keep up, so he dropped back among the other oxen. But he came up during the night and no doubt "turned in" with father. The next day he fell behind again, and the next night he came up as before. The third day the ground lost was never regained, and poor Tover, as I used to narrate over and over again with real heart-felt sadness to Bertha and Iabel when they were children, poor Tover never came back again, and grandma had to make the rest of his journey to far, far away California land without the watchful care of his angy affectionate, faithful dog. Why is not the following tribute applicable to dear long-lost Tover:

MY TOO.

The curate thinks you have no soul;
I know that he has none. But you,
Dear friend, whose solemn self-control
In our four-square familiar pew,
Was pattern to my youth—whose bark
Called me in summer days to rove—
Have you gone down into the dark
Where none is welcome—none may love?
I will not think those good brown eyes
Have spent their life of truth so soon;
But in some canine paradise
Your wraith, I know, renews the moon,
And quarters every vale and hill
Seeking its master. * * * As for me
This prayer at least the gods fulfill,
That when I pass the flood and see
Old Charon by the Stygean coast
Take toll of all the shades who land,
Your little, faithful, barking ghost
May leap to lick my phantom hand.
—St. John Lucas.

AN ATTACK OF CHOLERA.

The most critical experience father had during his five years' absence from home was when the cholera broke out in the train. Three men had died with it and father was the fourth who was stricken. The dreadful reality became all the more apparent as the symptoms took on the same form as developed in the other cases. He had several bottles of pain killer with him and commenced taking liberal doses. In spite of this and his strong will power he gradually grew colder. Still the red hot pain killer went down with no dilution or sweetening. Finally, after he had swallowed a half pint, or more, the terrible malady was overcome—vanquished. And that was the last of it in that train.

It almost appalls me when I think of the possible consequences to mother and the children that would have followed his death—how much poverty and struggle and tears, how much also of father's history and achievements would have remained unwritten, and the entire family record changed, we know not how or to what extent. God was merciful to father in his final restoration to health—merciful to every one of us in all the fruits of the years that followed.

A DISPUTE AND A BLOW.

I doubt whether father ever told you of a serious difficulty he had with a miner holding a claim adjoining his. A corner between the two was in dispute. The other man pulled up the stake and moved it some feet over on father's claim. Father moved it back again where it belonged. The removal was repeated and again father placed it back. A belligerent movement on the man's part was met by father with a slashing blow with his long-handled shovel on the man's cheek. This ended it, and the stake was left where it belonged. The wonder to me is that it did end there. That was a country and those were days when many a man was a law unto himself and the pistol or Bowie knife the final and easy arbiter in all differences and contentions. And father was deaf besides.

A POETIC EXPRESSION.

Father always drifted into the printing offices if there were any at hand. My recollection is that he carried on a good deal of
Sought no cheat, fare through bloody strife,
In their bravely truthful life
Taught us a lesson noble, grand.

There are a dozen texts in this little poem for thoughtful minds to dwell upon and enlarge. Concentrated truth is the mission and purpose of every real poet. In fact, that is what constitutes genuine poetry.

I had a great fondness for father's recitations from Scott, Byron and other authors, and recall sitting in his lap before the blackboard instruction, then almost unknown. The test members were requested to ask for a sentence to be placed on the chalkboard by father. Mr. Weld communicating it to his wholly by sign. Everything was going satisfactorily. Finally a member recited some lines from a standard poet for trial. Mr. Weld was almost agast. To sign prose was one thing; to sign poetry where words have many synonyms—all perhaps represented by one sign—was quite another. He signed it, however, with great care. Father was quite lost for a moment or two. Then his wonderful memory came to his rescue—and Mr. Weld's relief also, you may be sure—and on the board the poetry went and Mr. Weld was triumphant and happy.

It is not presumptuous, I think, to express the natural belief that Mr. Weld, in a matter of so much importance, would take the pick of the student body for his associate in demonstrating the work of deaf mute instruction, then almost unknown. In the test members were requested to ask for a sentence to be placed on the chalkboard by father. Mr. Weld communicating it to his wholly by sign. Everything was going satisfactorily. Finally a member recited some lines from a standard poet for trial. Mr. Weld was almost agast. To sign prose was one thing; to sign poetry where words have many synonyms—all perhaps represented by one sign—was quite another. He signed it, however, with great care. Father was quite lost for a moment or two. Then his wonderful memory came to his rescue—and Mr. Weld's relief also, you may be sure—and on the board the poetry went and Mr. Weld was triumphant and happy.

I recall vividly an incident that happened when I was quite small. Father was cutting down a big tree. As a precaution he placed me just behind him, of course leaving room for the swing of his axe. As the cutting progressed father may have changed his position slightly. But more likely I changed mine. Anyway, the first thing I knew, the back of his axe struck me squarely on the forehead—just as the blow was spent. Whether I was toppled over, or was bashed or hurt, I don't know—but not the slightest recollection. If I had been one inch nearer it might have been different.

At another time father and I were going to the farm a mile south-west of Fairview, he driving the oxen and I following. had seen father innumerable times slip in behind the oxen and seat himself on the hounds of the wagon tongue when tired. Well, I was tired, or thought I was, and so I tried it. My legs were considerably shorter at five years of age than his. I failed to mount the tongue, got down some way and a wheel ran over my foot. Father as usual was my ahead of the oxen and did not observe me creeping along behind and crying lustily of course. Finally he looked back, saw me limping, picked me up and put me in the wagon. That was my last trip on the wagon tongue until I was big enough to make it with safety. In going to or coming from the farm on foot it was a rather uneven gap between father and myself. He was a rapid walker, as you know, Frank, I was a poor one. But I had a refuge and a release always sure—father's big broad shoulders. A sign from me was all that was needed. Down he went and I climbered on. The secure comfort, the restful feeling that came to me so many times I never will forget. And perhaps in after years the burden-bearing was reversed in a sense, and just as satisfying to us both.

