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

Thomas Eyre Booth

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THOMAS EYRE BOOTH'S REMEMBRANCES 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 him at 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, 1923, and another of Dec. 12, 1923, 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. You will 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,



a good bit of what you write will be of interest only to our children, but no matter; it will continue to interest their children and their grandchildren, and so on no telling how long. Indeed, what would we not give if we had the life history of the Booths and Walworths, of the Delavans and Hendershots, back through the generations. And started as this is with father's and continuing with yours and Hattie's and mine, the little that we may contribute, it will surely be a growing narrative--added to by our children as they come to our age and state of mind. Then do not fear making it too long or full; I would say, put in everything that you can recall of father and mother in their character and life habits, also of yourself in all your relations to their life activities. No, do not hesitate to bring yourself in; the rest of us want you, next to father, for in my mind and memory you, the two of you, are inseparable. I often wonder how father could have gotten along without you. Yes, Hattie and I can contribute, and I think I can say we will, but my own contribution will be meagre compared to what you are in a position to make.

WHEN FATHER CAME HOME.

It was in March, 1854. In those days there was not a mile of railroad or a telegraph line in Iowa. We knew father was on the way, but it was a long journey from California via the isthmus and up the Mississippi on a slow-moving steamboat and by Frink & Walker's four-horse coach line from Iowa City. It may be imagined that time seemed to drag along very slowly, and every stage arrival was awaited with increasing anxiety.

Our woodpile was in front of the house on the roadside, as was customary, even with Main street stores and woodpiles down town. The house stood just where the opera house was located many years afterwards. The weather that ever memorable day was not cold, and late in the afternoon, I, a lad of twelve, was sitting on a log, gazing westward down the street, or rather down the military road. There were only occasional footmen or teams on the highway then. But finally, away down the street, perhaps a quarter of a mile distant, I saw a traveler approaching. As he came nearer I observed that he was carrying a carpet sack in one hand. He had on a light-colored but heavy overcoat and wore a new glazed cap. Surely it wasn't anybody I was acquainted with in this locality. This intensified my curiosity, and when the big man came straight toward me, put out his hand and exclaimed, "Home at last," I knew it was father! I verily believe I was the happiest boy in America at that moment.

He scarcely stopped an instant, but started around the east

side of the house without asking any questions, I tagging pretty closely at his heels, and I turned the corner just in time to see mother fly out 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 m mother saw a man pass the east window and that she felt terribly scandalized when mother's strange performance met 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 approximate 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 x 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 nugget 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 telling 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 siezed with the natural impulse to run over and tell "gramma" that 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 immediately made arrangements with John Handy to put up a dwelling



for $150. That is as I remember it. We moved in that fall. I always had a boy's responsibility before that, but at nine years of age this was doubled and quadrupled as time passed. The wood had 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 Fisherville, a half mile distant. In the winter time I had to haul ice on my little sled wagon from Fawn creek, a half mile east--often bitter cold and the road snowy, or worse--lumpy, from alternate thawing and freezing. No overcoats or overshoes then for boys. My first overcoat mother brought to me at the printing office down town in the fall of 1858 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. N. Perkins (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 visions of the future, and I remember how picturesquely 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 farther. Uncle George Walworth, 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 sufficient to demonstrate that. In 1861 father, on solicitation, do-

nated ground at the north-east corner of the block, perhaps 48 fx feet 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 way 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 E. 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 Matt Parrott, on Booth street. Parrott was father's partner in the printing office, was married at 22 or 23, 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 Hellberg's barn. As the value of the lots 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 Reserve. I think we had two cows, and you would have smiled at, as well as admired, the double-rail shed that she and I built, with straw packed in between the double rails on three sides and the top covered with the same material to keep out a part of the rain and all the snow. The south side was open to the sun, and likewise the cold, as I realized when benumbed fingers so often drove me houseward.



