

(Two copies of this article were included in box of material from Julia Wheeler home, after her death in Nov. 1954)

### RECOLLECTIONS OF SEVENTY YEARS IN IOWA

(Copies probably made for friends of the article as prepared for and printed in Annals of Iowa (October 1945)

An interview with Mrs. Robert Miller Haines (Joanna Harris Haines) a graduate of Iowa College, now Grinnell College, of the class of 1865, a resident of Grinnell since 1855, and of Iowa since 1852, in the eighty-first year of her life, at Des Moines, Iowa, January 2, 4, and 6, 1928.

#### Memoranda made by Frank I. Herriott

"Yes, my recollections of those early days in Lee County between 1852 and 1855 and of my coming to Grinnell in 1855 are still vivid; and if you think that they are of interest I will give you what I can.

"I was born November 24, 1843 on a farm near Harrisville, in Butler County in northwestern Pennsylvania. The hamlet or village was named for my grandfather, Ephraim Harris. My father, James Harris, was what we would call today a well-to-do citizen. Besides his farm he was very much interested in the promotion of a smelting furnace. The high price of iron was his undoing just as the high price of food stuffs during the late World War was the undoing of so many in Iowa in the last ten years. He extended too much and then mortgaged his farm to secure a note for a relative. The fall of prices following the Mexican War and the general depression ensuing was too much for him. He lost his holdings and decided to seek his fortunes in Iowa, tales of which were most alluring.

"One fact I may note before coming to the journey west. Whenever it rained it was observed that all the pools of water about my father's furnace were covered with oil or tinged with the iridescent hues thereof. Back on the farm was what we called the 'bog ore spring' to which people came from miles around to drink of its oily water believing it had a beneficial medicinal effect. Soon after we left for Iowa, on the site of my father's smelting furnace was discovered one of the great oil wells--a gusher I believe it would be called now. I recall a philosophical remark of my father's about our leaving that fortune behind us; he said that probably we were better for not having it for the children of many of those who struck oil were spoiled by the inrush of unexpected and unappreciated wealth. He never bemoaned the loss of the farm and its incalculable riches.

"My brother McKee had come to Iowa in 1851 and his letters how had been so enthusiastic that my father and mother had no doubts as to whether they should journey when the financial disaster compelled them to give up the old farm. They, with my three brothers, Ephraim, James and William J., and three sisters, Susan, Jennie, Mary and myself started for Iowa in the fore part of 1852, going virtually all

the way by river boats--first down the Allegheny to Pittsburgh, thence on the Ohio river on the steamboat, 'The Diadem', to Cairo; thence on the 'New Englander' up the Mississippi to Keokuk.

"For reasons of economy we took what was called the 'deck passage'. One incident I recall vividly. Although but nine years old, I could sing fairly well and was much given to it when by myself. My father and mother were very ardent not to say radical abolitionists. Many of my songs reflected their prejudices and public views on the heated subject of slavery. My singing soon attracted attention and I was asked to sing by the passengers. I sang the songs with which I was most familiar and one afternoon I sang the following words to the tune of 'Susannah Don't You Cry'

"I'm on my way to Canada  
That cold and dreary land  
The dire effects of slavery  
I can no longer stand."

"My soul is vexed within me so  
To think I am a slave  
I'm now resolved to strike the blow  
For freedom or the grave."

"I was utterly innocent of the sorry significance of the song on board an Ohio river steamboat with Kentucky always to the south of us and citizens of that state and other slave states farther south among the passengers. All of the anti-slavery passengers applauded my childish performance, but that song led to a rumpus. The Southerners protested in no uncertain terms to the management. My mother soon sensed the situation and told me not to respond any more to requests to sing. I can appreciate now what trouble I might have incited.

"Few other events of the trip remain with me. One incident however, I remember. As we were nearing the end of our journey, I recall my father looking over toward the Illinois side and pointing out the town of Nauvoo and saying to my mother in tones that imported horror and utter reprobation "That is the place where the Mormons live." He dwelt on some of the then recent events which had shocked the country, the riot which had led to the assassination of the Mormon leader, Joseph Smith. I had no appreciation of what was involved but I got the ideas that they were some sort of terrible wild animal that was very dangerous.

"What were your general impressions of the country and the people you came among in Lee County?"

"My impressions and those of my parents were somewhat mixed

We settled on the western side of the Lee County close to the then notorious 'Half-Breed Tract'. We had lived on a rough, hilly farm of Pennsylvania, the land of which was not very fertile. We had heard so much of the beautiful prairies of Iowa and their amazing fertility. We found this country hilly and wooded and its roughness was not more attractive than the region from which we had come. My own disappointment was quite pronounced and I did not get over it until I came to Grinnell three years later. There were none of the vast open stretches of which we had been told. But there were bronze wild turkeys, prairie chickens and quail which my brother brought home for my mother to cook for all of us to enjoy.

"The people seemed strange to us, many of them even queer. Our neighbors, as I recall them were either New Englanders or Southerners, but the latter were more numerous and controlled local affairs. The intense abolitionism of my parents tended to alienate us and to enhance our sense of loneliness.

"My father and mother had been old school Presbyterian. When the discussion of slavery became acute in the 40's they left that church because of its attitude toward the question and joined the Free Presbyterians. They found no church of choice in Lee County. They would have joined the Congregational church of their New England neighbors but their stiff notions of rectitude on the subject in controversy and their stout consciences would not allow them to do so. The Congregationalists were patronized by, if not financially assisted by, the American Tract Society and that body would not publish any anti-slavery tracts, or in any manner give its countenance to the anti-slavery agitation.