JUVENILE EQUESTRIANISM.

I was riding our horse from uncle Henry's one day, father walking just behind. He had to keep cautioning me not to go fast. But that is what I wanted to do. Passing through the grove south of our house I quickened the pace a little until I was far enough ahead of father and could not manage to see him. He had his choice, and I have no doubt he slapped him on the back good and plenty in the spirit of appreciation and admiration the first chance he had after that fine test was concluded. The legislature of course was completely satisfied and a law was passed authorizing the sending of deafmutes to Hartford.
This horse episode reminds me of what I have been told happened to me at the Walsworth mills when I was perhaps three or four years old. Mother, evidently, was visiting the family and took me along. There was no fence and I was running about as I pleased. So were several horses. With noalice aforethought they run over me. Fortunately uncle Ben, perhaps 26, happened to be near at hand, rescued and carried me into the house, my face bloody out and bloody and blood streaming down over my clothes. A scar across the bridge of my nose and under each brow—not ordinarily discernible—reveals the location of the cut of some hoof and how nearly fatal it was. I never had any recollection of the affair.

REMOVAL TO ANAMOSA

In the fall of 1850, after consultation between the two families, uncle Henry hired out to uncle Ford, his brother-in-law, as a man of all work for $15 a month, I think it was, he and his (and aunt Hannah’s) mother, and Julia also, to live in the hotel, the Wapsipicon House, which uncle Ford was running. Which uncle Ford was running, which uncle Ford was running, which uncle Ford was running, which uncle Ford was running, which uncle Ford was running. Uncle, Hattie and I were given a small addition for occupancy, except that we slept elsewhere, mother and Hattie together and I with the boys. That arrangement was not permanent, however, and in the interval between that and our final removal to the new house up town in the fall of 1851, we lived for a while in the L. W. Perkins house and in the Osborn house mentioned elsewhere.

AS TO DAGUERREOTYPES

The first daguerreotype man ever in the town came along during that time and set up business in the parlor of the hotel. Of course we children had to have their pictures taken as well as them. After many trials mother had to be satisfied and sent our pictures to father. No doubt he was highly delighted to receive them. I distinctly recall that little Harriet Emna, born in Fairview June 17, 1846, and about three years of age, was attired in her very best. Mother was an artist in curling Hattie’s hair, and with her ringlets and round, rosy cheeks I am certain she was the handsomest and brightest little one in town. Doubtless father thought so too. I also remember that mother’s picture was just right and revealed a happy expression. Mine was solemn as a tomb-stone in spite of all her admonitions and the photographer’s repeated requests, “Now look pleasant please.” Maris and Harlow were taken together and Harlow, perhaps seven, was so scared at seeing the photo man shoot his bullseys at his from under his black hood, that the picture showed two copious rivulets of great briny tears coursing down his cheeks. That picture always made me laugh, and in later years I guess it hit Harlow in the same way.

A HIGH WATER EXPERIENCE

We had a great flood in the spring of 1851. The water poured in an expanse fifty feet wide, or more, from the Buffalo, northwest of town. Light through the lesser portion and to the back waters of the Wapsie. The town as it was then was an island. A few houses were partially inundated, the one that mother, Hattie and I occupied, among them. The house belonged to Blain Osborn, brother-in-law and partner of F. W. Gillett, Blina Brown, wife and daughter lived in the main part, and when he got up in the morning he stepped in water a foot deep. He all had to move out. The house next and a little higher up was that of Father’s bright, our Congregational minister. Our family found refuge in other quarters until fall, when we moved to the new house up town.

When the main flood had subsided, though bottom lands were still overflowed, Will Wood, my cousin, two Wilson boys and myself were in agitating on the bottnix, south side of the Wapsie, twenty rods below the dam. The depth was one to two and three feet. In a frack of playfulness I called out “Will catch me by the boat, dragging as he walked backward. Unintentionally and unexpectedly to himself, he suddenly stepped off the steep bank right into the raging current of the main channel, of course pulling me after him. He was older and a fairly good swimmer and I was able to paddle just a little. We came into town finishing up, ultimately plucking each under water twice and both strangling. Once more for either of us meant good-bye. Will gave me a desperate push with all his strength toward the shore, strangely enough I lost my hold on him at last, and after a hard struggle I reached safety. Will followed without special trouble. The Wilson boys, paolo-stricken, hurried after father to help us, and probably they could not. But Will never attempted any avenging coupes on me again, and I never heard of his making any reference to the incident that so nearly ended in a double tragedy.

THE NEW SHOTGUN

When I was about ten I began to coax mother for a shotgun. Prairie chickens, quails and rabbits were abundant all the year round. Likewise pheasants by the millions, ducks and many geese in their season. Mother was doubtful about placing a gun in my inexperienced hands. Afterwards I did not wonder at this. But she wrote to father and he, good soul, sent a tempestral gold piece in a letter for that purpose. Fyatt Skinner, brother to the doctor, sent to Dubuque for goods in a short time and when he returned he had a shining single barrel gun for me. It cost $4.50 and I was really very proud of it, though many times in peculiar situations.
I showered copious malcontents on his head for not getting me a double barrel piece when he had the $10 to pay for it. However, that would have been heavier to carry, and that may have been one reason for his choice. But I made a pretty good record with that gun in ten years, and many a prairie chicken, with the accompaniment of a great battle of mother's unqualified dquipments, came to our table, to the especial satisfaction of father. I shot and trapped many prairie chickens, quail and rabbits inside the present city corporation, some of them on this five acre block.