Speaking of cows reminds me of the fact that after dark I hadn't the grit to start out on the lonely cow paths or timber roads toward the river unless mother was with me. I was 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 of course--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 dogs 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 fled like white-heads the moment he revealed his intention to eat us up. Another bobcat was killed later near Scroggs' residence on north Garnavillo 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 Fifield, mother's sister, used to tell with much gusto and elaborate details about mother. In 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. After dark this was regarded as a decidedly spooky xx 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 pop out at any moment. Ascending a hill she was surprised and overjoyed at seeing one of the cows quietly meandering homeward. "I thank you, Betty," she said to herself from the bottom of her heart. Then another cow came to view. "Oh, Rosie, how I tha thank you too." And presently, one after another, appeared the rest of them, each the unconscious recipient of copious exclamations of increasing surprise and gratitude from Emily, until, last of all, Mary Ann, as she always called mother, came trudging along, serenely 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

*Wapsipinicon River

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 moral stamina for the brothers and sisters to decide upon a three days' "raising" 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 threw 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. Clark Walworth and his brother-in-law, Nason, built the first heating plant put 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. So 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 since of the perilous risk she incurred, but the cow seemed to have some sort of an intuition of mother's courage or perhaps a realization of her uniform kindness, and never harmed her.



## IN THE BLACKBERRY PATCH.

Mother had her own way of doing things and it seemed especially so when we went blackberrying. She always struck out on independent lines, whether there were only two or three or a half dozen pickers. If I was along I went with her, for she was almost sure to find areas where pickers' feet had not trodden and the vines hung low with luscious berries. But a much more important reason--not as fully comprehended then as afterwards--led to my choice. In the early years the woods were the refuge of great yellow rattle snakes. Mother wanted me along no doubt because my ears were quick to detect the always startling,, whizzling rattle of that dangerous reptile. She could not hear and was in constant peril of walking right on a coiled-up rattler all ready to strike the foot or ankle with its poison-filled fangs. That thrilling zing-g-g, once heard, can never be forgotten. In the woods or on the prairies it was the same--always dangerous--for the black rattlers of the prairies were equally venomous with the yellow variety. And this reminds me that father, when mowing alone with a common scythe somewhere in the neighborhood of the Cass farm in 1854-5, was startled at seeing a snake writhing and twisting just in front of him. An investigation revealed the amazing fact that he had decapitated a rattlesnake, that undoubtedly was coiled up, sounding his unheard warning, and would have struck father a death-blow if the sharp scythe had not caught his uplifted head. Think what would have been his fate a mile or more from any farmhouse and three miles from home! It was certainly a providential escape, for which I feel he was very grateful.

## 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 awoke, 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 rattling. It did not take long to dispatch the small but just as vicious intruder, which had squeezed through a mouse hole in the corner of the bedroom. Suppose that had been mother's sleeping room, or father's and mother's afterwards, what might have happened?

## A STRANGE SUMMER.

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. What the trouble was I never knew. Mother, of course, was very anxious. Uncle Henry wanted Dr. Matson to see me; Father and mother abhorred 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 youhg. I grew worse, and finally in some way uncle Henry, who had no influence with mother, got word to uncle George Walworth, 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, looked 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 reasonable expectation that he would get her letter. And, as it finally turned out and I got well, this was no doubt a fortunate thing for all concerned.

## HOW MOTHER AND I LOST EACH OTHER IN THE WOODS.

It was in the summer of 1850, a year after my sickness. The blackberrying season was on in full blast. A wagonload of uncle Ford's folks came up for a day in the famous berry regions west of Fairview, in the timber stretching for miles east and west along the prairie farms opened up by Julius and J. M. Peet, Ambrose and Neal Parsons and others. In that load, as near as I can remember, were aunt Hannah, father's sister; Maria, her daughter, and William and Harlow, her sons, and possibly Danforth also. Of course I was crazy to go with them, but mother, following the bent of her independent spirit, and probably thinking there would be too many pickers for one locality , determined otherwise. So they went the Parsons way west and she and I took the Fairview road and then went directly east. I never shall forget the heavy timber, in large part great w white oaks, where the axe of the woodman had not been heard. Rxabx



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.