"It was not long before my father's strong views were well known and, of course, the Southerners looked askance at him and the whole family, and this increased our sense of isolation. My father did not then engage in any open or offensive agitation of the slavery question, but his home was the gathering place for abolitionists and this fact did not increase the good-will for us among the southerners although I cannot recollect any unkindness shown to us. I can remember my father and two of my sisters going to Salem in Henry County to an anti-slavery convention that aroused a great deal of interest in the family and neighborhood. I believe it was in 1853.

"Another bright memory that does not fade is connected with Lee County. It was in our first home in Iowa that I read Uncle Tom's Cabin. We took the National Era in which the story first appeared. I looked forward to each issue of the paper with an intense interest that exceeded any I have experienced since. I was so eager to get the paper from the carrier that I would go down the road to meet him as

he brought the mail. If I was lucky in getting the longed-for chapter, I would go off in the woods near the old home to read its fascinating chapters before anyone could interrupt, or if I was not forehanded, I was alert to get it when it was laid down and I would hie myself to the loft to read it undisturbed.

"The presidential campaign of 1852 made little impression on my mind save that, following my father's views, I had little interest in either of the two major parties because of their opposition to radical anti-slavery propaganda. I recall a meeting at our house at which a Wesleyan Methodist preacher--a Mr. Whitten--said without any sort of reservation, 'I never trust a Whig.'

"Did you suffer the usual hardships of the pioneers. For instance, did your parents endure any such distress as is so vigorously described in Rovaag's Giants of the Earth?

"In a general way we suffered none of the privations and misfortunes portrayed in that story of the Dakotas thirty or forty years ago. We lived in a log cabin, of course. But we were always comfortable. We were poor, as we measure worldly possessions today. One thing I particularly remember is that mother always had a plentiful supply of bedding and no matter how cold the winter nights might be we were always warm. One matter you may be interested in. The women of the family always slept on the first floor of the cabin and the in the upper part. This practice was due, I presume in part, to the needs of the young children. In the order of things that today would be reversed.

"A characteristic or trait of my parents I want to leave on record. Although my father suffered sorry financial disaster in connection with his ventures in Pennsylvania, endured many privations of comforts, not to say luxuries, he and my mother had been used to, during all those first years in Lee County and later in Poweshiek County I never heard either one of them singly or together, in my presence or when they were conversing alone, bemoan their financial reverses or complain about the hard turns of fortune they had endured. At the table or about the fireplace, or after they had retired at night, their conversation was about the traffic in living to be sure, but we had with it always much high thinking and whole some discussion. These memories I hold as my precious heritage.

"One of the interesting experiences in Lee County was our relation to the New Englanders. Between our place and Warren was Congregational church. The pastor was Mr. Danforth Bliss. He came to see us and wanted us to join his church as there was no Presbyterian.

church within reach. He was much disappointed that the strict views of my parents prevented, but it made no difference in his good-will and graciousness to us. He was a man of beautiful spirit and a person of wide influence for good in our community. His church was not strongly supported and received much of its support from people back in New England.

"Another fine influence in my early girlhood was a young schoolteacher, another New Englander, a Miss Allen. She was one of the many teachers sent out from New England by Governor Blaine of Vermont. She was a beautiful woman and a wonderful teacher, a graduate of Mt. Holyoke. The natives stood in awe of her. Whatever may have been the traditions as to mischief and tricks, they were never tried upon her in her administration of the school. She easily dominated the entire situation. She married a Mr. Scoville, another New Englander of marked refinement.

"The Southerners among whom we lived seemed very queer to us. Their customs and manners and speech were strange to us. They were kind and neighborly if we or anyone encountered ill-fortune, but for the reasons I have mentioned we had very little to do with them.

"My father's discontent with the character of the land, the rough hilly country, and the additional fact that he was living on rented land made him begin to look about for a better location. He wanted prairie land that he could cultivate more extensively and more easily. By good fortune he read one day in 1854 the advertisement or announcement of the plans of Mr. J. B. Grinnell for the planting of a colony in north central and eastern Iowa. A church and a school of high learning were to be established and anti-slavery principles were to be maintained. I cannot tell now whether he read it in the National Era or the New York Independent which he may have come upon in the home of Reverend Nichols. As soon as he read the prospectus, father exclaimed, "That's the place for me."

"My father and brother Samuel went up to Grinnell in the fall of 1854 to examine its prospects and, if satisfied with the outlook, to purchase a farm as circumstances might suggest. My father decided to purchase of Mr. Grinnell 80 acres of land at \$4. per acre, a mile west of the north line of Grinnell. My father returned to Lee County and my brother remained to prepare for our coming in the spring. He was a carpenter and built a shack for us on the corner of West Street and Fifth Avenue. He had it ready for us when we arrived.

