VISIONS OF USEFULNESS

FROM J. B. GRINNELL TO HARRY HOPKINS:

A HISTORY OF GRINNELL, IOWA, 1854-1914

By William Deminoff

For Betty, Kathy, Steve, and Anne

The dominion-heart of America will be far inland, toward the West . . . . Those regions . . . will compact and settle the traits of America, with the old retain'd, but more expanded, grafted on newer, hardier, purely native stock. --- Walt Whitman, Democratic Vistas

The dream of the pioneer did not envision a society of new pattern, rather a more attractive place in the social fabric for himself and his family. --Allen G. Bogue, "Social Theory and the Pioneer," in Turner and the Sociology

BEFORE THE FOUNDING

The 19th-century push to settle the American west started with two Frenchmen paddling canoes southward on the Mississippi River in 1673. Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet and their companions were the first whites, accoding to record, who set their eyes on "the beautiful land," as Iowa was justly called by the native Americans who inhabited it.

The land stayed relatively inviolate until 1788 when another Frenchman, Julien Dubuque, made a compact with the Sac and Fox tribes and got a crew of miners to begin extracting lead from the west shore of the Mississippi. The miners formed Iowa's first settlement, and their boss was the first to work the land and enjoy the wealth it produced.

But a grander vision of what Iowa and other western domains had to offer came when Thomas Jefferson proposed that the French be paid $15 million for possession of the Louisiana Territory. The embattled Napoleon knew that these immense lands owned by France were vulnerable to British conquest, and so in 1803 he took the money while he could, applying it to his own military enterprises in Europe. America, on the other hand, now had the means to move from a collection of colonies to the dimensions of a vast nation.

But first this nascent state had to deal with the people called Indians. Money and force—but mostly the latter—were the means to that end. The western lands held by the Indians were (in Robert Frost's words) "unstoried, artless, unenhanced"; but the enterprising whites would change all that. The federal government entered into a series of treaties that in time effectively dispossessed the Indians of their lands. Hounded westward and finally sequestered on reservations, these first Americans saw the white settlements move raggedly but relentlessly from the Mississippi to the Pacific.

For Iowa, the operative accord was the Black Hawk Treaty of 1832. Historian Joseph F. Wall says that before that year "it is doubtful if fifty people lived across the Mississippi in the entire Iowa region." But by 1844 the population was 75,000 and growing. In 1846 Iowa considered itself populous enough to give up its territorial status, and on December 28 it became the Union's 29th state.

The year 1845 was also the year that Chief Poweshiek and his people in 40 Fox lodges were treaty-bound to leave their villages, located around the Skunk River in east-central Iowa. Heading for a reservation in Kansas, they stopped to winter in Missouri. Known to his people as "roused bear," Poweshiek balked at his forced exile and said he would go no further. But it wasn't long before he moved on without resistance, having been told by a white official that "we are your friends, [but] if you persist in your purpose of making war on the whites, many of your squaws and papooses, as well as your braves, will be butchered." The chief heeded these words and went to Kansas; years later he died there and was buried in an unmarked grave. The magnanimous whites in

the meantime had given his name to the land he was forced to abandon.

The white migration to Poweshiek County began soon after May 1, 1843, the effective date of the Treaty of 1842. Beginning in the fall of 1843, there were settlers squatting on the land, almost all of them without any confirmed claim to the plots they occupied. The first of these whites in the county was Richard B. Ogden from Morgan County, Illinois, who built a cabin in Union Township. The first Poweshiek County tract to be officially surveyed and sold by the federal government was in Bear Creek Township in the east half of the northwest quarter of Section 18; this became the property of John J. Talbott of Holmes County, Ohio, whose deed was entered on August 27, 1847. Other settlers were members of the Manatt family from Ohio who came to the county in 1845–46. Their land purchases in or near what is now Brooklyn (originally Brookland), Iowa were recorded March 20, 1848.

By then there were 20 families in the area, and Poweshiek County had already been officially organized under a legislative act of January 24, 1848. The first election took place on April 3, and the platting of Montezuma as the county seat was recorded on July 22. In the following year, the county's population jumped to 443; and by 1854, the year that J. B. Grinnell came to found his community, the number rose to 1,953.

Shortly thereafter, the community of Grinnell was not only outstripping all other Poweshiek towns in population but, by virtue of the aggressive stewardship of its founder, was also becoming one of Iowa's, and indeed the west's, best known towns. The following pages are an attempt to tell the story of a community that developed under a founder whose origins, personality

and interests reflected the complex and often gritty nature of America's push toward "manifest destiny."

J. B. GRINNELL: EARLY LIFE

The city of Grinnell, Iowa, was founded on March 4, 1854. America as a nation was only 65 years old, and its 14th president, the Democrat Franklin Pierce, occupied the White House. The most important piece of legislation enacted that year was the Kansas-Nebraska Act which left it to the people in the territories to decide whether they wanted slavery or not. Inherently divisive, the act guaranteed that there would be a terrible conflict in the young nation. But that would be seven years later. The act's major effect in 1854 was to push the anti-slavery forces toward a new Republican Party.

The country was continuing to grow, with its population then at 24 million. New York City had 700,000 people, with additional hundreds of thousands coming through it from foreign lands. Chicago's population was about 60,000, but in the Windy City, Cyrus McCormick was producing a thousand of his reapers a year, and with good reason: the price of wheat was going up, from 72 cents a bushel to more than $1.40 within 1854 alone. Most important, there were strong moves to bring the railroads across the Mississippi so that the lands beyond could be opened to development.

America was thus looking outward, and as increments of its population moved away from the east, they also moved away from the European, and particularly English, modes of thought and conduct that characterized the earlier America. In 1830, Ralph Waldo Emerson had asserted the need for a more indigenous culture, and as if in response to his call, Henry Thoreau in 1854 was completing Walden (with a famous reference to J. B. Grinnell's cousin Henry Grinnell in the last chapter), Walt Whitman was finishing Leaves of Grass, and Melville and Hawthorne were probing America's moral and social dilemmas.

More practically, Commodore Matthew Perry was making America's economic destiny more manifest by opening trade with the empire of Japan. England was pursuing her own national interests by engaging in the Crimean War, which would contribute to the panic of 1857 in America and inevitably affect Grinnell, Iowa, in its early struggle for survival. Although at war in Balaklava, the British were simultaneously extolling the fruits of peace in the Crystal Palace exposition, where the McCormick reaper was one of the exhibits.

American expansiveness was of great interest to Josiah Bushnell Grinnell. A Congregational minister, he had come to Iowa to restore his health but most of all to pursue his beliefs about religion, education, politics, business and industry. A remarkably enterprising man, he built those beliefs, as well as a deep antipathy to slavery and hard drink, into his community. His life and career were coterminous with American frontier development and would not end until the frontier was declared closed in the last decade before the beginning of the 20th century.

J. B. Grinnell was born on Forefathers Day, December 22, 1821, on a farm in New Haven, Vermont. He claimed that he came from Huguenot immigrants on one side of his family, following the lead of other Grinnells who linked their heritage to French nobility. But genealogists have not been able to show any traceable relationship between the Grinnells of America and the French Grenelles from whom the family name purportedly derives. Some Grinnells see it as much more likely that the family came, not from France, but from good plain English stock, there being many Grinolds, Grenells, and other variants of the name in pre-1600 Britain.

The French connection arises because the progenitor of the Grinnell family in America was Matthew Grennell, presumed to be the same as a Mathieu Grenelle born in 1602 in Macon, France. But there is no good evidence showing that the American Matthew and the French Mathieu were one and the same. The only certainty is that a Matthew Grennell was listed as a prominent resident of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1638, and from him the Grinnells in America got their start. That Matthew came from England is certain (most likely in 1629), but whether he was born and spent his early life in France is not at all certain.