It might have been an hour we were thus engaged, having unconsciously wandered farther apart and finally out of sight of each other, when I suddenly observed mother's absence. I looked up and down the hollow and scanned the hills on either side, but she was no where to be seen. She might be stooping down picking berries, perhaps hidden behind a clump of higher bushes, or, what was scarcely thinkable but still possible, might have been bitten by a rattlesnake. At any rate there I was, apparently alone and unable to call her. I began to tramp wildly about , up and down, over the hills and back again, every moment increasing my alarm for mother and reawakening my terror of wildcats that might be ready at any moment to pounce on me from those big white oaks.

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 unwisely 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 view point it was all a horrible uncertainty--and father in California!

At last mother, compelled by exhaustion, started for home. When 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!

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 deveral years before his death.

HATTIT 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 even 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 eatables and a variety of bedding 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 pistol, 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 balls on the bottom of mother's pretty pewter syrup-cup, but to my surprise ~~surprise~~ she 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 Towser 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 1850-1-2 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 across 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 OPTOMISTIC 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 quietly dropped it into an inviting pool. No sooner 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 hook 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 three yokes of oxen, perhaps more. At last the journey through the desert nearly at an end, they reached a point 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 imprecatory voices of more or less alarmed drivers, who could not know the 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 Towser. Except this. One night Towser 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 teams. 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 Towser, as I used to narrate over and over again with real heart-felt sadness to Bertha and Mabel when they were children, poor Towser never came back again, and grandpa had to make the rest of his journey to far, far away California land without the watchful care of his and my affectionate, faithful dog. Why is not the following tribute applicable to dear long-lost Towser:

MY DOG.

The curate thinks you have no soul;<br>
  I know that he has none. But you,<br>
Dear friend, whose solemn self-control<br>
  In our four-square familiar pew,

Was pattern to my youth--whose bark<br>
  Called me in summer dawns to rove--<br>
Have you gone down into the dark<br>
  Where none is welcome--none may love?

I will not think those good brown eyes<br>
  Have spent their life of truth so soon;<br>
But in some canine paradise<br>
  Your wraith, I know, rebukes the moon,

And quarters every vale and hill<br>
  Seeking its master. * * * As for me<br>
This prayer at least the gods fulfill,<br>
  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 appals 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 father claimed it should stand. 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



his mining operations in the vicinity of Stockton, prospecting here and there as was the custom. A year or so after hsi arrival in California we received a Stockton paper containing a poem with the signature "E. B." My regret is that the poem was not saved, but I have a clear remembrance that its heart lesson was that men should be faithful to their manhood. Placed in the form of wholesome and I may say home-appealing verse, it must have been far more than ordinarily impressive.

I wish to add here, in passing, that father was a great lover of poetry, often giving passages from memory, and was also the author of many patriotic expressions before and during the civil war. A carrier's address was an unusually idealistic and entertaining production. This is too long to transfer to these pages, but we think the following meditation gives us a vision of father's deeper nature and altruistic faith--a revelation of the high levels of thought that marked him as a man apart, in a distinguished sense, from the mass of humanity, even in many of its better types of aspiration and attainment. The following was found among his occasional writings, perhaps indited after his return from the mines:

The iron age has passed away
As passed before the age of clay;
The age of gold is on us now
And steam is linked to the plow.
Old Xerxes might rejoice again
For Ocean feels another chain; — Atlantic cable laid by Cyrus Field
The sun himself, obedient made,
Is harnessed 'mong the marts of trade;
The car, the steamship and the wheel
Sing paens through their ribs of steel.
The lightning speaks along the wire
With lightning speed and words of fire,
Fused and combined in uses one,
And spirits stand at Reason's throne,
Connecting known with the unknown.
Immortal man, of Godlike power,
Rules sovereign o'er the gladsome hour,
And glorying in his strength of thought,
Surveys the various labors wrought,
And laying all his being forth
Aims to renew creation's birth.