I used to take the gun to the woods and to the prairie very frequently. We started house one day from the farm with a load of hay. I always loaded and strapped the hay and I considered myself an expert—though I don't think I ever heard anyone else hint as such. I was on the load, father driving, and we were following the east line fence, bumping along over the rather rough road. Suddenly I saw a prairie chicken running along in a pass up under the fence. The gun was with me. I hauled up, fired, the oxen and father jumped, but the chicken was mine—with the usual dumpling feast the next day.

I did not stop to think then, nor for some time afterwards, that if my paper wedding had taken fire, as it occasionally did, and had fallen on the load, the hay, oxen and wagon would very soon have gone up in smoke to say nothing of myself and the oxen. But it was a mighty good shot anyhow, if I do say it as oughtn't to.

A year or two after I returned from Garden Academy, N. H., I made a contract for a $50 Parker double-barrel breech-loader on the understandance of solid silver and I was about six months on the market in the latter part of the year. This was not a load of lumber, but a load of prairie chicken running along in a path under the waving prairie grass. I took the gun with me when I paid them and had a liberal supply of bums thrown away.

A NEW PAIR OF SKATES.

In the winter of 1854–5, a merchant down town, Joe Secret, I believe, got in a big stock of skates, the cheapest being priced at 50 cents. When mother, Hattie and I returned in January, 1853, from a visit with uncle Fifield's family in Dohaque, Mr. Fifield being mother's sister, we stopped a few days with our friends, the Roswell Crane people, at Lawrence, on account of a break-down of the Frank Walker stage coach. While there I happened to stumble on an another pair of skates. I never had tried on anything of the kind but I went down to the creek and succeeded in getting them adjusted. There I struggled for a day or two with a liberal supply of bums thrown in, and quite got the hang of the business. As soon as the Secret stock arrived I besieged father for a pair. Money was a mighty scarce article, but father made a deal with Secret and I was happy. The deal was this: A load of long wood, 50 cents; for a pair of skates, 50 cents. Father was always indulgent, the oxen were hitched up the next morning and away we went two miles to the timber. It took all day for the trip. Then of course the skates had to be equipped with straps. Deal No. 3 was in order. Another day and another load of long wood for John Belknap fixed that all right. It was literally a 50-50 proposition all around, and joyously consummated.

Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation. Two days, eight miles travel, tollhouse labor and joyous consummation.

Speaking of prices for wood in the early days reminds me. A gentleman by the name of Show (as in plow) taught school here in the winter of 1854–5. He was a good teacher, later went into merchandising, was postmaster in Pierce's administration, got into trouble with the government, became landlord of uncle Ford's, west of the City a year or two after I returned from Garden Academy, N. H., I made a contract for a $50 Parker double-barrel breech-loader on the understandance of solid silver and I was about six months on the market in the latter part of the year. This was not a load of lumber, but a load of prairie chicken running along in a path under the waving prairie grass. I took the gun with me when I paid them and had a liberal supply of bums thrown away.

A NEW PAIR OF SKATES.

In the winter of 1854–5, a merchant down town, Joe Secret, I believe, got in a big stock of skates, the cheapest being priced at 50 cents. When mother, Hattie and I returned in January, 1853, from a visit with uncle Fifield's family in Dohaque, Mr. Fifield being mother's sister, we stopped a few days with our friends, the Roswell Crane people, at Lawrence, on account of a break-down of the Frank Walker stage coach. While there I happened to stumble on an another pair of skates. I never had tried on anything of the kind but I went down to the creek and succeeded in getting them adjusted. There I struggled for a day or two with a liberal supply of bums thrown away.

Speaking of prices for wood in the early days reminds me. A gentleman by the name of Show (as in plow) taught school here in the winter of 1854–5. He was a good teacher, later went into merchandising, was postmaster in Pierce's administration, got into trouble with the government, became landlord of uncle Ford's, west of the City a year or two after I returned from Garden Academy, N. H., I made a contract for a $50 Parker double-barrel breech-loader on the understandance of solid silver and I was about six months on the market in the latter part of the year. This was not a load of lumber, but a load of prairie chicken running along in a path under the waving prairie grass. I took the gun with me when I paid them and had a liberal supply of bums thrown away.

A NEW PAIR OF SKATES.

In the winter of 1854–5, a merchant down town, Joe Secret, I believe, got in a big stock of skates, the cheapest being priced at 50 cents. When mother, Hattie and I returned in January, 1853, from a visit with uncle Fifield's family in Dohaque, Mr. Fifield being mother's sister, we stopped a few days with our friends, the Roswell Crane people, at Lawrence, on account of a break-down of the Frank Walker stage coach. While there I happened to stumble on an another pair of skates. I never had tried on anything of the kind but I went down to the creek and succeeded in getting them adjusted. There I struggled for a day or two with a liberal supply of bums thrown away.