From Matthew, the line to J. B. Grinnell is well documented, and there is no doubt that he was descended from John Alden and Priscilla Mullens of Mayflower fame. Matthew's grandson Daniel (1664-1741) married Lydia Pabodie (or Peabody) in 1683. Lydia was the daughter of Elizabeth Alden Pabodie, whose parents were John and Priscilla Alden. Daniel and Lydia lived for about 20 years in Little Compton, Rhode Island, and among their eleven children they

had a son George (1702-59) who married Mary Bull. George and Mary's children included Daniel (1729-1801) who became the husband of Ann Chapman. Daniel and Ann's third child was Reuben (1755-1815) who married Mabel Martin Everts. Reuben and Mabel had seven children, the oldest of whom was Myron (1785-1831) who married Catherine Hastings. The second son of Myron and Catherine was Josiah Bushnell Grinnell.

Under variant spellings, the Grinnells in America developed as an extensive family rooted in New England but eventually branching out throughout the United States. More than 50 Grinnells, including J. B.'s grandfather Reuben, are known to have fought in the Revolutionary War. The more noted members of the family have included shipping magnates Henry and Moses Grinnell (see below); Julius Sprague Grinnell (1842-98), Illinois state's attorney who prosecuted the Haymarket Riot defendants in Chicago in 1887 (with misguided help from J. B. Grinnell); George Bird Grinnell (1849-1938), ethnographer, naturalist and conservationist after whom Grinnell Glacier and Grinnell Lake in Montana are named; and Joseph Grinnell (1877-1939), zoologist who was the pioneering first director of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, Berkeley.

Many of the early Grinnells in America were seafarers. Among them was a Lt. William Grinnell who, during the Revolutionary War, served under John Paul Jones. Heroic as a sailor, William also showed some simple gumption when he wrote to the great captain and told him to pay back the money that Grinnell had lent him! More affluent and more influential than the good lieutenant were Henry Grinnell (1799-1874) and Moses Grinnell (1803-77) who operated a fleet of merchant vessels out of New York City. They and textile magnate

Joseph Grinnell were the sons of Cornelius Grinnell of New Bedford, Massachusetts, who built a fortune in shipbuilding and commercial shipping.

Henry Grinnell was elected first president of the American Geographical and Statistical Society, and Grinnell Land on Ellesmere Island in the Arctic was named for him. He is also mentioned in a famous passage at the end of Thoreau's Walden. Interested in exploration, Henry financed Arctic expeditions, including the unsuccessful attempt to find Sir John Franklin and the crew of two English ships lost while seeking the Northwest Passage in the years following 1845. By virtue of Henry's endeavors, the Grinnell name has for long been a part of the decor of the White House. This is in the form of a desk that Queen Victoria presented to President Rutherford B. Hayes in honor of Henry Grinnell's efforts to find Franklin and his men. The desk was made from the timbers of the Resolute, one of the ships sent by Grinnell to the Arctic and abandoned there, later to be recovered by the British. The desk continues to be used in the Oval Office of the White House.

Moses Hicks Grinnell also contributed to the Arctic rescue attempt. A partner with his brother Henry in the shipping firm of Grinnell, Minturn & Co., Moses owned the celebrated clipper ship The Flying Cloud. He also served as president of the New York City Chamber of Commerce and was a member of the original Central Park Commission. A powerful financier and associate of political boss Thurlow Weed, Moses supported the anti-slavery candidacy of William Seward at the 1860 Republican Convention. His cousin, J. B. Grinnell, was a fellow delegate who voted for Abraham Lincoln.

Although rooted in the east, Moses was actively involved in the western

movement, particularly as it had to do with abolitionism. He was one of a group of anti-slavery financiers who in the pre-Civil War period provided subsidies to spur Free Soilers to settle in the western territories. Moses Grinnell was a director of the New England Emigrant Aid Company which "devoted itself to the problem of planting free-labor towns in Kansas," and this might be the way that Grinnell, Kansas, got its name.

Unlike Henry and Moses, J. B. Grinnell came from a much humbler side of the family. His grandparents, Reuben and Mabel, settled in New Haven, Vermont, in 1791 after farming in Salisbury, Connecticut, and Lanesboro, Massachusetts. In New Haven, located about 25 miles south of Burlington near Lake Champlain, Josiah was born into a farm family working the hardscrabble of northern New England. From his earliest years, he knew the strenuous regimen of farm chores coupled with biblical discipline. He helped with plowing, drove cows to pasture, washed sheep, and harvested crops. His most vivid recollections of his years as a farmer's boy were "of bare feet and nursing stone bruises; binding Canada thistles with stray stalks of wheat; guiding in locomotion a string of steers at a plow, with a rebound of stumps and stones which struck one's anatomy . . . "

Along with these privations, J. B. recalled the daily chore of learning Bible verses and the harder one of attending Sunday services. "Families rode to church in springless lumber wagons, over hubs and stones, affording painful exercise rather than amusement of the young, and to the mothers in weariness a doubtful means of grace." But there were also fun and games, and as an active youngster J. B. played fox and geese with his peers, ran barefoot races, and joined in other sports and diversions. As he grew older, he found that his

friends often enhanced their pastimes with alcohol. He recalled seeing the effects of its "cruel sorceries," but he himself was not immune. One day he proposed a contest to see who could "longest inhale at the bung" of a barrel of hard cider. Young Josiah won, but ended up with what the doctor called "alcohol on the brain," a classic hangover that helped make him a teetotaler for life.

His experience was not unusual. In New Haven as elsewhere, "every household was generously stocked with liquid necessities. . . ." In fact, liquor was a big industry in New Haven; in 1820 one mill owner reported converting 1000 bushels of grain into 300 gallons of booze. "Drunkenness was a disgrace, but [evidence of it] was determined by the simple rule of whether a man could stand on his feet." J. B.'s grandfather was among those who failed the test, church records noting that on September 4, 1818, Reuben Grinnell was censured for "drinking too freely of spiritous liquor . . . "

Reuben's son Myron, on the other hand, was an abstainer who served at various times as a constable, justice of the peace, selectman, Congregational Society clerk, and teacher. J. B. proudly recalled that Myron as a schoolmaster produced "the only New Englander knighted by the Queen." This was Curtis M. Lampson, a native of New Haven who went to England in 1830 and became a highly successful merchant and financier. As vice-chairman of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, Lampson was declared a baronet by Queen Victoria for his work in furthering the Atlantic cable project.

Myron Grinnell thus gained a lasting reputation as a teacher. He was also one of the signers of a Temperance Society pledge when the Society was founded in

New Haven in 1831. But it was in that same year, at age 46, that he contracted "brain fever" and died--a tragedy that changed his nine-year-old son's life. Shortly after Myron's burial in New Haven's Evergreen Cemetery, Josiah was accused of pilfering fruit from an orchard, a charge that he hotly denied. Nonetheless, he was placed under the guardianship of Jonathan Hoyt, Jr., a New Haven squire with large farm holdings. The boy quickly matured as his guardian piled chore upon chore on him. Before long, young Josiah was running various parts of the farm operation, learning not only about production but about marketing as well.

He also learned about the hazards that threatened the area's agricultural enterprises. Blight and rust would ruin the wheat crop and farmers would lose everything. In this hard Vermont soil, some would turn to raising livestock, notably sheep, but others would head for points west of Vermont in search of better land and better prospects. It was in this way, and at an early age, that Josiah felt the pull of the west and the promise it held.

At 16, the boy began to worry about his lack of book knowledge. Since his guardian refused to let him draw from his inheritance for school expenses, Josiah hit on a sure way to advance his education: he became a school teacher. By having to stay one step ahead of his students, he did an effective job of instructing himself. A neighbor let him do his grammar and arithmetic lessons Lincoln-like before the fireplace at night, and soon he had the "basics."

But he wanted more. Over the continuing opposition of Squire Hoyt, the 17-year-old Grinnell left New Haven to attend the nearby Castleton Seminary. Located in an abolitionist town which would become a stop on the Underground

Railroad, Castleton was a radical institution enrolling 66 "ladies" along with 88 "gentlemen." Also, it offered a modern curriculum that included U. S. history, the natural sciences, political economy, as well as traditional training in religion and the classics. His inheritance still unavailable in 1839, J. B. entered Castleton under a fund "devoted exclusively to paying the tuition of indigent pious young men, having in view the Gospel Ministry."