The glorious dead our homage claim,
They of enduring name and fame,
Whom no low purpose led astray,
Who blinded none with treacherous ray,

Sought no cheap fame through bloody strife,
But in their bravely truthful life
Taught us a lesson noble, grand,
All can admire, all understand.
Humboldt, Mann and Prescott died
And Nature's great heart heaved and sighed.
Why should we weep? They do not die
Whose lives are living prophesy.

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 big fireplace while his words were as sweet music to my enraptured senses. He had a pronounced rythmic movement that was captivating to a small urchin, and that, in later days, always reminded me of our Latin lessons in scanning Virgil at Meriden.

HIS SOUTHERN TRIP.

One illustration of his poetic habit is suggestive. He speaks in his autobiography of being taken by Lewis Weld, head of the Hartford institution, on a trip to South Carolina and Georgia, if my memory serves me. They had been invited by the legislatures of those states that they might learn something of the methods and results of deaf mute instruction, then almost unknown. In the test, members were requested to ask for a sentence to be placed on the blackboard by father, Mr. Weld communicating it to him wholly by signs. Everything was going satisfactorily. Finally a member recited some lines from a standard poet for trial. Mr. Weld was almost aghast. 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. Father was 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



SOME BOYHOOD RECOLLECTIONS.

Perhaps I may venture here to return to matters that may not be of large importance in themselves but still are a part of the early experiences of our family.

I recall vividly an incident that happened in the woods 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 bruised or hurt, I don't know--have 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. I 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 way 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 jump 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 game between father and myself. He was a rapid walker, as you are, 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 clambered on. The 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 near enough to the house to put the horse into a trot. A few jolts of that kind and off I went. I recollect very distinctly that I landed right under the horse and that one of his hind feet struck my apron into the earth. The step might have been on my head or body. I shall never forget that deep hoof-print on that apron

This horse episode reminds me of what I have been told happened to me at the Walworth 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 no malice aforethought they ran over me. Fortunately uncle Den, perhaps 23, happened to be near at hand, rescued and carried me into the house, my face badly cut and bloody and blood streaming down over my clothes. A scar across the bridge of my nose and under each brow--not ordinarily discernable--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 $16 a month, I think it was, he and his (and aunt Hannah's) mother, and Julia also, to live in the hotel, the Wapsipinicon House, which uncle Ford was completing. That meant our removal also to Anamosa. Mother, 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. N. 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 about every family had to have their pictures "took," ours among 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 Emma, born in Fairview June 17, 1848, and about three years old at the time, 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." Maria and Harlow were taken together and Harlow, perhaps seven, was so scared at seeing the photo man shoot his bullseye at him 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 a stream fifty feet wide, or more, from the Buffalo, River northwest of town, right through the lower 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 an I occupied, among them. The house belonged to Linus Osborn, brother-in-law and partner of F. W. Gillett. Elisha Brown, wife and daughter lived in the main part, and when he got up in the morning he stepped in water a foot deep. We all had to move out. The house next and a little higher up was that of Father Wright, our Congregational minister. Our family found refuge in other quarters until fall, when we moved to the new home 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 swimming on the bottom, south side of the Wapsie, twenty rods below the dam. The depth was one to two and three feet. In a freak of playfulness Will caught me by the heels, dragging me 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 face to face, upright in the current, alternately pulling 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 let loose my hold on him at that moment, and after a hard struggle I reached safety. Will followed without special trouble. The Wilson boys, panic-stricken, never lifted a finger to help us, and probably they could not. But Will never attempted any swimming capers 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 pigeons by the million, 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 ten dollar gold piece in a letter for that purpose. Pratt Skinner, brother to the doctor, went 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

*Wapsipinicon River

I showered copious maledictions 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 kettle of mother's unequalled dumplings, came to our table, to the especial satisfaction of father. I shot and trapped many prairie chickens, quails 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 home one day from the farm with a load of hay. I always loaded and stacked the hay and I considered myself an expert --though I don't think I ever heard anyone else hint as much. I was on the load, father driving, and we were following the east line fence, bumping along over the rather rough sod. Suddenly I saw a prairie chicken running along in a path under the waving grass ahead. 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 wadding had taken fire, as it occasionally did, and had fallen on the load, the hay, rack 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 Meriden Academy, N. H., I made a contract for a $50 Parker double-barrel breech-loader on advertising, and when you, Frank, were at uncle Ford's, west of Webster City some years later, I took the gun with me when I paid them and you a visit. Doubtless you remember that we gathered in a good many chickens--and some watermelons--during my stay of three or four days. The Parker finally went to Frank Buxton, a printer, for $20.