"We left early in the spring of 1855, or late winter, for snow was still on the ground when we started. There were ten of us, my parents, my oldest brother Ephraim and his wife, Rachel Hanlin,

my two brothers, James and William Jr, and my three sisters, Susan, Jennie, Mary and myself. We travelled in two covered wagons drawn by yokes of oxen, and in a two-seated buggy drawn by two very spirited horses of which my father was very proud, and which were very mettlesome and hard to hold for they were in the best of condition. The weather was very cold and we had to travel with care for my mother was suffering from a severe attack of lumbago. Save mother's distress, we enjoyed the journey. We had plenty of warm clothing and we stopped along the way at several places, among them Bonapart and Agency City. At night the men slept in wagons while mother and the girls put up at the hotels, or taverns as they were called. There were no incidents of note on the trip. I recall particularly the spirited horses that were hitched to the two-seated buggy. They were hard to hold and when we were entering Grinnell, notwithstanding the long tiresome day they had had, those horses went prancing along the prairie road and up to the Chambers House where we were given a warm welcome. Among those who greeted us was Abbie Whitcomb, later Mrs. Horace Robbins. I can still see her sister Helen looking from the window as our horses trotted up to the front door of the hotel.

"This journey to Grinnell gave me the fulfillment of my dreams of the prairies. In 1855 there was not a tree within three miles of Grinnell. We could see for miles and all my longing for vast open spaces was satisfied. The selection of the town site we were told was due to Mr. Grinnell's inside information that the managers of the Rock Island Railroad, then called the M & M, was to locate a station at this point.

"Another thing I shall remember as long as I live with unalloyed and inexpressible pleasure was the magnificence of the wild flowers that made the prairies for miles in all directions one gorgeous mass of variant beauty. I simply cannot adequately describe it. Some three years ago I was asked to tell of my pioneer experiences to the Kiwanis Club of Grinnell. I indulged in what must have seemed to the present generation utter extravagance in adjectives and I felt they would suspect me of mere exuberance. But several whose memories went back to the same days, either in Grinnell or in other parts of the state, assured me that I had not misrepresented the facts and that I could scarcely overdraw the astonishing beauty and profusion of the prairie flowers. As one looked over the stretches he must have been made of stone not to have been thrilled by the loveliness of it all. I cannot now name any number of species, but purple and yellow blossoms, wild roses and sweet williams were conspicuous among them.

"I learned to appreciate the extraordinary richness of the soil about Grinnell. My father came from Lee County well supplied

with the late farm implements, among them a breaking plow. He was soon in demand to break the heavy sod of the prairie. One part of the plow interested me and everyone else. In front of the plow-share there was attached to the beam a sharp knife blade reaching to the point of the share that was to cut the sod ahead of the share, thus insuring a clean cut line in the turnover and reducing the strain on the plow and the oxen pulling the plow. This plow was a matter of no little curiosity to the other residents as one of the new devices for agriculture. Because of its efficiency my father was asked to do, and did do, most of the first breaking of the prairie around about Grinnell in the next two or three years after our arrival. The extraordinary richness of the soil was a matter of constant astonishment and delight to my father. As you know it was almost coal black as the plow turned the sod over. I recall how my father exclaimed time and time again as he looked at the sod, "How rich this is" and compared it with the poor farm land we tilled back in Pennsylvania.

"Our method of planting corn and potatoes may interest you. One of my brothers or sisters or I would follow the plow and drop at regular intervals the seed corn or potatoes and the next time around the plow turned another furrow over and so covered the seed. Was it hard work? Not to me. The new farm life was a constant delight.

"One childish horror I suffered--and not exactly childish either--came from the innumerable snakes that infested the prairies. We encountered them in all directions, and there were some very dangerous kinds such as rattlers and copperheads. My brother Will kept us in a state of terror from his irrepressible habit of killing them in a reckless manner. He was constantly doing so. His method was not with sticks or stones but by picking them up by the tails and snapping their heads off. How he could do it and how he did it so skillfully I never could understand. But he would, even though my father rebuked him time and again for his recklessness and often forbade his doing it. But he brought the rattles into the house by scores.

"My recollections of our first days in Grinnell prior to the Civil War cluster about several persons or incidents; First, the founder of the town, Mr. Grinnell, and the character of the people we found there, or who came soon after; second, Professor & Mrs L. F. Parker and the education I received under their teaching and the ideals they exemplified; third, the coming of Iowa College & its trustees, faculty and students; fourth, the movement for the abolition of slavery and John Brown's journey through Grinnell & conferences with those in sympathy with his program; and fifth, the onset of the Civil War and its frightful disturbance of the ongoing and progress of our peaceful life.

"Each of these phases of our old life constitutes a story by itself and I can give you only hints and glimpses of what actually occurred, or suggest the variant phases of the influences which remain in my memory. They are typical of the best in the beginnings of Grinnell and in the beginnings of the state. Time has worked memories colored by prejudices, or marked predilections, and I hope none will ascribe to me arrogant or false assertion.

"I had all the natural pride of an American. I became possessed early with the pronounced opinion that Grinnell was a very fine place in which to live and that new people were just as good, or if you must have it, a little better than the average. I have since learned that there were many other communities in the state made of people precisely like my fellow townsmen of Grinnell whose culture, public spirit in public affairs and philanthropy and private and public morals were the same as ours. One does not live as long, as I have and not discover that virtually all people, no matter whence they may hail, are very much the same at heart in public purpose and private virtue.

"The most significant fact about Grinnell in contrast with my first home in Iowa was the predominance of New Englanders. Their ideas and ideals prevailed, but intermixed with these were emigrants from the middle states and a few Southerners. In contrast with this was the fact that in the country ten miles west and south and east of town were settlers who came largely from the south, or from the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. The difference in habits, customs and speech were pronounced and interesting. Each group was "odd" or "queer" to the others, and how we laughed at the speech and ways of some of them. The New Englanders came with better schooling and higher educational ideals than those of us from the western states and in our hearts we admitted the fact, but we never "Twant so" and "Do tell" always amused us. Their nasal twang and some of their pronunciations always made us smile. Such were their "licker", "Cider" and "hoser".