In 1840, after a year at the Seminary, he left to enroll in the classical school at Vergennes, Vermont. Finishing his studies there, he gave some consideration to studying medicine with a local practitioner but decided instead to attend college and enrolled at Yale. This came after the death of his 21-year-old brother Freeman. A younger brother, George, had died at age eleven in 1837, and J. B. was thus left with only one other sibling, his brother Ezra (who would settle in Grinnell and live there until his death in 1901 at age 76).

At Yale, J. B. hadn't even started his studies when he decided that the institution, whose buildings looked "low and gloomy," was not for him, and he promptly transferred to the Oneida Institute at Whitesboro, New York (near Syracuse). Today Oneida would be described as an "experimental college," an institution where students combined manual labor with study. It was progressive in other ways: in J. B.'s words, the "chosen curriculum was in favor of the languages of the living . . . rather than of the dead." A multiracial school, Oneida in J. B.'s time enrolled (in his words)

> emancipator's boys from Cuba; mulattoes removed from their sable mother . . . ; [a] high tempered Spanish student . . . whose

> slinging an iron poker at me left an impression; then an Indian, with the inelegant name, Kunkapot, the calling of which created a laugh; black men who had served as sailors; or as city hackmen, also the purest Africans escaped from slavery, of a class like the eloquent Garnet, the protege of Joseph Sturge, the English reformer; sons of the American radicals, Bible students scanning Hebrew verse with ease, in place of Latin odes; enthusiasts, plowboys and printers; also real students of elegant tastes, captured by the genius of President [Beria] Green.

It was in this melting pot that Josiah got the undergirding for what would become a fervent abolitionism. Knowing that his father had owned a 14-year-old "blackman" (valued at $28 in Myron's estate), J. B. began to see the destructive force of slavery in American life. As "a hot-bed of radicalism," Oneida intensified his feelings. The school taught its students to test and criticize the accepted wisdom and to spread the gospel of abolitionism far and wide. Later, J. B. would describe it as "the home of freedom," a place where, while both "church and nation were asleep," students learned to be "practical men" ready to engage "in the coming struggles of the Republic."

In this heady environment the young collegian "found more diversion in debates and in the writing of colloquies . . . than in severe studies." He noted, for instance, that "in Greek and Hebrew I made fair progress only." In later life, he would show that he had little taste for formal theology. He made fun of contemporary theological debate, characterizing it as "the old school holding children are sinners when born; the new school, sinners when old

enough to know how." This does not mean that he was a casual believer; he was simply more comfortable with the empirical rather than the dialectical side of things.

To J. B., the politics of Oneida were thus far more attractive than the pedagogics of Yale. This good opinion of Oneida, however, was not shared by the State of New York which punished "radical innovation" by refusing to license the school to grant academic degrees. Without a degree but nonetheless finished with college, J. B. in 1844 headed west for the first time, visiting the Wisconsin territory as a representative of the American Tract Society. The Society's work was part of the evangelical movement which joined Congregational and Presbyterian denominations with Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Friends in spreading "the propaganda of the temperance, peace, mission, and anti-slavery movements." Penetrating both urban and rural areas, the Society's "colporteurs" inevitably saw the grinding poverty of the cities and the struggle for survival on the farms, and so the Society itself "broadened [its] purview by attempting to alleviate poverty through charity as well as conversion."

This kind of evangelism involved selling in the modern sense. The Tract representative would leave a Bible with a family, talk earnestly about the need for an active religious life, and then follow up by arranging to have the Society's literature sent to each home on a regular basis. It was this aspect of the work that Grinnell was particularly good at. But the evidence is not overwhelming that he carried his concerns vigorously beyond evangelism--to poverty, for instance. Rather, he was seen as a "demonstrative, enthusiastic man [who] could see more people and say more in a day" than many others could.

He was, in short, a promoter. As such, he wrote articles for the New York Tribune which extolled the virtues of Wisconsin so vividly that the pieces were collected into a volume called The Home of the Badgers and used by Wisconsin officials to attract more settlers to their territory.

In 1844 J. B. gave up the traveling life of the Tract Society after only a few months and entered the Theological Seminary at Auburn, New York. He was admitted as a junior, the faculty having found him proficient enough in Hebrew and New Testament Greek to let him skip the first two years. Though he bristled at the conservative atmosphere, he worked at his studies and completed the requirements. Graduating in 1846, he was ordained in the following year, and his first assignment was the Congregational Church at Union Village near Albany, New York. He was relatively happy there, particularly since the congregation was an integrated one—although all the blacks sat on one side of the church and the whites on the other. Since blacks usually were relegated to a corner space of even the most enlightened churches, J. B. felt this was a considerable step forward.

He left Union Village in 1850 to see what his pastoral prospects might be in Washington, D. C. A year later he heard of the impending sale of the Episcopal Trinity Church on Judiciary Square. With the help of others, including Henry Ward Beecher and Horace Bushnell (from whom he got his middle name), Grinnell raised $5,000 to buy the edifice and in November 1851 installed himself as pastor of this first Congregational church in the nation's capital. It was a fateful move.

All around him, he saw "the poisonous, miasmatic breath of slavery." He was

sickened by the sight of a black family in chains being dragged to the slave market. Although warned to be quiet in the ideologically southern city, the 30-year-old Grinnell spoke out. His sermon on November 25, 1851, was held to be the first to be delivered in Washington as an outright indictment of slavery. The congregation included members of Congress and other officials, most of whom reacted angrily to the young minister's words. This was "the year after the last of the great compromises had been passed. Washington pulpits were supporting the Fugitive Slave Law, [and] both North and South had been deeply agitated by the early chapters of Uncle Tom's Cabin which were then appearing in the National Era."

In this volatile atmosphere Grinnell found himself labeled as an extremist and actually placed under surveillance. His future in the nation's capital thus undermined and his throat showing signs of serious illness, he left for New York. Biographer Charles Payne portrays J. B. at this juncture as a man of "moral fervor, generosity, energy, and will, rather than intellectual keenness, or power of analysis." Thus "it seems never to have occurred to him that he himself was something of a Hotspur or that men of his type were in any way responsible for the impending conflict. To him slavery was a clear-cut moral issue: right was on one side, wrong on the other. It is not surprising, therefore, that he left Washington as he entered it, convinced that there could be no settlement of the slavery issue through compromise."

"GO WEST, YOUNG MAN, GO WEST!"

Although upset by his experiences in Washington and concerned about his health, Grinnell was far from depressed. He had earlier met Julia Ann Chapin,

daughter of farmer-legislator-abolitionist Chauncey Chapin and Nancy Lombard Chapin of Springfield, Massachusetts. A graduate of Mt. Holyoke Seminary and a descendant of John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, Julia was living in her parents' home when J. B., as he described it,

> while endeavoring to found a Congregational Church in Washington, D. C., preached in the First Church, Springfield, Mass., Dr. Osgood's. Later I sought the [hospitality] of his senior deacon. . . . It was the woman of the Lord who opened the door of a plain, spacious, brick house, in the shadow of a century's growth of elms. The welcome was that of a true lady. . . .

On February 5, 1852, J. B. and Julia were married in Springfield and soon departed for New York. There, as a staff member of the Union Congregational Church in Brooklyn, the groom took up new duties as a schoolmaster for neighborhood children and as an outdoor preacher to stevedores and other workers.

These efforts in a rough environment turned out to be as discouraging as his Washington experience. With his throat worsening, Grinnell looked up a friend and mentor whom he had met in his irrepressible pursuit of persons of stature and influence. The friend in this case was Horace Greeley. It was in Greeley's office at the New York Tribune on or about September 25, 1853, that the editor, according to J. B., gave the young minister his famous advice: "Go West, young man, go West." There is no evidence, from Grinnell's account, that Greeley added "and grow with the country." He may have used those words with others to whom he gave the advice, but to the ailing J. B. he said, "Go

West, young man, go West. There is health in the country and room away from our crowds of idlers and imbeciles."