## A NEW PAIR OF SKATES.

In the winter of 1854-5, a merchant down town, Joe Secrest, 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 Dubuque, Mrs. Fifield being mother's sister, we stopped a few days with our friends, the Roswell Crane people, at Langworthy, on account of a break-down of the Frink & Walker stage coach. While there I happened to stumble on an ancient 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 bumps thrown



in, and quite got the hang of the business. As soon as the Secrest stock arrived I besieged father for a pair. Money was a mighty scarce article, but father made a deal with Secrest 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 morningand 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. 2 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 successfully and joyously consummated. Two days, eight miles travel, toilsome labor for a man, boy and weary oxen, that doubtless wondered what it was all about--for a single pair of pot-metal muley skates--cost, $1.00. That was the price of wood and the price of skates in those days. But I kept the skates for years--never had any others--practiced on the pond where the library stands now, and was counted just as swift, just as skillful, and I know I was just as happy as the owners of the fancy three dollar brass toe-capped turn-up styles.

## MY FIRST STATED SALARY.

Speaking of prices for wood in the early days reminds me. A gentleman by the name of Show (o 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 Wapsipinicon Hotel, and later still went to Missouri, entered law and finally was elected to the supreme bench of the state, so I was informed. Well, Show hired me to kindle fires for six months in two big box stoves in the frame school house on the hill--salary, 50 cents per month. It was a mighty cold winter, lots of snow, long wood, good, bad and indifferent--mostly of the latter qualities. Somebody was hired to cut it and I lugged it in. The kindling I picked up around home, carried it in a basket. No road; cut across lots, climbed three or four rail fences, built my fires and was expected by the teacher and fifty or sixty big and little scholars to have that barn-like school house inhabitable by nine o'clock. If I succeeded in getting things redhot it was only to burn the faces next to the stoves almost to a blister while their backs were ashiver from the zero breezes that whistled through the rattling windows and doors. I remember that the mercury went 40 below on one occasion. To make the situation in my case still less entrancing, in those days the parents had to pay the teacher three dollars for each pupil for the term. My three dollar salary just balanced the tuition father was responsible for in my case. But Hattie was attending also--another three dollars! However, Show never had the cheek

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 $25 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, maul 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 down 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 12-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 Southwestern 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 $30 left on his hands.

But the road was completed somehow. The cars came March 9, 188 1860, and the depot was located up-town, followed gradually by new and old business establishments. The first important one was the building of the big hotel, the Fisher House, in 1856, for which I hauled many a load of brick from Oliver Lockwood's, a mile south of town.



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 hauled to Dubuque and sold for a dpllar a bushel as I remember it. That summer ten acres more were broken and the next two seasons the wheat crop was about doubled

## A PRINTER'S DEVIL.

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 cash all told, but store orders almost entirely and few 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 balance 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 $525--$275 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 conditions 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 no 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, Meriden, 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 $200 to $300 an acre when the boom was on a few years ago.

## ACCURATE SURVRYING 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 surveyer by the name of S. J. Dunham, whom we boys regarded as a queer old codger, was employed and four of us went out to run new lines. A wide, rocky gorge had to be crossed, the chainmen being Perkins, I think, and myself. We clambered down over the steep rocks to the creek bottom where a corner was to be located. Dunham jabbed his surveyor's pike down into the earth to make a hole for the stake. Some obstacle hindered. He kept digging and finally the remainder of the old corner stake was brought forth! Father was amazed and we all thought it pretty accurate work.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Returning home from down town one night in the later fifties, father and I were walking along the roadside just opposite the Gillen House (corner of Main and Garnavillo 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 irresistable.