Speaking of prices for wood in the early days reminds me. A gentleman by the name of Show (as in plow) taught school here in the winter of 1854–5. He was a good teacher, later went into merchandising, was postmaster in Pierce's administration, got into trouble with the government, became landlord of uncle Ford's, west of the City a year or two after I returned from Garden Academy, N. H., I made a contract for a $50 Parker double-barrel breech-loader on the understandance of solid silver and I was about six months on the market in the latter part of the year. This was not a load of lumber, but a load of prairie chicken running along in a path under the waving prairie grass. I took the gun with me when I paid them and had a liberal supply of bums thrown away.

A NEW PAIR OF SKATES.

In the winter of 1854–5, a merchant down town, Joe Secret, I believe, got in a big stock of skates, the cheapest being priced at 50 cents. When mother, Hattie and I returned in January, 1853, from a visit with uncle Fifield's family in Dohaque, Mr. Fifield being mother's sister, we stopped a few days with our friends, the Roswell Crane people, at Lawrence, on account of a break-down of the Frank Walker stage coach. While there I happened to stumble on an another pair of skates. I never had tried on anything of the kind but I went down to the creek and succeeded in getting them adjusted. There I struggled for a day or two with a liberal supply of bums thrown away.
to ask him for it—having concluded, no doubt, that the fire builder perhaps had earned five instead of only two and a half cents a day for which he had contracted his services. Deducting the value of the kindling and the wear and tear in climbing the rail fences would scarcely leave excess profits calling for an income tax of large dimensions.

GOOD WORK IN THE WOODS.

Father came home in March, 1854, and a few days passed before he had bought 80 acres of fine wild prairie from uncle Henry, three miles north, in Cass township. The price was $800, paid in gold ($300 was also paid for our keep a little over a year at uncle Henry's.) A yoke of young white oxen and a second-hand wagon without a box came next—price, $75 and $85 respectively. The steers, no doubt frightened by father's strange voice, ran away the first thing they did. No damage, and they soon found out that father was the kindest owner and driver they ever knew before or after. The next thing was a rail fence for the first ten acres, to be broken up the following summer. Father was 44, nearly, right out of the mines and with muscles of iron. He provided himself with axe, saw and iron wedges and at once went to work felling trees and splitting rails in "the timber. I went with him and the team in the course of a couple of weeks and was astonished at the number of trees he had cut away and worked into rails—a dozen big piles, perhaps more. Of course they had to be hauled five miles to the farm. He did the driving at the start and in time I took charge. The first load was too heavy for the long Dutch creek hill and the oxen turned short off and broke the tongue. That ended the haul for that day, but we had no further disasters of that kind.

Later father bought a cross-cut saw and it was just fun for a 13-year old boy to help him saw the big logs, though I suspect that at first he did the most of the pulling and the pushing. We had lots of that kind of work later when the Dubuque Southeaster was building and buying ties. These were of white oak, eight feet long, hewed on two sides and bringing 40 cents a tie. Everybody in that business was flush for awhile, but the bottom dropped out, the railroad scrip in which we were paid went flat and father had about $5 left on his hands.

But the road was completed somehow. The cars came March 9, 1858, and the depot was located up-town, followed gradually by new and old business buildings. The first important one was the building of the big hotel, the Fisher House, in 1856, for which I had hauled many a load of brick from Oliver Lockwood's, a mile south of town.

(34)

Father put the newly-broken ten acres into wheat the next spring—1855—I harrowed it and the harvest was a fine crop of about 150 bushels, perhaps more, a part of which was sold to Dubuque and sold for a dollar a bushel as I remember it. That summer ten acres more were broken and the next two seasons the wheat crop was about doubled.

In 1858 I went into the printing office to learn the business, and father not long after rented the farm. My compensation was $30 for the first year, $45 for the second and $60 for the third—with board. I think that I did not receive $10 in all told, but store orders almost entirely and not many of them, as father bought a half interest in the office soon after I was inaugurated as "devil." Boarded at home. Fearfully hard times set in in 1857. Later father borrowed $500 from the school fund for himself on his half interest, mortgaged the farm, was unable to meet the indebtedness in the five hard-times years and the farm went under foreclosure for $350—$375 less than he paid for it as wild land! It was too bad but it could not be helped in the utterly bankrupt and broken-bank condition of the country, with the aggravated financial upheaval of the civil war to further complicate the business situation. Father was with the paper from 1856 to 1896 when he voluntarily retired, having done editorial work for some years. I was with the paper from March 8, 1858, to January 1, 1911, with the exception of twenty months at Kimball Union Academy, Meredith, N. H.

Subsequent owners of the farm added buildings and other improvements, and I have no doubt the farm went to a top-notch value of $300 to $300 an acre when the boon was on a few years ago.

ACCURATE SURVEYING WORK.

During father's absence in California the corner stakes in his timber had rotted away and he did not feel sure where his lines were. A surveyor by the name of J. J. Dunham, whom we boys regarded as a queer old codger, was employed and four of us went out to run new lines, and I have no doubt the farm went to a top-notch value of $300 to $300 an acre when the boon was on a few years ago.

A PRINT'PR'S DEVIL.

But the road was completed somehow. The cars came March 9, 1858, and the depot was located up-town, followed gradually by new and old business buildings. The first important one was the building of the big hotel, the Fisher House, in 1856, for which I had hauled many a load of brick from Oliver Lockwood's, a mile south of town.
A NARROW ESCAPE.

Returning home from downtown one night in the later fifties, father and I were walking along the roadside just opposite the Gillen House (corner of Main and Garoaville Sts.) Suddenly I heard a resounding clatter and rush of hoof-beats following us. I just had time to jerk father toward the fence with all my strength, when a pair of runaway horses swept by like a cyclone right on our track. If father had been alone I have not the least doubt that he would have been dashed to the earth and killed. For the momentum of the animals was terrible and it would have been irresistible.