The second sentence in the quote is logically the kind of thing Greeley might say to someone who was ill and discouraged. The famous first sentence, however, was not original with Greeley. John H. B. Soule, editor of the Terre Haute (Ind.) Express, first used it in an editorial in his paper in 1851. This writer has learned that, ironically, Soule's statement was not a prompt to easterners to go west; it was a push for indigent farmers already on the frontier to leave mid-points like Iowa and Indiana and go farther west.

Grinnell went west, but not as the stereotypical pioneer riding topside or trudging alongside his prairie schooner. He went by train after being assigned by Greeley to cover the state fair at Springfield, Illinois. With his wife accompanying him, he attended the fair, filed his stories, and then pushed on to Missouri where Julia owned 640 acres of land by inheritance. This property became the first option that the Grinnells had for founding a town.

Charles Payne notes that this land was near a Marion College "to which the Chapins had formerly contributed funds in the hope of increasing the value of the land." But when the Grinnells arrived, they were met with an unpleasant surprise: the college had collapsed at some time after the depression of 1837 and nothing was left but one forlorn building. The Grinnells gave up on any other nearby sites when they learned of the strong pro-slavery feeling in the area.

On the train taking them through Illinois on their way back to the east, the Grinnells met Henry Farnam, the builder of the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad on which they were traveling. To Greeley's advice, Farnam added his own: "Go to Iowa, a free state [where] I am to build a railway to the Missouri River, an extension of the Rock Island Road." Farnam even offered the services of one of his young surveyors, Theodore Bacon, who would provide Grinnell with the information needed to pick a site for a new settlement.

There should be no illusions about J. B. Grinnell's prime interest in such a community: it would be a "saint's rest," certainly, but not one in which the sole concern was piety. J. B. was nothing if not an entrepreneur, and he was not shy about seeking the material wealth that his Puritan background sanctioned. He was one of those who, in Daniel Boorstin's words, could keep "their eye on the path to heaven" but could also "develop an uncanny vision for new markets and a facility for shifting investments." Alexis de Tocqueville met some of these practical visionaries on his travels in 1831. Observing the "religious zeal" of the New England transplants, the French writer noted that "these men do not act exclusively from a consideration of a future life; eternity is only one motive of their devotion to the cause. If you converse with these missionaries of Christian civilization, you will be surprised to hear them speak so often of the goods of this world, and to meet a politician where you expected to find a priest."

Searching for a base of investment compounded of agriculture, railroads, and real estate, J. B. was also mindful of the importance of politics in fostering all three. Spurred by Farnam's advice, Grinnell advertised in the New York Tribune and the New York Independent for partners in his new enterprise. He

said he wanted "persons of congenial moral and religious sentiments" who must also have "pecuniary ability to make the school and Church paramount and attractive institutions from the outset." He took care to add that "lands adjacent to . . . Christian colonies are held in the market at a much higher price than those in the vicinity of a medley class of people."

In a sense, this was the Grinnell covenant, and it harks back to the Puritan founders of towns like Dedham, Massachusetts. The settlers there in 1636 vowed "to keep off from us all such as are contrary minded, and receive only such unto us as may be probably of one heart with us . . . " J. B. Grinnell had the same moral and religious requirements, but he added an economic one--"pecuniary ability"--which made for a new, western Puritanism. How well the requirement was enforced is indicated by L. F. Parker who, as a job-seeker in 1856, asked Iowa Superintendent of Public Instruction James Eads if the community of Grinnell offered good prospects. "Oh, good enough," Eads replied, "if you can whistle through their quill." Taking up residence in Grinnell, Parker learned that, on failing the quill test, "more than one man . . . was advised to move on."

From the outset, then, there was a paternalistic note in settling the community. Interestingly enough, Thorstein Veblen uses the same term that J. B. used--"pecuniary ability"--to show that money in small-town America was the means toward "reputability." In his advertisement, in fact, J. B. did exactly what Veblen would later outline as the standard procedure: as founder, he had to define the "scheme of life that the community shall accept as decent or honorific" and "by precept and example . . . set forth this scheme of social salvation in its highest, ideal form."

Elkins and McKitrick identify the practical element which was used in furthering such a scheme, one which today is ingrained in the American concept of progress. "It was . . . promotion which gave the tone to the entire life of the town . . . . Everyone understood that success must depend upon the town's prosperity, that it must be advertised, its virtues broadcast." J. B. Grinnell was a master of the art. His promotional skills, partly instinctive and partly learned during his days as a colporteur for the American Tract Society, were given full play in a wholly new environment where an aggressive promoter could call the shots and keep calling them, while all the time appearing to be seeking consensus in getting them approved.

J. B. began his scheme in December, 1853, by writing to Julius A. Reed, agent in Iowa for the Home Missionary Society, and asking his advice about a site for a new town. "Would you go as far west as the Missouri River?" he asked Reed. "Will you please give me facts as we wish to do service next year in some portion of the west where lands are cheap and there is sure in time to be a R. R. [Persons] of means and character are now looking to me." J. B.'s use of the word "service" reflects Tawney's proposition that, as trade and investment in the Protestant dispensation moved toward the center of human enterprise, the old censure against greed was overcome "by the argument ... that enterprise itself is the discharge of a duty imposed by God."

As he searched for a community site, Grinnell learned that engineer Grenville M. Dodge (later a Union general and Congressman from Iowa) was already surveying a route that the Rock Island Railroad would take across Iowa to the Missouri River. Dodge put up a flagpole at a site about three and half miles

northeast of Lattimer's Grove in Poweshiek County. The grove was the site of a stage station that Nathaniel Lattimer maintained on the open prairie for the Western Stage Company. The stage line ran from Davenport, through Iowa City, Marengo, Snooks Grove, Lattimers Grove, Fort Des Moines, and then out to Council Bluffs on the Missouri River, thus anticipating the railroad line that would supersede stage travel. A former resident of New Salem, Illinois, where he knew Abraham Lincoln, Lattimer came to his new home in 1848 and managed the stage station with his wife, the former Jane Rutledge, a first cousin of Ann Rutledge, Lincoln's apocryphal love. The Lattimers maintained a rough-hewn 40- by 20-foot "hotel" with eight bedrooms and a large barn for housing stage coaches and horses.

The site of the flagpole that Dodge planted was recorded as a "controlling point" in his survey, its location designated as in Township 80 North, Range 16 West, approximately at the divide of the Iowa and Skunk Rivers. The pole with its red flag stood near the present site of the Rock Island depot on the southeast corner of Third Avenue and Park Street, and around it would grow the city of Grinnell. Theodore Bacon, Dodge's aide, wrote to J. B. and advised him to buy land in this area, noting that it was topographically ideal for a junction of east-west and north-south railroad lines. "Lose no time," Bacon told Grinnell, "for there will be a rush for the land and the best will be taken--the boys mean to take it up."

On February 23, 1854, Grinnell met at Weddell House, a hotel in Cleveland, with two respondents to his New York advertisements--41-year-old Rev. Homer Hamlin of Wellington, Ohio (originally from Berkshire County, Massachusetts), and 23-year-old surveyor-engineeer Henry M. Hamilton of Hudson, Ohio, a recent

graduate of Western Reserve College. All three agreed to found a western community, giving some consideration to a Minnesota site as well as to the Iowa location.

Finally deciding on Iowa, the three met again in Chicago after undertaking some fund-raising. This meeting took place at the Matteson House on February 25, and on March 2 the three partners reserved more than 6,000 acres of land in Township 80 North in Poweshiek County, promising to pay the U. S. Land Office at Iowa City $1.25 per acre, with financing arranged through the banking firm of Cook, Sargent and Downey of Iowa City. The three purchasers became four when 36-year-old Thomas Holyoke of Searsport, Maine, joined the original group on the same day. Born in Brewer, Maine, Holyoke was a physician who graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1847.

While Hamilton returned to Ohio to raise more money for his purchase, Grinnell, Hamlin, and Holyoke, along with surveyor A. J. Cassiday, journeyed to Lattimer's Grove. Arriving on March 4, the four had a noon "dinner" at Lattimer's tavern and then proceeded to the point three and a half miles northeast where Bacon's flag marked the site they had just reserved. Land records show that on March 11, 1854, J. B. completed the purchase of 2008 acres in Sections 5, 7, 8, 9, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 28 of Township 80 North of Range 16 West. Between March 13 and May 26, he would buy an additional 3304 acres in these and other sections, and his purchases in Poweshiek County and other areas of Iowa would continue into the following decades.