MARKETING IN DUBUQUE.

In a previous note I spoke of wheat-selling in Dubuque. That city was the leader in this respect for all 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 sawmills 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 Whites 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 G. Joslin (who married father and mother July 26, 1840) and the doctor, his son, Clark Joslin, went up the river on a three days' hunt. In that time they captured twenty-one deer, averaging seven a day. Wm. Sutherland, supervisor from Scotch Grove some years ago, a perfectly reliable man, told me that he once saw a drove of deer numbering seventy-five, quietly feeding on the prairie or lying down, like so many cattle.

Father used to take three or four days for these Dubuque trips. Ten dressed hogs of 150 pounds would mean 1500 pounds--a very good load--proceeds $22.50, 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 bushe of apples in which my chief interest of course was centered. I remember his return on one occasion and my irrepressible eagerness for father to pull out the apple sack, and how ecstatic I was when he handed it to me. Mother, as usual, was very careful about saving, making them last as long as possible. I recall gazing so longingly on a piece of apple on a shelf high above my head. Just a thin slice was my allowance for a day. So it



went day by day--a small bite and a big hunger--with incidental and sorrowful reflections on grandma's tales about the apples and "great Bartlett pears" rotting on the ground in the orchards of Massachusetts. How different now! Nevertheless mother was a past master--or, perhaps, past mistress, in preserving black berries, wild straw berries and putting up crab apples, plums and, occasionally, wild grapes in most edible forms for winter consumption. Most wild fruits were very plentiful.

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 two 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 useful Christian citizen. Dr. French, of the 14th Iowa, speared a muskellunge of 28 pounds. Others were taken that went 22, 21 and 16 pounds, and Frank and I took Rev. J. B. Fiske out one night in the seventies and I speared a pickerel of 11¼ 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 1869-70 (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 charms and sweet odors of floral environment. When Bertha passed into the new life beyond, May 12, 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 and industry. Hattie possibly may remember something about it and the skeins of yarn we delighted to stretch between our extended wrists for winding into balls, Then in was transformed by knitting needles into stockings or mittens, or sent to the weaver's, 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. N. Starkweather bought it and something 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 way was she 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 blind man's buff mother was the queen of the flying squad of buffers 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 must have been a marvel of activity and celerity 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 grandpa
and grandma 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 AWAKEN 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 seized 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 plentifulness 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 lips--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 were invariably 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 remains thirty years or more ago for the purpose of removal to the Anamosa cemetery, but of course without results. However, a small monument, called white bronz, was placed on our Anamosa lot for her; also another for Grandma Booth, whose grave strangely was lost sight of in the years and changes in the cemetery following father's return from California. Only one thing do I remember of little Harriet. I did something to her she didn't like and naturally enough she criew. 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. What blissful, glorified environments, what spiritual development must have been hers 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 Mabel, 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 27, 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 Brown berry 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-featured but very red-faced little urchin peacefully reposing 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 chub of a boy, who later gave a part of his time to play, a part to reading and study, and all the time to propounding that everlasting, irrepressible "W-h-y?"

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 them--with the always appreciative office hands at the same time your brain cells and fingers were formulating type-lines for the edification of the readers of the Eureka. Later, as a student at the Iowa State College, selecting and installing the machinery, type and stock for a College printing plant and making it a successful and paying institution, you also earned enough above your school expenses to cover the trip with me to the centennial exposition at Philadelphia in 1876 and graduated with honor in 1877. But that "why" spirit was the fundamental, ever active impulse of investigation, analyzation and demonstration, especially as illustrated by original designs and figures in the primary and developing processes of mathematics, that wrought out at Council Bluffs, Philadelphia, Washington, D. C., and Omaha your career as a successful and eminent teacher of the deaf, as your father was--a guide to their footsteps, an opener 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, 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 it. I remember well when a boy that father always expressed his views with absolute fearlessness in the company of men in groups or singly.