"One experience has remained bright in my memory. I was playing with one of my best girl friends about a cherry tree in the spring. I told her with pride that I had climed that tree. Whereupon with a reproving manner she said, "You clim the tree". We squabbled for some time as to which was correct but in time we learned that we were both wrong.

"We noted that the New Englanders were sharper in trade and



in making bargains than were the people from other parts. They were keen and shrewd. My father was a kindly man and seldom given to caustic comments, but he frequently characterized them as 'blue-bellied Yankees' and never felt quite comfortable in dealing with some of them, though he was never mistreated as far as I can recall. He felt that he had to keep his wits at their best in dealing with them and he did not like it.

"The few Southerners always interested us. One fine family, the Hayes, came with their emancipated servant whom we all knew as 'Uncle Ned'. We were impressed by their always treating Uncle Ned with such consideration. They were very kind to him and he repaid them. Their slow, drawling southern speech was very charming. I always liked to hear them talk. There was a softness in their tones and enunciation which was pleasing to our ears. I cannot say so much for the speech of the mountain whites and the Hoosiers who were numerous in the township about Grinnell.

"The central figure and the most interesting personality was, of course, the founder of the town, Mr. Josiah B. Grinnell. He was a man of marked ability. He was alert, energetic, quick in his actions and thinking and incessantly active in the furtherance of his many and varied interests. He comprehended and summed up all the characteristics of the founder and promoter of a western town. Including in his program a rather elaborate and extensive scheme for the moral improvement, the educational advancement and the social uplift of those he sought to attract to this western town, his scheme connected with at least two of the great subjects of national debate. I refer to slavery and the suppression of the liquor traffic. Because of this we became more self-conscious and contentious than we would otherwise have been.

"Mr. Grinnell was the life of every social gathering. He was witty and quick at repartee. He had a fund of good stories and told them well. Whether this was because of his exuberant nature or a part of his desire to make people glad that they were in Grinnell I will not undertake to say. But I recall that as a child I was constantly watching him to see what he would say or do next, for I knew that we would have a good laugh at some turn he would take.

"As a public speaker he was very successful. His advocacy of the restriction or elimination of the evils of slavery was an invariably interesting subject and at times a thrilling subject when fugitive slaves were the subject of local concern, or the horrors of the struggle in Kansas were uppermost, or the last days of John Brown. He knew how to touch the quick of human feelings. His political opponents found him a hard one to encounter in debate. He was much sought after in campaigns prior to the 'ar, and later,

as his career in Congress may suggest.

"I recall an example of Mr. Grinnell's sagacity in scoring points in any project he was pushing--and he was always prompting some plan or other. One of the strong characters among the first settlers was Henry M. Hamilton. He and Mr. Grinnell did not pull together in their plans for promoting the town. Their differences were accentuated because Mr. Hamilton owned land south of the present line of the Rock Island tracks while Mr. Grinnell's holdings were largely to the north. Mr. Hamilton, by shrewdness or by luck, got business developments--two stores--built on his side of the dividing line and this seemed to be the probable course of business, much to the chagrin of Mr. Grinnell. He offered various counter inducements but none seemed potent until he persuaded the trustees of Iowa College, then in Davenport and seeking a better or more congenial location, to come to Grinnell, offering them as a gift, twenty acres which were accepted as the college campus. With the coming of the college the tide of public interest and the drift of trade began to turn to the north of the median line. Another item in his strategy was his gift of the present park which constitutes what in many Iowa towns is called the public square.

"With the founder of the town I recall with more feeling his good wife, Mrs. Grinnell. The two were an interesting contrast. He was exuberant, vocal and congenial, a hail-fellow-well-met always. She was reticent, serious, even severe, in mein and manners and gave the impression at first of sternness. But with all her sadness of manner and restraint in words, Mrs. Grinnell is one of the bright lights of my girlhood and my later womanhood. She was very kind in doing the little things that make life easier for children and neighbors. I shall never forget her gift to us of a bag of apples, the first we had in Grinnell, a kind of fruit we so longed for and could not obtain.

"Among the attractions of the town to my father and mother was the announcement of the plans for schools. These were first the common, or what is now called the grade and high schools; and second in Mr. Grinnell's forecast was a University. I recall caustic comments on the extensiveness of the undertaking. Fortunately the coming of Iowa College put a stop to the talk of a University. Our first school was taught by two New England young women, Miss Lucy Bixby, and then by her sister, Miss Louise.

"The coming of Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Parker was a happy incident in the promotion of Grinnell as an educational center. Prior to that we had done well, but when he began his work in 1856 everything

changed and a 'new era' was inaugurated. He was a graduate of Oberlin which to my youthful mind was the radiant center of all that was best. Readers of Edward Eggleston's Hoosier Schoolmaster know that the pioneer schools followed a simple treadmill routine in reading, writing and arithmetic. Professor Parker, as we called him even then, changed all that. He made us eager to learn because he made us realize that knowledge was the means of introducing us to the larger life of the world about us, and to the significance of the history of the world. Recitations were not a dull round of repeating what we had memorized. He illuminated the schoolroom and made our lessons vital. They related to life and they made us see what we were as individuals and how we might play a part in the progress of better things.