The town of Grinnell itself would rise out of Section 16, which unlike the other sections in Township 80 North, was owned by the state as a "school

section," the sale of which would help fund the public school system. This was true for all townships. Settlers could lay claim to land in a school section by squatting on it, and this was effected by J. B.'s settling on the northwest quarter, Holyoke on the northeast, Amos Bixby on the southeast, and Hamilton on the southwest. Each squatter had to put up a "house" on the land being claimed, and so Grinnell and his partners built crude shelters in just about an hour's time on each quarter section. According to Hamilton, these activities took place between April 23 and May 3, 1854. On the latter date, the partners paid the state's School Fund Commissioner $260 per quarter section of land. Section 16 thus became the nucleus of a town that would eventually expand into Sections 8, 9, 17, and 21.

Charles Payne in his biography of J. B. Grinnell gives March 13 as the date of the arrival of Hamlin, Holyoke, Grinnell and Cassiday at Lattimer's Grove, but Payne does not give a source for this information. Nowhere in J. B.'s Men and Events of Forty Years is a founding date given. The annual meetings of Grinnell's Old Settlers Association, on the other hand, were held "on or near March 13," but here again no reason is given for that as the anniversary date. Nevertheless, the community has regularly observed March 13 as Founders' Day.

But land records show that on March 11 J. B. and his cohorts had already purchased much of the acreage in which they were interested. On March 13, in fact, J. B. is shown as beginning his second series of purchases. He thus must have visited the site a week or so before March 11, the date of the original purchases. From evidence in reports of Henry Hamilton and Henry Lawrence, there is little question that the first visit by the buyers took place on Saturday, March 4.

With plenty of land to work with, the founders in mid-March started the process of community building. The process in Grinnell was different from that of many another frontier town where a rough individualism marked the settlers. In such communities, there was no compact joining the inhabitants in common purpose. As a result, transiency was high, orderly development a struggle, and a sense of identity hard to maintain. Historian Frederic Paxson writes that it was the community of Grinnell that "made the frontier democracy of Iowa less completely Jacksonian than most of the Mississippi Valley was at this moment."

Soon after their arrival, the settlers built a log cabin near the bank of Sugar Creek about three miles west of the present Grinnell business district. Soon, other colonists joined the original group, these including Henry Lawrence; A. F. Gillette of Summit County, Ohio; and Amos Bixby, a lawyer from Searsport, Maine. All lived in the 14- by 16- foot cabin, each with a specific job to do in the communal setting (Henry Hamilton, for instance, was the cook). In his function as "acting commissary," J. B. Grinnell transported the first "bill of goods" for the new community by traveling to and from Burlington, more than 100 miles to the southeast. He made purchases of sugar, coffee, saleratus (baking soda), crackers, cheese, fruit and other delicacies, and tobacco. "The full and heavy load was wagoned home by the purchaser and welcomed with a shout."

With new settlers arriving regularly, the first log cabin was almost immediately replaced by a much larger shelter,

> a rude, cheap, temporary building which was shingle-less, oval-roofed [achieved by bending green boards over the ridge pole], and bore a striking resemblance . . . to a canal boat. It was long enough to be sectionized into kitchen, storeroom, and eating room, and the corners were assigned for apartments ... which were curtained off from the miscellaneous crowd.

This was the Long Home, and it stood between the present Fifth and Sixth Avenues on the west side of Broad Street. Located approximately in the middle of that block, but closer to Sixth than to Fifth Avenue, the Long Home was a short home at first but, with additions, ended up as an 80- by 14-foot structure positioned somewhat diagonally toward what would later be a portion of Broad Street. It was to this haven that new settlers came, remaining until they had built their own shelters. A flagpole with a lantern hung on it was placed near the dwelling to help travelers find their way at night. Eventually, a half-ton bell was installed to welcome new arrivals and to call settlers to worship, the makeshift Long Home serving as a church, school, and general place of assemblage. The first well was dug nearby, "and to the glad surprise of the settlers water was found at the depth of twelve feet in plentiful supply."

THE COMMUNITY GROWS

Early accounts of the settlement of Grinnell imply that this was, in some nearly complete sense, a New England community. It was not. Gillette, Lawrence and Hamilton, for instance, were Ohioans, as was Hamlin (though by way of Massachusetts). Not very many years after the founding, in fact, J. B.

Grinnell would say that Ohioans dominated the city's population. The Hayses, who came in the early contingent, were from Maryland, the Phelpses from Wisconsin, and the Baileys from New York State.

But it was certainly New Englanders who dominated the town's culture, religious orientation, and economy. These were the settlers from Milton, Rutland, New Haven, and Windsor, Vermont; Bath and Center Harbor, New Hampshire; Norridgewock, Brewer and Searsport, Maine; Lowell and Stockbridge, Massachusetts; and Saybrook, Connecticut.

J. B. listed the following as being in the first contingent of settlers: "J. B. Grinnell, wife and daughter; Homer Hamlin; Dr. Thomas Holyoke, wife and son Willie; H. M. Hamilton; Mr. and Mrs. Loyal C. Phelps and their children Juniette, Matthew, Loyal, Atlantic, and Frances; Nancy Gates; Mr. and Mrs. Anor Scott; Amos Bixby, wife and son; Mr. and Mrs. George Chambers; a Mr. Carlton; John Bailey; Benoni Howard; Henry Hill; A. F. Gillett; a Mr. Benjamin; H. A. Wolcott; Henry Lawrence; Levi Marsh, wife and four children; Abram Whitcomb, wife and two children; John Brown and family; David Sutherland; Stephen N. Bartlett; Emery S. Bartlett; John T. Hays, wife and five children; Deborah and Mary Hays, sisters of John Hays; Darius Thomas and wife; Mr. and Mrs. Sumner Bixby and Lucy; Capt. and Mrs. Josiah Hale, parents of Mrs. Sumner Bixby; and Edward Delaney." It is also known that William Burton of Austinburg, Ohio, came in the first year but returned to Ohio to settle his affairs and died before he could rejoin the new community.*

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*His widow later settled in Grinnell where her sons Philander and Theodore

grew up. Philander became a prominent businessman and banker in Poweshiek County; his brother Theodore took on even greater prominence, becoming a U. S. Senator from Ohio. Theodore attended Grinnell College but was graduated from Oberlin.

Given the abolitionist principles on which the colony was founded, it is interesting to find that Edward Delaney was in this first group of settlers. Edward Delaney was black. He was a member of the Hays group from Maryland, having been owned by the John Hays family from childhood. Unlike other slaveholders, the Hayses were vehemently opposed to slavery. According to John's son, William, they bought slaves in order to protect them from the exploitation and brutality of other slaveowners. Thus, John once bought a black woman from a neighbor in order to shield her from abusive treatment, eventually selling her to her own mother.

"Treated in nearly all respects as one of the family," Edward came with the Hayses in their journey to Iowa. Free though he was in a free state, he was deeply attached to the Hayses and enjoyed working for this extraordinary family until he died at an advanced age. The family's concern and affection for "Uncle Ned" extended even to death, Edward being buried in Grinnell's Hazelwood Cemetery in the same plot with two of the Hayses.

The settlers who arrived in the first and immediately succeeding years listed themselves as farmer (mostly), storekeeper, stock-raiser, grocer, blacksmith, lawyer, livery-and-feed operator, teacher, minister, physician, butcher, and banker. They were not a lowly lot, and in fact some of them brought more than

a small share of history with them. The Bartlett brothers, for instance, who came from Bath, New Hampshire, were descendants of Josiah Bartlett, a signer of the Declaration of Independence and third governor of New Hampshire.