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 county, 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 indispensible, for this preparatory work that, as the years passed, developed so splendidly in this state.

GOING AWAY FROM HOME.

Mother passed away in January, 1898, 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 summer in the mountains at Douglas ranch, ten miles from the Springs. But this was impracticable unless her mother 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 and all seemed in cheerful spirits. In fact I had been thinking for some days that father was going to have a vacation novel and delightful in many ways--opportunities to visit and observe Frank's classes and methods, the general management, and all the other details pertaining to the Philadelphia institution. Its extent may perhaps be inferred from the fact that Frank was at the head of a department with twelve teachers under him. This in addition to all the other privileges and attractions of a large city. My mind was running in some such way as that, and I supposed we were all in substantial accord in that respect, including father himself. But what a mistake! Father, to all appearances busy with pleasant anticipations, suddenly burst out: "It is no trifling matter for me to leave my home; and if the ticket had not been bought I would remain here."

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 realization of father's loneliness without mother and the old home that I never had before. I think father had somehow imoibed the idea that perhaps we were expecting to make his stay permanent. If so 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 mother.

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 forbear making a quotation from a well-known army correspondent in illustration of this statement. This is an extract from a letter written by John C. 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. We took the Eureka, Edm Edmund 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 my hand 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 companionable. His son Tom, whom I once knew, took the paper and now I believe it 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 conjuring for a name one day for his 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.

Yours fraternally,
Magee."

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 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 probably was not clearly understood by Mr. Magee, as his speech was 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. Milner, 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 was the first Editor I ever saw, and while it was necessary 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 troublous 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 were 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 them passes away I feel that he ought to be remembered.

"The Eureka is the first newspaper I ever saw, and times without number I have walked from the farm to Wyoming the time it was due there on the mail to get the copy and took it home in the eventide, almost swallowed it, and especially the old column we now call "locals," which you designated as "Home Matters."

"I want to say that the Eureka has not diminished from its high standard, purposes and aim as established by your late father and which were drilled into you from a barefoot boy to manhood's majestic state and the amount of good it has done is not computable by the nine digits and cipher. It has always and has ever been eternally right and not afraid to say so upon every great question.

"You were taught and brought up in the same school of thought as myself, and, of course, I could not believe otherwise, but we are in good company and plenty of it."

Mr. Matt Parrott, partner with father on the Eureka from 1858 to December, 1863, 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 continued service on one paper, Mr. E. Booth, the senior editor of the Eureka, easily stands at the head. He can justly and honestly be called the nestor of fifth district journalism. He was a writer on the Eureka in 1856, and has been connected editorially with it ever since. And he has always been a good editor too. A man of fine learning, splendid reasoning powers, a reader 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 dodged his conscience for expediency. His one misfortune alone (having been deaf from the age of 8 years) prevented his occupying the place to which he was justly entitled--the foremost among the great men of our early days."

REV. J. N. 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 an unusually gifted young man; his memory was marvellous and he was the idol of our children as a story teller. Later he was a teacher in our high school, then in Doane College, Crete, Nebraska, entered the ministry in Wisconsin and now resides in Madison, the State Capital. The following gem 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 songs he heard; then silence fell,
To him all noiseless was his schoolmates' play,
And birds with songs unheard filled all the day.
"Sad, sad," men sighed, "that he apart must dwell
As in a voiceless world." But let his life's work tell
How strong the resolute soul; how mighty they
Who beat beneath their feet the fears 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;
*Cry 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.



A REFLECTION.

The above voluntary expressions of admiration for father--one by a civil war soldier-correspondent, the second by an eminent lawyer, the third by a lieutenant governor and fifth district editor, and the fourth by a printer-preacher-poet--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 them place 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,
Nor 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 unmoved 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 quivered 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 me--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 Paradisal gladness
Fall yet more sweetly on our opened ears
Because of all the silence and the sadness
Of these our mortal years?"