"Mrs. Parker was then and ever after one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen. Her brown eyes and gentle ways and gracious manner of addressing young and old alike gave her remarkable influence. Professor Parker was more vigorous and electric in his work and she complemented him in the most telling way. They gave a distinction to the educational life of the community that constituted a most important part in Grinnell's fame.

"I was due to Mr. Cooper, later Colonel Cooper, that Professor and Mrs. Parker came to Grinnell. He had known of them at Oberlin and their noteworthy success in teaching. Professor Parker wanted to settle in 'bleeding Kansas' as we called it in anti-slavery circles, and went there to find a suitable location. But not finding just what he desired, he stopped in Grinnell, as he had promised, and stayed.

"The beginning of 'Iowa College', or 'Grinnell College' as we now call it, constitutes a story by itself. Mr. Grinnell had very ambitious plans for the establishment of 'Grinnell University'. It was incorporated as such and Mr. Grinnell was president of the board of trustees. As originally conceived, the University was to consist of two seminaries or schools. One was to be located on what is the present campus of the college for young women. The other, for young men, was to be located in the southern part of the town, south of the present Rock Island railroad 'at a safe distance' from the Female Seminary as the speech of those days put it. Mr. Grinnell gave twenty acres. Further, as a part of his plan for establishing the University, he offered to give the proceeds of the sale of certain portions of the lots which he sold to settlers to provide a working capital or the beginning of an endowment fund. A wooden building was erected on the present site of Alumni Hall. (Registration Building)

"Why was not Professor Parker made President of the University and later of Iowa College when it came to Grinnell?"

"Answer to your question involves one of the most interesting phases of our life. While we were in fact an anti-slavery community, there were sharp differences among us as to the proper limits of agitation. Professor Parker was an 'Oberlinite' and all such were looked upon by the general public as extremists and dangerous radicals. This was especially true in Iowa. Oberlin stood for abolitionism and Woman's Rights, subjects of violent contempt in the minds of both men and women outside of the small circle of advocates for Coeducation, and upon this too the majority looked with grave doubts as to its wisdom and propriety. It was common talk that Professor Parker was promised the presidency of Grinnell University, but Mr. Grinnell and others with whom he had to work soon realized that however much they might sympathize with the 'new thought' and progressive ideas of the day, they had to reckon with the strong undercurrent of common opinion in outlying regions from which they hoped to draw popular support for the new and ambitious University. The great majority looked at our radical reforms, or innovations as they were often called, not only with disapproval but with dread, precisely as the public today looks on Bolshevism, Communism and sundry sorts of Socialism. The people of Iowa in those days, as generally through her history, were conservative, and Mr. Grinnell and his associates soon clearly sensed this fact.

"The matter of the Presidency hung in the balance for several years. The Civil War kept the decision in suspense and finally Dr. George F. Magoun of Bowdoin was called. His attitude while 'advanced' was not so extreme in popular estimate as was that of Professor Parker, the 'Oberlinite'. The relations of these two men and Mr. Grinnell constitute a most interesting study in human relationship in the furtherance of public philanthropy. All had pronounced feelings and striking traits of character. Each was possessed with keen mentality and physical vigor and in the strenuous discussions of those days, their influence on the course of events was definite and at times emphatic. They added much to the zest and picturesqueness of life in the town and constituted the major elements in its distinction abroad.

"The visits of John Brown on two occasions gave to Grinnell fame, or infamy, according to one's view of his career and character. I saw and heard him on one of his trips, but was too young to appreciate the significance of his coming. When he came with the eleven negro slaves whom he had taken from their masters in Missouri, I saw and heard him. The town was all agog with excitement. Everyone knew he was there and there were many who did not approve of his high-handed method of invading Missouri and kidnapping the slaves. Though abhorred slavery as an institution, they realized that promiscuous interference with the rights of the slave-holders would bring on the

horrors of slave insurrection and Civil War would wreck the country's peace. Mr. R. M. Kellogg, an old-line Democrat, was outspoken against public sympathy with such invasion of public and private law. Brown spoke in the church where the stone church now stands. I do not recall much of what he said but he denounced the oppression of the evils inflicted upon him. One thing I particularly remember, namely, the harsh features, the cold relentless eye and hawk-like look of the hero of the Ossawatamie. He kept children and men alike in a state of awe, and in this fact, I suspect, lay much of his ability to do things that most men would not dare to try to do.

"The next morning Brown stopped in front of the schoolhouse with his covered wagon and hailed Professor Parker who went out to talk to him. We youngsters knew as soon as our left who was out in front and one of the pupils asked if we might not go too. Either because of his sympathy with us or because he appreciated that it was useless to insist that we remain in our seats and pursue our studies, Professor Parker consented. We all scurried out and, huddled in a cluster of excited children, saw the much talked of man sitting on the sagonseat holding the reins of the horses. Again that cold, stern eye held us in awe and silence. We were much excited to see a number of wooly heads and flashing black eyes and rows of white teeth greeting us through cracks in the wagon cover where it had been lifted by some of the irrepressible pickaninnies crowded in the back of the wagon. We were all a tiptoe to see and agog with suppressed excitement.

"Because of my parents' views on slavery we were among the conductors of the underground railway. It was a subject of little discussion, in fact was not mentioned at the table or about the hearth. Father and mother frequently engaged in whispered conversation and we knew something was on, or up, as the phrase goes, but we were never told what it was. I believe it was not generally known that our house was a 'station' because my parents were so reticent. We children knew it was a dangerous topic and talk of it might subject the family to arrest or attack and we instinctively said nothing.