MARKETING IN DUBUQUE.

In a previous note I spoke of wheat-selling in Dubuque. That city was the leader in this respect for a long time the chief products of the farm in this part of the state, Muscatine was next, then Davenport. Clinton was not even a cornfield, the great amass in not being in existence. Father used to raise and fatten a few hogs, dress and haul them to Dubuque every fall. They were of very ordinary breed—the big Chester hogs and Poland Chinas not having been invented, I guess. The prices averaged perhaps $1.50 per 100. Deer, feathered game and fish were so plentiful that pork raising was almost a superfluity. As illustrative of these facts I cite the following: John J. Joelin (who married father and mother July 30, 1840) and the doctor, Clark Joelin, went up the river on a three days' hunt. In that time they captured twenty-one deer, averaging seven a day. Mr. Sutherland, supervisor from Scotch Grove some years ago, a perfectly reliable man, told me that he once shot over seventy-five, mostly feeding on the prairie or lying down, like so many cattle.

Father used to take three or four days for these Dubuque trips. A drove of hogs of 150 pounds would mean 1500 pounds—a very good load—proceeds $32.50, or thereabouts. What would the farmers of today think of such a financial limitation in their annual pork sales? But father never forgot the half bushel of apples in which my chief interest of course was centered. I spoke of fish in a previous paragraph. George Perkins, while working at the Walworth mills in the early forties, speared a muskellunge weighing 48 pounds, the largest fish I ever knew to be taken in this vicinity. Possibly some sturgeon speared later by different parties may have overrun this weight. Perkins afterwards located seven miles up the Buffalo, married, raised an excellent family and was known far and wide as a Christian citizen. Dr. ex-French, of the 14th Iowa, speared a muskel-lunge of 38 pounds. Others were taken that went 23, 21 and 15 pounds, and Frank and I took Rev. J. B. Fisk out one night in the seventies and I speared a pickerel of 111 pounds, an inch less than a yard in length. This was near the cemetery. Large catfish, pickerel, black bass and redhorse were almost without limit in supply. But for the past twenty-five years or more, the refuse from certain factories and the sewer systems of the state have been killing the fish and I do not believe that we have now one-tenth or one-twentieth the number formerly found in our streams.

MOTHER'S APPLE-SEED PLANTING.

When mother, Hattie and I were living on Main street, she chanced to get hold of a few apples of extra fine flavor and immense size. "I will save seed and plant," she said. Three thriving trees were the result. When this house was built in 1868-70 (the house on south Ford St.) father transplanted the trees, not yet large, to this place. One lived and grew with the years until it must have been a foot or more in diameter. The fruit did not remain true to type as to size, but the flavor in sauce was very superior—unlike that of any other apple sauce we ever ate. Every spring the blossoms presented a picture of radiant beauty. When Bertha and Mabel were small they used to get up into that tree with their story and school books and read in the charm and sweet odors of floral environment. When Bertha passed into the new life beyond, May 13, 1907, many full-blossomed branches from that tree of mother's planting decorated the room in which she rested. It was really mother's contribution of affection to one of her most beloved grandchildren.
THE OLD SPINNING WHEEL.

One of the delightful memories I cherish of the dear old log cabin home in Fairview is mother's skilled accomplishment in operating the spinning wheel. I can see her right now as she deftly attacked the fluffy roll of carded wool to the point of the spindle, gave the big wheel a whirl with the right hand and drew the little roll slowly out with her left as she stepped three or four feet backward. In a moment that roll was in the form of yarn wound around the swift revolving spindle and awaiting the skillful attachment of another similar roll, with another whirl of the wheel and the spindle. And so it went, hour after hour, one spindle of yarn quickly succeeding another, and the music of it all charming my senses into dreamy admiration of mother's marvelous skill. Battle possibly may remember something about it and the skeins of yarn we delighted to stretch between our extended wrists for winding into bails, then in transformed by knitting needles into stockings or mitens, or sent to the weaver, where the play of the shuttle brought forth the famous homespun for men's suits or women's garments. But the ancient glory of the spinning wheel is no more and the log house disappeared from the landscape perhaps fifty years ago. If I mistake not, in 1850 L. H. Starkweather bought it and bought it like an acre of ground right on one of the most prominent streets of the metropolis and paid therefor the enormous sum of $30! He turned it into a soap factory and I never saw the inside of that once happy boyhood home again.

MOTHER'S ACTIVITY.

When we lived at Uncle Henry's, one of my discoveries was mother's wonderful gracefulness in what we rather unpoetically call *jumping the rope.* She didn't "jump." Julia and I wanted no better fun than to swing a long rope and see mother just dance with a grace, agility and accuracy that was simply artistic. I never saw her equalled in a demonstration of that kind.

Not only in that, was she an adept. In later years our family resided across the alley from each other and had Thanksgiving turkey together. When it came to the after-dinner "blindman's buff" mother was the queen of the flying squad of buffoons and could slip out of a tight corner and elude the out-reaching arms of the most active "blind" man with a dexterity unsurpassed and unsurpassable. She yet have been a marvel of activity and cleverness in all manner of diversions in her younger days.

"THE LITTLE DEARS.

While my children were small and we were living in the little brick house across the alley, father happened over one evening just as they were saying their little prayer at their mother's knee. Both were attired in red pajamas, both looked up for an instant as he came in, and then resumed their devotions as though nothing unusual had occurred. The latter part of the prayer was really quite significant, I always felt, and so I give it a place here:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I should die before I wake,
I pray thee Lord my soul to take.