Like J. B. Grinnell, almost all of the settlers were well off financially. One of those who came in 1855, T. B. Clark, was in fact worth $25,000, something of a fortune in those days. J. B. himself, who could not have derived much from his salaries as a minister, relied on his wife's inheritance as a financial base and, with it, was able to command credit and buy property. Clearly the early settlers of Grinnell were not the coonskin-capped bushwhackers of popular image. The frontier reality was in fact quite different from that image, as Ray Billington notes:

> Few who went west were poor; the financial demands of pioneering excluded the poverty-stricken. Most were established farmers with some capital, and all were governed by a compelling desire for self-improvement. They might be driven westward by worn-out lands, or uncongenial neighbors, or overcrowding; they might be attracted by a thirst for adventure or the thrill of westering. But the basic urge was for a better farm, more wealth, and a higher status in life.

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Prospects on the frontier were not promising for the poorer pioneer. As Paul A. Gates shows, there were fairly high start-up costs:

> Custom plowmen, using the heavy breaking plow pulled by a number of yoke of oxen, charged $2 and $3 an acre for breaking prairie. Lumber for the house, fencing, and perhaps a barn could no longer be 'hooked' from neighboring government- or absentee-owned tracts and had to be brought in at heavy expense from the Mississippi River mill towns or Chicago. A yoke of oxen, wagon, plow, stove, chains, ax, shovel, grindstone, scythe or cradle, together with seed, funds to maintain the family until the first crop came in, fees for filing land-office papers, or money to make the down payment on a railroad tract, brought the amount needed to start farming to $500 at the minimum; safer estimates were two or three times that much.

The Grinnell settlers, and perhaps especially the New Englanders, clearly had the urge for a better life and they also had the means to start it. In addition, they did not suffer from a condition that Billington cites as having made frontier life especially difficult:

> ... The pioneers realized that in moving westward they severed their ties with tradition. The act of migration disrupted the social relationships that had assisted them in patterning their behavior in their old homes. In their new homes the sense of

> nonbelonging was accentuated, for most frontier communities were settled by men and women from a variety of places and social backgrounds.

This was indeed true of many pioneer communities, and the problem is starkly dramatized in Rolvaag's Giants in the Earth. In that narrative, Berit Hansa, a sensitive Norwegian immigrant, moves to the Dakota frontier with her hard-working husband. Almost totally separated from everything familiar, rooted, and supportive in her past, Berit has a nervous breakdown which persists until a Norwegian minister comes to the community and provides a religious and cultural tie that brings back Berit's sense of identity.

But in Grinnell there was very little of this feeling of isolation ff isolation from one' roots. Amelia Perry Hamlin recalled that "the principles of sound morality and temperance were in the very foundation stones of the new enterprise. We ma°did not have to wait long for social, educational and religious advantages. We had them all at the beginning . . . The refinement and intellectual tendencies of [our] eastern homes had only been transplanted to grow and flourish on the broader western soil." Maria Parks Kellogg, who came to Grinnell in 1857, seconded this view, seeing the town as "a community of educated people, refined ladies and gentlemen, drawn together by a common cuture."

In short, the settlers in the New England contingent brought an ethos with them. This common religious and cultural background gave them a strong sense of identity and a cooperative spirit that helped in meeting the privations of the first years. Maria Parks Kellogg arrives in Grinnell and finds everyone

"vying with each other in an effort to make [newcomers] feel at home." But they are already home, as the Norwegian immigrants in Rolvaag's tale are not and as the Americans "from a variety of places and social backgrounds" are not. For the Grinnell settlers, there is a shared and continuing sense of history, and in fact a sense of possession. They know that the land is theirs even before they are the land's, to paraphrase Robert Frost.* In this regard, Grinnell was in a special category.

BIRTH, DEATH, CONTINUITY

Soon after the founding, the settlers moved in human ways to develop their new home. The first woman on the scene was Mrs. George W. Chambers, and after her, the wives of Amos Bixby and Dr. Thomas Holyoke. The first marriage (October 3, 1855) was that of Henry Hill and Susan N. Harris, a sister of Dr. E. H. Harris. The first-born (February, 1855) was Frederick Samuel Holyoke, son of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Holyoke, but he was also one of four children who would die in the colony by July of 1855. In the fall of 1855 twins George and Emma Hamlin, son and daughter of Homer and Amelia Perry Hamlin, were born; Mrs. Hamlin would later claim that <u>they</u> were the first-born in the community.

The town's national roots were not forgotten as the community's first Fourth of July was observed in 1854. The celebration drew about 150 persons from Grinnell and other Poweshiek County communities. After parading around the Long Home, the celebrants listened to J. B. as he praised God for providing this new Eden. J. B. took pains to add that a railroad would soon come through to connect Eden with markets for Grinnell produce. He also "feelingly mentioned his wife" who was back East with her family. Amos Bixby also spoke,

stirring his listeners with a patriotic address which was followed by a prayer calling for an end to slavery. Music was provided by a small choir, whose members included Mrs. Amos Bixby and Mrs. Thomas Holyoke. There was also a roll call to find out how many different states were represented among the celebrants; twenty states were counted, plus Canada, England, and Scotland.F

After the celebration, J. B. returned East for his wife and daughter, and in late August 1854 the family left the home of Julia's sister, Mary Chapin Day, in Hollis, N. H., to make the trip westward. Finally reaching Iowa City, where they stopped before making the final push to Grinnell, J. B. bought daughter Katie a rocking chair "in which she rode the remainder of the journey." When they reached Grinnell, they joined the Phelps and Chambers families in the Long Home. Julia Grinnell recalled that "a carpet partitioned one end of the sleeping room for us." The room "contained a bed, a dry goods box, which, with some shelves inside answered for bureau and washstand, with some nails on the rafters above . . . for hanging garments."

The primitive conditions did not deter the women from preparing the community's first Thanksgiving dinner "in New England style." Julia Grinnell remembered that "a long table was set in Mrs. Phelps' front room, and many guests made welcome. Our meat at that time was mostly venison and prairie chicken, while our fruit was the wild plum and puckery crab, which in cooking were made very palatable. Mince pies were made of venison and crab apple sweetened with sorghum, a native product." It was "a memorable occasion."

For the Grinnells, sadder occasions followed. In April 1855, Julia heard that

her mother had died of pneumonia in Springfield, Massachusetts. More poignantly, on May 15, 1856, little Katie Grinnell died, the Montezuma Republican reporting that she was a victim of "inflammation of the brain, aged three years and four months . . . a child of promise, early maturing--blighting many fond hopes in her death." Katie's brother, George Chapin Grinnell, would have an even briefer life, 1855-57. Both were buried in Hazelwood Cemetery in what would be the family plot.*

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*Living to adulthood were the Grinnells' two other children--Mary Chapin, born September 24, 1857, and Carrie Holmes, born April 2, 1859. Mary Chapin Grinnell was married to the Rev. David O. Mears; she died in 1935. Carrie Holmes Grinnell was married to literary scholar Richard Jones; her death occurred in 1934.

Hazlewood Cemetery was laid out in 1855 on 13 acres of land donated by J. B. Grinnell. To one resident, it was more than a burial ground. "The place of sepulture has a relation to the history of a town and is peculiarly associated with the tastes and sensibilities of a refined people." Mrs. Christina Patterson (listed as Charlotte Patterson in one source) had the honor of being the first to be buried in this "place of sepulture," having died of a stroke in the winter of 1855. She was not, however, the first to die in Grinnell. The first deaths were those of the aged Capt. and Mrs. Hale, both of whom succumbed in 1854. Since there was no cemetery in that year, they were buried in a plot on the farm of Sumner Bixby, the Hales' son-in-law.

Eventually the cemetery would be dotted with the headstones of local folk,

both worthy and otherwise. But by 1871 the cemetery itself was losing its standing as a well-kept "place of sepulture," the Poweshiek Herald declaring that neglect made for "disgraceful conditions" at the cemetery. In 1886 the Grinnell Herald said: "There is some complaint that persons owning lots in the cemetery are in the habit of raking the leaves and rubbish from the same and leaving it lie in the avenues and beside other lots, where it kills the grass and starts a weak patch. It is also said the cistern cover is frequently found out of its place and as a result dead reabbits and the like are found in it."