"One night, when I came home I found a colored woman with a baby in her arms sitting by the fire. We heard mother and father whispering to one another and realized that preparations were being made. In the morning she and the baby were gone. My brother had taken them on their way. Needless to say, all this gave a peculiarly exciting turn to life for us and made us all as alert as crickets to the course of public events, especially those relating to slavery.

"The episode of the negro boy's education which so disturbed the peace of Grinnell was one in which my brother Ephraim was involved in no small measure. It sharply illustrates the curious phases and limitations of public and private feelings about the irrepressible negro question. The public today is not different in such matters than it was in those exciting days.

"My brother, Dr. Ephraim Harris, entered the army service as a regiment physician. In New Orleans he became in some way interested in an attractive negro lad called James. How my brother took charge of him or felt concerned to help him, I do not recall. But he brought him to Grinnell. His education became a matter of concern and he was sent to the town school. His appearance in the schoolroom precipitated another crisis. Grinnell had a number of New Englanders who were idealists and friends of humanity when thinking of faraway China or Africa, or South Carolina, but their zeal in good works cooled when the actualities came into town and next door. Several citizens protested against James being put with their children in school. Some years before the exclusion of negroes had been sought under a resolution denying 'foreigners' the privileges of schools but it had been voted down by a narrow margin. Two citizens, both from New England, Captain Clark, an old sea captain, and Mr. Kellogg, were leaders of those who came to the school to protest. But Professor Parker announced in no uncertain terms that anyone who ventured to take the negro boy from school must do it over his dead body. As previous experiences like the Oberlinite indicated what his assertion implied, the lad was left alone. Nothing came from the flare-up but smoke.

"Strangely I do not recall much about the political discussions preceding the election of Abraham Lincoln. My father and mother were so extreme in their views that they looked upon Lincoln with indifference, if not with positive suspicion. He did not attack slavery; he stood for the protection of the slave-holder's rights in his ownership of his slaves, even sustaining the Fugitive Slave Law. His opposition to the extension of slavery was not extreme enough for them. For years they had read the Radical, a paper of extreme anti-slavery views. Later it was called Principia. During the campaign of 1860 and in the forefront of the war it expressed most adverse opinions about Abraham Lincoln and had no respect for his program of 'saving the Union' regardless of the abolition of slavery. It was not until a year after the beginning of the war that my father became convinced that the abolition of slavery was one of the inevitable results of the struggle and that Lincoln's course began to interest me. The Proclamation emancipating the

slaves, of course, changed everything for us. Lincoln became one of the fixed stars for us.

"My recollections of the Civil War are not so clear as it seems they should be. Four of my brothers and my father enrolled in the army. My brothers, James, aged 23, and Samuel, aged 30, enlisted in Company B of the Fortieth Iowa Infantry, and served for three years. My oldest brother, Dr. Ephraim Harris, was associated with the same regiment as assistant surgeon but the major part of his service was in charge of a hospital given over to smallpox cases in New Orleans. My brother McKee also served. Their commanding officer was Colonel Cooper and they and my mother remembered gratefully his kindness and consideration. My youngest brother, William, was ordered into service, but because of my mother's need of his help with the farm he was released, and I sympathized with his disappointment.

"My father's war experience was interesting. He was 58 years old, beyond military age. He joined the famous 'Greybeard Regiment', The Thirty-seventh Iowa Infantry, which was mustered into the national service on December 15, 1862 at Muscatine and mustered out at Davenport May 24, 1865. All of the members of the company were over forty-five years of age and were not subject to draft or other call of the government. The Regiment saw considerable service of an important character at St. Louis, and Franklin, Missouri, at Rock Island, and Alton, Illinois, at Memphis, Tennessee, Indianapolis, Indiana, and Columbus, Ohio. At Indianapolis and Columbus, they guarded prison camps. My father enlisted because his conscience and earnest feelings about slavery compelled him. He was not much concerned at the outset because he felt that President Lincoln was not determined to abolish slavery, but when it became clear that slavery was to be abolished, he felt no doubt as to his duty to do all that he could to assist. The achievements of the Regiment and their substantial service won high praise from their officers and the Government.

"Our work in college was of course, completely disturbed by the outbreak of the Civil War. We felt the same intense feeling that surged up in the public at large. One incident that I recall had much of the absurd and pathetic in it. It occurred at the outset of the war. The girls of the college, mostly of my class, made a flag, or perhaps bought it, at any rate possessed one. When Stephen A. Douglas died, soon after the war broke out, Mr. Kellogg, an ardent Douglas Democrat, asked that the flag be hung at half-mast in recognition of the fact, because of his prominence and because from the time of his defeat for the Presidency he had earnestly

urged the South not to secede, and both the North and South to support the Union. We should have readily acceded to Mr. Kellogg's request, but we did not, rather we summarily refused to do so. Mr. Kellogg in some heat and precipitancy came to the college building where the flag was and undertook to lay hands upon it and himself to carry out his purpose. He was anticipated and resisted by the boys. Some hot words were passed and Mr. Kellogg had to abandon his plan. The next morning there was seen dangling from a tree in front of his home an effigy, and attached thereto the ungracious words, 'Empty barrels make the most noise'. My neighbors never had much respect for college students after that. It was a silly performance. In the light of subsequent developments I know that we should have put aside our prejudices but we were such ardent youngsters, as most young people are, that we could not forget that Douglas had tried to defeat Lincoln, that he started the repeal of the Missouri Compromise which we regarded as a sacred compact and that he was a defender of slavery which we held indefensible.