"God bless dear papa and mama and grands and grandmas and sister, and help us all to be good that we may meet a happy family in heaven at last—Amen!"

The "Amen" snapped out, away they scudded to their trundle-bed near at hand. Father was visibly touched by the scene and exclaimed in an affectionate tone, "The little dears!"

DID IT AWAKE A MEMORY OF OLD?

It is very likely that it did, as the following would indicate. On a later occasion, when Gertrude was caring for the house as usual, it happened one day that the gorgeous lily blossoms were waving above the ledge of the open south window. She called father's attention to them and commenced to spell on her fingers, "Behold the lilies of the field—when he seised the quotation and finished it—"they toil not, neither do they spin, yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." "Why," he exclaimed, with evident gratification, "I learned that at my mother's knee ninety years ago!"

Gertrude more than once has driven home a strong point by narrating this incident to her always interested classes in Sunday school in favor of committing the scriptures to memory in the earlier years.

MOLASSES—ROUND AND ROUND.

Father and mother were very fond of the grandchildren—in all our families—and Gertrude recalls the fact that father, if there seemed to be a case of possible juvenile discipline approaching, always came to the rescue with his kindly suggestion—"Well, well, when they are older they will have more sense!" I doubt not that some narrow escapes for the children may be credited up to grandpa's occasionally over-indulgent interposition in their behalf.
Mother was a good deal the same way—and then some, when the children were small and suddenly remembered that they were hungry—and all children are almost always hungry if they happen to think of it—they knew that just across the alley was their land of Canaan flowing with milk and honey, but with plenteousness also of substantial bread, butter and molasses. I can see their impetuous, smiling signs right now—slice of bread, butter spread over, and molasses—index finger drawn persuasively through red lip-pouring round and round. Ah! mother understood it all before the sweet petition in pantomime was presented. It might be only a half hour before dinner or supper, with immediate and unrelenting starvation staring them in the face at home, but at grandma's there was unfailing relief. They knew the trick well and mother knew it too, "so bread and butter and molasses round and round and round transferred salvation, brought forth and employed, as though the happy recipients were feasting at the queen's festal board.

THE LITTLE ONE WHO DIED

Harriet Booth was the second child in father's family. She was born in Fairview February 22, 1846, and died July 31, 1847. The burial was in Wilcox cemetery, west of Fairview. We attempted to find something of the remaining thirty years or more ago for the purpose of removal to the Anaasosa cemetery, but of course without results. However, a small monument, called white brass, was placed on our Anaasosa lot for her: also another for Grandma Booth, whose grave stones were lost right in the years and changes in the cemetery following father's death. All other stones were removed from California, but of one thing do I remember of little Harriet. I did something to her she didn't like and naturally enough she cried. Just that glimpse is all I recall, though mother I remember sometimes made affectionate reference to her.

By our measurement of time she has been in heaven seventy-six years. That blissful, glorified environment, what spiritual development must have been here all these years. What will be her joy when our sister shall welcome us and ours, as she did father and mother to the heavenly home. Some day it will be "a happy family" that Bertha and I, at their mother's knee used to pray for—and a large and increasing "happy family in heaven at last" that we all pray for as the days and the years bring their fruitage of new relationships, new hopes and new joys.

A NEW BLACKBERRY PICKER

I am not going to forget this date, July 37, 1855. Aunt Hannah Ford, father's sister, made an early call at our house that morning. Her principle business at first seemed to be to hustle me off on a blackberry expedition with some one of her family, I don't remember who. I don't know what became of Hattie. The day, so far as I was concerned, was spent in the well known George Shumway regions, two or three miles south. We came home in good season with a liberal supply of fruit. But a new life had been ushered into the world—a fair-favored but very red-faced little urchin peacefully reposining on mother's breast. She turned down the bed cover with a sweet, proud smile on her countenance, and there you were. I hasten to assure you that Hattie and I, as soon as we could adjust ourselves to the changed situation resulting from the arrival of this squirming and sometimes slightly vociferous novelty, proceeded to adopt you into our happy family as a permanent and paramount member thereof. And that's where you have been ever since.—first, a round-faced, good-looking child of a boy, who later a part of his time to play, a part to reading and study, and all the time to propounding that everlasting, irrepressible "uh-yul."

Printing office stunts of all kinds gradually worked in. At seven you commenced setting type, standing on a box in order to reach the cases, and cracking jokes—rather too many of these—with the always appreciative office hands at the same time your brain cells acquired your everlasting irrepressible spirit. A boy, who later gave opening of the doors of knowledge, a revealer of God to the minds and souls of multitudes whose ears have been stopped and whose fettered tongues were bound to perpetual silence but for a new freedom, a new salvation, brought to them out of the heart of love.
It was both wise and becoming, on this initial birthday anniversary of the new blackberry picker, that the family, each member of it, should give you a cordial welcome and bestow on you constant affection and well-merited trust all the years following. Such has been your happy fortune in our family; such, and even more, has been your fortune in your own loving, honorable, patriotic, Christian family. What better heritage could come to our boy, born the day following the 15th anniversary of his father’s and mother’s wedding day? FATHER’S INDEPENDENT POLITICAL VIEWS.