VICTIMS OF CYCLONE: HERADSTONES OF LITTLI KID ETC

The most prestigious gravestone there, one of distinct historical importance, was that of Harry Lloyd Hopkins (1890-1946) who was buried in Section 481 in 1973. There is clearly a difficulty here. The fact is that Hopkins, after serving Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt both in the Great Depression and in World War II, died one year after Roosevelt, but his urn languished in a New York funeral home long before the family could arrange for burial in 1973.

ADD MARSH AND ANY OTHERS.

One young settler who survived the hazards of the frontier gives a particularly graphic account of how her family traveled to its new home in Iowa. Joanna Harris (Haines), though born in Pennsylvania, would live 70 of her 81 years in Iowa. She tells how her family journeyed to Iowa in 1852 "virtually all the way by river boats--first down the Allegheny to Pittsburgh,

thence down the Ohio River on the steamboat The Diadem to Cairo, Illinois, thence on the New Englander up the Mississippi to Keokuk in Iowa."

The family first settled in the latter city, but James Harris found "the rough, hilly country" around Keokuk not to his liking, and he looked for better land to develop. Reading about J. B. Grinnell's colony in a newspaper (probably the New York Independent), he visited the new community and bought 80 acres at $4.00 per acre in a location "a mile west of the north line of Grinnell." Leaving a son in Grinnell to build a shelter for the family (on the corner of West Street and Fifth Avenue), Harris returned to Keokuk to get family and belongings together for the trip to their new home. Embarking from Keokuk on a cold day in early spring of 1855, the ten members of the Harris family

> travelled in two covered wagons drawn by yokes of oxen, and in a two-seated buggy drawn by two very spirited horses . . . which were mettlesome and hard to hold. 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 . . . At night the men slept in the wagons while mother and the girls put up at hotels or taverns as they were called.

Joanna Harris goes on to say that, on arrival in Grinnell, the newcomers found the prairie to be almost entirely without trees. But soon enough, as the spring turned to summer, she had "the unalloyed and inexpressible pleasure" of seeing "the wild flowers that made the prairie for miles in all directions one gorgeous mass of variant beauty." Joanna's father, on the other hand,

marvelled at the richness of the Grinnell soil as he turned the sod preparatory to planting corn and potatoes. Under these promising conditions, the only drawback Joanna could find to her first months in Grinnell was "the innumerable snakes that infested the prairies," including rattlers and copperheads that her brother dispatched in a manner that kept Joanna and her sisters in a continual state of terror.

When the Harrises arrived in the spring of 1855, they found a rude but operating community. The second structure to be built in the colony was Anor Scott's store, which stood near the southwest corner of what is now Broad Street and Fifth Avenue. There was also John Bailey's sawmill, a steam-operated flouring mill, a lodging house managed by Loyal C. Phelps, and new houses for individual families. John Hays set up his smithy in the Long Home when that building was no longer needed as a shelter (probably in the summer of 1856). Almost all of these structures were within the northwest corner of Section 16 where J. B. and his partners determined that the town site would be. By June of 1855 there were 15 houses plus other buildings. One of the first permanent dwellings built in the summer of 1854 was that of Dr. Thomas Holyoke; it was a one-storey frame house considered to be "extravagant" in its use of walnut finish. The house, with a front section that was built some years later, still stands at 904 East Street. Another early dwelling still used as a residence is the Levi Grinnell house at 1002 Park Street. Built in 1856 by J. B.'s cousin, it is a temple-form Greek Revival type that was traditional in New England. Also standing are a number of houses with roof-top "monitors" or lookouts of the kind seen on houses in coastal towns in New England.

Maria Parks Kellogg recalls that most of the new dwellings were "cold, small houses" in which families endured seasonal rigors. In preparation for winter, "all the wood must be brought from the grove several miles away, and ... it took a large quantity to keep even comfortable." Diets in the cold months were meager: "it was almost impossible to keep vegetables from freezing . . . [and] even potatoes were scarce and high priced." In warmer months, walking to a neighbor's house was difficult, the mud being "the blackest, stickiest substance one can imagine." Only when settlers had the foresight to lay down some hay in the streets did walking become bearable. And, says Maria Kellogg, "how we missed the trees! There was not a tree or shrub in the whole town plat, not a clump of trees between [Grinnell] and Brooklyn . . . " But there were pests aplenty. The most irritating was the one Maria genteely identified as cimex lectularius, platoons of which invaded the settlers' bedding, and only "by diligent and almost perpetual warfare were we enabled to sleep at all."

Of the original Section 16 purchase, J. B. reserved one block of land for himself, another for his friend Loyal Phelps, another for a park, and one lot each for a church and a school. The other partners also retained a certain number of lots. All remaining lots were to be sold, the profits to go into a "literary fund" which would eventually provide for the building of a college. Henry Hamilton later maintained that the idea for a literary fund and college was his and not J. B. Grinnell's, as the latter always claimed. It was Hamilton who sold 1,200 acres of his own land and contributed the proceeds to the Literary Fund. J. B.'s claim is based on his provision of the 348 lots (160 acres) on which the college itself was to be situated.

The town was laid out as a square, the boundaries being First Avenue, East Street, Sixth Avenue, and West Street. Each lot as planned by J. B. and his associates measured 75 by 165 feet, and each buyer who built a frame house (instead of one built of notched logs) was given an adjoining lot free. Except for one of the earliest structures, there were thus no log houses in Grinnell. Residential streets and most business district streets were 80 feet wide, except for Broad Street which was 100 feet wide. To beautify the streets and provide shade and windbreaks, J. B. Grinnell and Emery S. Bartlett in the spring of 1855 dug up some small trees in the timbered areas near Grinnell. They transplanted these in town, but soon found that some of the varieties could not withstand the "never-ceasing winds and the prairie sod."

In the next spring, Bartlett and his brother Stephen brought home a wagonload of locust trees from Montezuma and they did well around Grinnell until borers destroyed many of them. Later still, Bartlett transplanted cottonwoods and soft maples, and supplemented these with apple trees grown from seed that he brought back from a trip to New Hampshire. J. B. Grinnell added to these by ordering seeds from New York and having them frozen in sand during the winter. In the spring he planted the seeds in a nursery and then doled out seedlings to his fellow settlers so that, in time, apple trees could be seen throughout the colony.

J. B. tried to make sure that the apples would not be converted to hard drink. He warned the town's folk about the consequences of imbibing or selling liquor and made it a condition "that intoxicating drinks as a beverage are not sold on the above named premises [i. e., those bought from J. B.], such acts causing reversion of ownership to the donor of the town plot of Grinnell" The

ban was not legally relaxed until the 1960s, although it's not known how many reversions, if any, actually occurred

This prohibitionist point of view was not shared by another purchaser of Poweshiek County land, George H. Norris of Illinois. Norris' property, which was bought just before J. B.'s, was the northeast quarter of Section 17 and consisted of two and a half blocks between what is now Sixth Avenue and Commercial Street, and three blocks between West Street and Center Street. Norris' plat was designated as the town of Jerusalem and a place where liquor would be sold to all comers. Norris, an absentee landlord, deeded part of this land to a William Keep, and it is tempting to think that he may have been the bar Keep. But whatever his function, and whatever Norris's intentions, there is no further evidence that the town ever existed in anything but spirit.

Some controversy arose over J. B. Grinnell's motives in delaying the platting of the town for many months after its founding.* The suspicion was that he was waiting for a chance to sell out to railroad interests at a price that would bring a windfall. Many a promoter considered this a normal result of sound investment. But at long last J. B. had the quarter-section platted and recorded on January 26, 1855. J. B. eventually acknowledged that he had indeed been offered $20,000 for his land, but after "prayerful consideration" and "divine guidance" he had decided not to accept. Whether he would have accepted $30,000 is another matter.

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*Even as late as 1858, when the community was well established, J. B. was

buying and platting land for another settlement 100 miles to the north. Complete with a "college square," this was what is now known as Old Chapin, and J. B.'s giving it his wife's maiden name reflects the seriousness of his interest in it. Old Chapin continues to have a Grinnell Street.