"Our college class work was more or less erratic just as work was disturbed in the World War, by constant excitement from news of the events, by our concern for our loved ones facing the dangers at the front, and by the intermittent reports of victories and then of defeats with horrible destruction. Systematic and serious study was very difficult, or rather impossible.

"All of the able bodied men of the classes enlisted. James Ellis and Carl Kelsey of Grinnell; John Carney whose home was near by; Hiram Cardell of Malcolm; Joseph Lyman from west of town and W. S. Kennedy, a Quaker from Sugar Creek township; all of these went to the front. From my own class of 1865 three left; Henderson Herrick, Robert M. Haines and Charles Scott. Mr. Haines was a Quaker and was constrained by his own and his mother's views as to war, but he went into service of the 'Christian Sanitary Commission' and served as a nurse at a hospital in St. Louis. Charles Scott's name revives memories of his hard struggle. He had to work for his living while in school. He was an excellent student, a strenuous worker and died two years after graduation.



Seventy Years in Iowa -

Joanna Harris Haines

From Annals of Iowa, October, 1945. Interview in Des Moines, Iowa, January, 1928

Yes, my recollections of those early days in Lee County between 1852 and 1855 and my coming to Grinnell in 1855 are still vivid. I was born November 24, 1843, on a farm near Harrisville in Butler County in northwestern Pennsylvania. The hamlet, or village, was named for my grandfather, Ephraim Harris. . . . .

My father's discontent with the character of the land in Lee County, rough and hilly, and the additional fact that he was living on rented land made him begin to look about for a better location. He wanted prairie land that he could cultivate more extensively. By good fortune he read one day in 1854 the advertisement or announcement of the plans of J. B. Grinnell for the planting of a colony in north-central and eastern Iowa. A church and school of high learning were to be maintained. As soon as he read the prospectus, father exclaimed, "That's the place for me".

My father, James Harris and brother Samuel went up to Grinnell in the fall of 1854 to examine its prospects and, if satisfied with the outlook, to purchase a farm as circumstances might suggest. My father decided to buy of Mr. Grinnell eighty acres at \$4.00 per acre, a mile west of the north line of Grinnell. My father returned to Lee County and my brother remained to prepare for our coming in the spring. He was a carpenter and built a shack for us on the corner of West Street and Fifth Avenue. He had it ready when we arrived.

We left in the spring of 1855 or late winter, for snow was still on the ground when we started. There were ten of us, my parents, my oldest brother Ephraim and his wife Rachel Hanlin, my two brothers James and William J., and my three sisters, Susan, Jemie, Mary and myself. We traveled in two covered wagons drawn by yokes of oxen, and in a two seated buggy drawn by two spirited horses of which my father was very proud. . . . . The weather was very cold, but we had plenty of warm clothing. We stopped at several places. . . . . At night the men slept in the wagons while mother and the girls put up at hotels, or taverns as they were called. The spirited horses were hard to hold and when we were entering Grinnell, notwithstanding the long tiresome day they had had, those horses went prancing along the prairie road and up to the Chambers House where we were given a warm welcome. I can still see Abbie Whitcomb, later Mrs. Horace Robbins, who welcomed us and her sister Helen, looking from the window as our horses trotted up to the front door of the hotel.

The journey to Grinnell gave me the fulfillment of my dreams of the prairie. In 1855 there was not a tree within three miles of Grinnell. We could see for miles and all my longings for vast open spaces were satisfied. Another thing I shall remember as long as I live . . . was the magnificance of the wild flowers that made the prairies for miles in all directions one gorgeous mass of vibrant beauty. . . . . purple and yellow blossoms, wild roses and sweet williams were conspicuous among them.

I learned to appreciate the extraordinary richness of the soil about Grinnell. My father came from Lee County well supplied with the latest farm implements, among them a breaking plow. He was soon in demand to break the heavy sod of the prairie. One part of the plow interested everyone. In front of the plow-share and attached to the beam was a sharp knife blade reaching to the point of the share which was to cut the sod ahead of the share, thus insuring a clean cut line in the turnover and reducing the strain on the plow and the oxen pulling the plow. The plow was one of the new devices of agriculture and because of its efficiency, my father was asked to do, and did do, most of the first breaking of the prairie around Grinnell in the next two or three years after our arrival.

Our method of planting corn and potatoes may be of interest. One of my brothers or sisters or I would follow the plow and drop the seed corn or potatoes at regular intervals and the next time around the plow turned another furrow over and covered the seed. Was it hard work? Not to me. The new farm life was a constant delight.

One childish horror I suffered - and not exactly childish either - came from the innumerable snakes that infested the prairies. We encountered them in all directions and there were some very dangerous kinds such as rattlers and copperheads. My brother Will kept us in a state of terror from his irrepressible habit of killing them in a reckless manner. He was constantly doing it. His method was to pick them up by the tails and snapping their heads off. He brought the rattles into the house by the score.

. . . . Mr. Grinnell was always promoting some plan or other. One of the strong characters among the first settlers was Henry M. Hamilton. He and Mr. Grinnell did not always pull together in their plans. Mr. Hamilton owned land south of the present line of the Rock Island and Mr. Grinnell's were largely to the north. Mr. Hamilton, by shrewdness or by luck, got business developments, two stores, built on his side of the dividing line and this seemed to be the probable course of business, much to the chagrin of Mr. Grinnell. He offered several counter inducements but none seemed potent until he persuaded the trustees of Iowa College, then at Davenport and seeking a better or more congenial location, to come to Grinnell. He offered them as a gift twenty acres which were accepted as the college campus. With the coming of the college the tide of public interest turned and trade began to turn north of the median line. . . . .