From young manhood up, father was intense in his hostility to slavery, and he was just as intense an admirer of William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Gerritt Smith and others of that class. I heard father called a ‘black abolitionist’ more than once, never though he was generally held in high esteem personally, but the Democrats especially, and some Whigs, later Republicans, had little love for his blind advocacy of abolition doctrines. Some of his poetic expressions are touched with the fire of his hatred for the man-selling system and the doughfaces north and south who supported Garrison, Phillips, Gerritt Smith and others of that class. Fiction and roll-merited trust all the year® following. at has day? of it, should give you a cordial welcowe and bestow on you constant

In the civil war father’s love for the Union cause and the boys in blue was remarkable, and especially those who went from this country, and they loved him in return. The political struggles between the Republicans and Democrats, local and national, were characterized by great bitterness, sometimes dangerously near bursting into the flames of civil strife, and now and then involving actual personal conflict. Father’s pen during the war spared not the country’s enemies, whether southern or northern rebels. But when the final victory came, with the curse of slavery swept away and the Union saved, father said that he felt that his work was done. And it was, in a large and essential degree.

A word of previous history may not be out of place here. Father was enrolling clerk for the legislative session of 1844, I think. This was a responsible position and I feel quite sure that he performed the duties with ability and general acceptance. It should be noted in this record also that he was largely instrumental in inducing the legislature to provide for sending deaf children to the Illinois School for the Deaf and at a later period to take the initial steps in the founding of the state school for the deaf in Iowa. His practical experience of years as teacher in the Hartford school for the deaf gave him the essential fitness, in fact made him almost indispensable, for this preparatory work, as the years passed, developed so splendidly in this state.

GOING AWAY FROM HOME.

Mother passed away in January, 1888, and some years afterwards it was planned to have father spend a few months in Frank’s Philadelphia home. This grew out of the fact that our daughter Bertha was suffering from lung complication resulting from exposure and a cold contracted in the east. After a sojourn of some time in Denver and later in Colorado Springs, it was deemed advisable to spend the summer in the mountains at Douglas ranch, ten miles from the town. Bertha was improving and father was sure he could be with her, and if she went to Colorado father would be without proper care. Frank cheerfully offered to have father spend the summer with his family, and came on for him. We were sitting at the breakfast table at an early morning hour

His voice shook with deep emotion and I thought he was going to break down entirely. It was a complete revelation to me, and I think to all the rest; but this new view gave me a realisation of father’s loneliness without mother and the old home that I never had before. I think father had somehow inherited the idea that perhaps we were expecting to make his stay permanent, or he was in error, of course we assured him that it was only for the summer and that when Gertrude should be at home again he would return. This I think was a help and the cloud did not look so dark. Father really had a good time in the east, though it was new and strange in many ways of course, but I doubt not that his experiences in Frank’s pleasant home and with the bright little grandchildren afforded him many pleasant reflections afterwards. His occasional
talks later indicated that fact. I met you and him in Chicago, I think, on the return home and, contrary to our expectations, he expressed his preference at once to spend his time at the old home where he parted from mother instead of staying with us. And he did and was as happy as he could be without us.

I am writing this for record as another evidence of father's strong attachment to his life-long companion and all the associations and memories of his Iowa home. It was a revelation of heart and character that the world sees too little of in these days.

FOUR QUOTATIONS.

I have made mention of father's love for the soldiers from Jones county in the civil war and of their admiration for him. This reciprocal good will was really remarkable. I cannot forebear quoting a few lines from a letter he wrote me in May, 1890, which shows my estimate of father's sentiments. This is an extract from a letter written by John P. Magee, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, dated Jan. 30, 1911, to Rev. F. P. Shaffer, of the Methodist church, Anamosa:

I notice the name of your street—Booth. I think I told you I lived on a farm in Scotch Grove township, Jones county, when a boy. It was 14 miles northeast of Anamosa. He took the Eureka, Edmond Booth, editor. He was a mute, whether by birth or injury I do not know. He was smart and made a good paper. While I was in the army I wrote some letters to the Eureka over the nom de plume of "High Private." I had never met the old gentleman. When I got home I was in Anamosa one day, called on him and wrote "High Private" on a piece of paper. He laughed, shook hands cordially, almost hugged me and took off my hat, which I, shy in my manners, I suppose, had not removed. He looked over my head, or my head over. I do not know what he thought, but he said some kind words and was cheerily conversational. His son Tom, whom I once knew, when I was a very young man, I now believe has passed into other hands. I haven't seen a copy in many years yet I wish it well.

The paper was started by one John E. Lovejoy, a brother of the famous Owen Lovejoy, a congressman many years. John was our neighbor in Scotch Grove. When he was a young man he sold papers for a local paper, like the old Greek of long ago he cried out, "Eureka." (I have found it,) and Eureka it was and has been ever since.

An explanation is proper here. The Senior, when particularly interested in a person, almost invariably took the liberty of examining his head, as he was a phrenologist and in his younger days frequently was asked to examine somebody's "bumps." He was deeply interested in all the soldiers from this county and especially by the correspondents of the Eureka, their letters being eagerly sought for by him and as eagerly read by the subscribers. Father, without doubt, made some remarks along phrenological lines, but not always readily understood by me, and the letters he read so eagerly were not always readily understood, and so he does not recollect anything except the general purport and manner of his greeting.

The statement by Mr. Magee that he was nearly "hugged" by the Senior indicated his affection for him and the boys in blue generally.

The following letter is from Mr. Tom H. Miner, formerly a farmer boy in this county and later a prominent attorney of Belle Plaine, Iowa. He writes under date of June 8, 1909, closing with these interesting though rather exhuberant paragraphs:

As yours was the first printing press I ever saw, and the first printing outfit into which I ever stepped, and as your late father, Eureka is the first newspaper I ever read and in many years of study to communicate with him by sign and word written and not by word of mouth, I remember having several conversations with him; and while at the cemetery I noticed the monument you had erected for him at the great age to which his splendid life was extended, and more than all, I know him to have been a great friend of my own father's, and with other pioneers of the county passed through the troublesome days and times of the war, yet it is a pleasure to look back and know that these great, grand, stalwarts were about the noblest that ever laid foundations for a new commonwealth. If you and I can measure up to the great standard our fathers left us, our lives will not have been useless or unsuccessful because theirs was not.

First they were "Black Abolitionists," and your father and mine and some of these pioneers were never so happy as when they were violating the iniquitous and cursed Fugitive Slave Law, and when one of these passed away I felt that he ought to be remembered. Eureka is the first newspaper I ever read and in many years of study to communicate with him by sign and word written and not by word of mouth, I remember having several conversations with him; and while at the cemetery I noticed the monument you had erected for him at the great age to which his splendid life was extended, and more than all, I know him to have been a great friend of my own father's, and with other pioneers of the county passed through the troublesome days and times of the war, yet it is a pleasure to look back and know that these great, grand, stalwarts were about the noblest that ever laid foundations for a new commonwealth. If you and I can measure up to the great standard our fathers left us, our lives will not have been useless or unsuccessful because theirs was not.

First they were "Black Abolitionists," and your father and mine and some of these pioneers were never so happy as when they were violating the iniquitous and cursed Fugitive Slave Law, and when one of these passed away I felt that he ought to be remembered.
Mr. Matt Parrott, partner with father on the Eureka from 1868 to December, 1883, in an address on the newspapers and editors of the 5th district, delivered in 1896, when father was 86, pays this appropriate tribute to father:

"For long continual service on one paper, Mr. R. Booth, the senior editor of the Eureka, easily stands at the head. He was a printer on the Eureka in 1858, and has been connected editorially with it ever since. In hisJNI_ and student, and possessed of a retentive memory, he was always a little in advance of the times. Radical at times, he expressed his views fearlessly and never doubted his conscience for expediency. His one misfortune alone (having been deaf from the age of 6 years) prevented his occupying the place to which he was justly entitled—the foremost among the great men of our early days.

REV. J. W. DAVIDSON'S TRIBUTE.

As a printer in our office, Mr. Davidson knew father well, and as a member of our family several years we knew and esteemed him most highly. He was a unusually gifted young man; his memory was marvelous and he was the idol of our children as a story teller. Later he was a teacher in our high school, then in Boone College, Crete, Nebraska, entered the ministry in Wisconsin and now resides in Madison, the State Capitol. The following poem is a contribution of Mr. Davidson's love for father and cannot be excelled either as a personal tribute or as a purely poetic production:

NINETY YEARS OF SILENCE.

Written in Memory of Edmund Booth.

His mother's song he heard; then silence fell,
To him all noiseless was his schooldays' play,
And these with songs unheard filled all the day.

Sad, sad, men sighed, "that he must must dwell
As in a voiceless world." But let his life's work tell
How strong the resolute soul; how mighty they
Who bent beneath the weight, and felt the tears that sway
The timid and the weak. A proud farewell
We speak, for thou hast stood life's testing pain;
Thou wast the conqueror of thine adverse fate;
 Sight of the soul far-reaching, thou didst gain;
O "ry of the wronged made thee articulate;
Rights of the dumb thou didst with might maintain;
Deeds like thy Lord's; these we commemorate.

"Obviously a reference to father's hatred of slavery.

The above voluntary expressions of admiration for father—one by a civil war soldier-correspondent, the second by a salient lawyer, the third by a lieutenant governor and fifth district editor, and the fourth by a printer-presbyter—are out of the usual line, and I feel that their inclusion in this narrative is not in the spirit of egotism, the only desire being to give these places on the records for our own satisfaction and that of the children. This poetic quotation also, I think, may properly appear here:

"He never sold the right to serve the hour,
For paltered with eternal God for power.
O good gray head, which all well knew!
O iron nerve, for each occasion true!
Oh, fallen at length
That tower of strength
Which stood unmove by all the winds that blew!

GOD'S GOODNESS.

Father, after mother's death, preferred to abide for the most part where he and mother had been so long together. Of course I looked after father in a general way, taking our Mr. Snyder's place for weeks and months at a time. I went over one evening for this purpose as usual. Generally we visited in an incidental way more or less. A casual remark of father's as to some event of the past, instantly inspired expression to a thought I long had entertained and I spelled out on my fingers, "God has been very good to you all these years." His response astonished me. He exclaimed, "Oh, yes, yes, and his voice broke, his frame convulsed and tears filled his eyes.

The long reserve was broken at last. Thus suddenly was I overwhelmed. For the holiest impulse of the soul had given voice in deep emotion to three short words in the spirit of real gratitude, of affectionate reconciliation, of conscious oneness with the divine will. I was inexpressibly glad. And I believe I speak only truth when I say he was glad, too, for he had revealed himself to himself—to you—to the good Lord above. With Him our father and mother now peacefully rest after their long pilgrimage of toil, devotion and love. This expression on the memorial window of the Congregational church, I think, is a fitting thought in closing:

"When earth is past,
Will not the songs of Paradisl gladness
Fall yet more sweetly on our opened ears
Because of all the silence and the sadness
Of these our mortal years?"