The beginning of Iowa College, or Grinnell College as we now call it, constitutes a story in itself. Mr. Grinnell had very ambitious plans for the establishment of Grinnell University. It was incorporated as such and Mr. Grinnell was president of the board of trustees. As originally conceived the university was to consist of two seminaries or schools. One was to be located on what is now the present campus and was to be for young women. The other, for young men, was to be located in the southern part of town, south of the present Rock Island railroad at a "safe distance" from the female seminary as the speech of those days put it. Mr. Grinnell gave twenty acres and further, as a part of his plan for establishing the university, he offered to give the proceeds of the sale of certain portions of the lots which he sold to settlers to provide a working capital or the beginning of an endowment fund. A wooden building was erected on the

present site of Alumni hall (registration building).

The coming of Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Parker was a happy incident in the promotion of Grinnell as an educational center. Prior to that we had done well, but when he began his work in 1856 everything changed and a new era was inaugurated. He was a graduate of Oberlin, which to my youthful mind was the radiant center of all that was best. He made us eager to learn because he made us realize that knowledge was the means of introducing us to the larger life of the world about us and to the significance of the history of the world. He illuminated the schoolroom and made our lessons vital... . It was due to Mr. Cooper, later Colonel Cooper, that Professor and Mrs. Parker came to Grinnell. He had known them at Oberlin.

Why was not Professor Parker made president of the university and later of Iowa college when it came to Grinnell? . . . While we were in fact an anti-slavery community, there was sharp difference among us as to the proper limits of agitation. Professor Parker was an "Oberlinite", and all such were looked upon by the general public as extremists and dangerous radicals. This was especially true in Iowa. . . . It was common talk that Professor Parker was promised the presidency of Grinnell University, but Mr. Grinnell and others with whom he had to work soon realized that however much they might sympathize with the new thought and progressive ideas of the day, they had to reckon with the strong current of common opinion in outlying regions from which they hoped to draw support for the new and ambitious university. . .

The matter of the presidency hung in the balance for several years. The Civil War kept the decision in suspense and finally Dr. George F. Magoun of Bowdoin was called. His attitude while 'advanced' was not so extreme in popular estimate as that of Professor Parker. The relations of these two men and Mr. Grinnell constitute a most interesting study in human relationships and in the furtherance of public philanthropy. . . They added much to the zest and picturesqueness of life in the town.

The visits of John Brown on two occasions gave to Grinnell fame, or infamy, according to one's views of his career and character. . . When he came with the eleven negro slaves he had taken from their masters in Missouri, I saw and heard him. The town was agog with excitement. Everyone knew he was there and there were many who did not approve of his high-handed method of invading Missouri and kidnapping the slaves. Though they abhorred slavery, realized interference . . might bring horrors of slave insurrection and civil war. Brown spoke in the church where the stone church now stands. . . Next morning stopped in front of the schoolhouse with his covered wagon and hailed Professor Parker who went out to talk to him. . . One pupil asked if we might not go out too. . . We were much excited to see a number of woolly heads and flashing black eyes and rows of white teeth greeting us through the cracks in the wagon cover where it had been lifted by some of the pickaninnies crowded in the back of the wagon.

Because of my parents views on slavery, we were among the conductors of the underground railway. . . but it was not mentioned. . . we knew something was up, but I believe it was not generally known that our house was a "station" because of my parents were so reticent. We knew it was a dangerous topic. . . In the morning, the colored woman was gone. . . We were as alert as crickets. . .

My brother, Dr. Ephraim Harris, entered the army service as a regiment physician. In New Orleans he became in some way interested in an attractive negro lad called James. How my brother took charge of him or felt concerned to help him I do not recall. But he brought him to Grinnell. His education became a matter of concern and he was sent to the town school. His appearance in the schoolroom precipitated another crisis. Grinnell had a number of New-Englanders who were idealists and friends of humanity when thinking of far-away China, Africa, or South Carolina, but their zeal in good works cooled when the actualities came into town and next door. Several citizens protested against James being put in with their children in school. . . Two citizens both from New England, Captain Clark (an old sea captain) and Mr. R. M. Kellogg, were leaders of those who came to school to protest. But Professor Parker announced in no uncertain terms that anyone who ventured to take the negro boy from school must do it over his dead body. Previous experience warned them, and the lad was left alone. Nothing came from the flare-up but smoke.

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My father's war experience was interesting. He was 58 years old, beyond military age. He joined the famous "Greybeard" Regiment, the 37th Iowa Infantry . . . served from Dec, 1862 to May, 1865. All were over 45 years of age and were not subject to draft or call. . . Regiment saw considerable service in Missouri, Illinois, Tennessee and Ohio. At Indianapolis and Columbus they guarded prison camps. . .

Our work in college was, of course, completely disturbed by the outbreak of the Civil War. . . All the able bodied men of the classes enlisted. . . From my own class of 1865 three left: Henderson Herrick, Robert M. Haines and Charles Scott. Mr. Haines (later her husband) was a Quaker, but went into service of the Christian Sanitary Commission and served as a nurse in a hospital in St. Louis. . . "

(Article as cut and used during early months of Grinnell's Centennial observance, 1954.)