The civil township of Grinnell was organized April 2, 1855, with L. H. Marsh, Sumner Bixby, and Anor Scott elected as trustees. Scott was named the township clerk; Henry Lawrence, assessor; Darius Thomas and G. W. Chambers, justices of the peace; and J. B. Woodward, constable. As Grinnell College scholar Jesse Macy explains in the country's first civics textbook, the U. S. government sold land during this period in three ways: in 40-acre lots, in sections, or in townships. Townships were set up as part of a system of governmental organization which, in the simplest terms, consisted of each county's being divided into six-mile squares of land, each square a township. Each township was then divided into 36 one-mile-square units called sections, and each section was further divided into 16 units a quarter-of-a-mile square, or 40 acres per unit. It should be noted that an acre of Poweshiek County land in 1854 was sold by the federal government for $1.25. As of this writing, 1993, an acre of the same land could easily bring $600 to $800, or more.

It had not been at all a foregone conclusion that the new town would be named for J. B. Grinnell. The issue of the town's naming, in fact, points up the differences between the prudent Hamilton and the opportunistic Grinnell. When the time came to give the community a name, Hamilton thought that "the spirit of the Weddell House conference" called for the colony to be "a guiding star

within its State in educational and religious matters." His choice of name was thus "Stella," the Latin for "star" (although Amos Bixby thought that it was the young lawyer A. F. Gillette who suggested that name). Hamilton also thought that "the delay in laying out the town plat, and the absence of promise when it would be done, did not contribute toward spontaneous demand that the place be called Grinnell." Hamilton contended in fact that the town was named for J. B. only after the latter came to the younger man and pleaded for the honor.

From the evidence in other sources, notably Emery S. Bartlett's Early Days in Grinnell (1914), this and other issues arose because two factions had formed in the town, one a J. B. Grinnell or New England group and the other led by Henry Hamilton and A. F. Gillette, both Ohioans. The conflicts would involve not only the naming of the town but also the locating of the business district and the college, each faction proposing sites that would be advantageous to its own economic and other interests.

Much of the tension derived from sectional traits. Although the hard core of the community was New England Yankee, there were settlers from other sections of the country, and there was an inevitable clash of temperaments. Joanna Harris Haines notes 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."

Standard 19th-century biographical sketches and obituaries always portray local worthies as individuals who made their marks by dint of hard work and incontestable integrity. The reality was somewhat different. In Joanna Harris Haines' account, she strives mightily to be fair, but she reports that what she saw was a community where people were prone to sharp dealing. Eli Clark goes further. Writing to L. F. Parker, he says that his father was a man of "absolute honesty and integrity [but] it was largely by reason of the short-comings of others that he preferred selling out and getting away from Grinnell." Even when it came to J. B. Grinnell, Emery Bartlett had occasion to say that his "warmest friends will not deny that he had some glaring faults" but adds that "no one can justly accuse him of being a mercenary man."

But a materialistic man he was, as were his fellow townsmen. James Bryce, British author of The American Commonwealth, who visited Grinnell many years after its founding, wrote that pioneer Americans saw materialism as "the end and aim of their lives; this is their daily and nightly thought." For the town of Grinnell, there was perhaps a more complex aspect of this condition than in other frontier communities. Given the origins of the earliest settlers and their Puritan character, the Grinnell folk assuredly had deep-rooted ethical sensibilities which were not easily set aside. But in their struggles to acquire some kind of standing and wealth--reputability, in Veblen's term--they found themselves compromising those sensibilities. The frontier was an unrelenting environment, whether one was working the land, engaging in trade, or presiding at a bank.

One's character, as Billington says of the pioneers in general, might "yield

some of its facets" under financial and other demands. And yet the Grinnell community's claim to unity and harmony lay largely in this moral heritage that gave the town the good name that it had. Its people not only professed, but believed in, their own goodness even as they shed some of it in their daily transactions with their neighbors. They lost their good names only when their transgressions were too large to remain private, as we shall see later in the so-called Spencer Scandal.

The founding of Grinnell University was not immune from these tensions. In the matter of the Literary Fund, Henry Hamilton in 1892 made a firm and persuasive claim that he, and not J. B. Grinnell, first had the idea that there should be a college in the community, and there is even the implication that J. B. opposed or was indifferent to the idea. In his Historical Sketch, Hamilton writes:

> Mr. Grinnell seemed to hold that he ought to have the town plat to do with as he chose. I contended that this would be a departure from the spirit of the Weddell House agreement of the previous February, under which I had invested my money in the Colony, and claimed that the town plat, on whosesoever land located, should be used to found an educational fund. Doctor Holyoke at that time said to me: 'If there is to be any money made out of the town plat, it should be made by those who first came upon the ground.' I replied: 'The way to make money out of the town plat is to appropriate it to educational purposes, and then as much or more can be made out of the adjoining lands.'

Emery S. Bartlett wrote later that most town residents were firmly on the side of J. B. in these matters. Joanna Harris Haines describes the traits in J. B. that were so persuasive to the residents. He was, she says:

> . . . alert, energetic, quick in his actions and thinking, and incessantly active in the furtherance of his many and varied
>
> of the great subjects of national debate, slavery and the suppression of the liquor traffic. Because of this we became more self-conscious and contentious than we would otherwise have been.

To this can be added the comment that L. F. Parker made about J. B. Grinnell. If a plan that J. B. proposed for the community "did not seem to some of us quite the best, his personal effort would certainly make it the most feasible . . . We who were in daily contact with him should soon learn to second all his thoughts, his plans at home, and to make him on all occasions our chief representative abroad." Parker's assessment makes sense when one sees, as Elkins and McKitrick point out, that a community founder had to be "free to boast of schools and churches for all. [But] this fundamental tolerance, this built-in attitude of placation, had its other side. The booster would adjust to his neighbors but would adjust to no one who tried to limit <u>his</u> activities; he would instruct his representatives but would not tolerate their instructing <u>him</u>."

An earnest developer like Henry Hamilton was therefore no match for a J. B. Grinnell, a man who was described as, "though not tall, of very solid build, with a short, strong neck and fearless temperament . . . ." Eventually, Hamilton felt that he could not prevail against that temperament, and he left

in 1859; at some time later he took up residence in New Jersey. He lived a long life as a lawyer, engineer, inventor (of an iron-working process used internationally in fabrication of railroad equipment), and highly successful industrialist and investor. He continued to have holdings in Grinnell, and his son, M. Clark Hamilton, was an 1880 graduate of Grinnell College. There is no question that the city lost out on some important opportunities for economic and civic development when Hamilton left.

A VILLAGE ON THE MOVE

Despite the controversies involving J. B. and Henry Hamilton, the community grew in gradual stages. After the Long Home and Anor Scott's store were built in the first year, a combined church and school building was erected in April of 1855. This 16 by 24, 12-foot-high structure stood on the east side of Broad Street, at just about the site of the present Stewart Library. Ten members of the community contributed $15 apiece to the project, and J. B. Grinnell contracted to build the structure for the $150 that was raised. It was not long before rainwater leaked through cracks in the green-lumber roof but, as Deacon Emery Bartlett noted, this was not much of a problem: "The floor was as open as the roof, and [the rain] soon found its way out again." The first church meeting was held there on November 11, 1855.

One of the first plank sidewalks was built in front of the church. The planks were treacherous when wet or icy, and only the agile escaped tumbles in the mud or snow. At one point two young sisters clad in hoop skirts stepped from a buggy onto a loose plank and ended up in a hopeless tangle on the ground. Besides the few plank sidewalks, straw from the farms was spread on the

walkways as a defense against the mud. Prairie grass, which grew persistently in the town, was kept somewhat suppressed by the ox-drawn supply wagons that crisscrossed the main streets.

The first teacher, part-time, was Sumner Bixby's daughter, Lucy, who was succeeded by her sister Louisa and then by Samuel F. Cooper of Stockbridge, Massachusetts (not to be confused with Samuel Cooper, a native of Antrim, Ireland, who was Grinnell's first mayor from 1865 to 1867).* When the schoolhouse became the church each Sunday, it was J. B. who invariably led the worship. The community's staunch Congregationalism and its commitment to temperance and abolition were immediately recognized by other communities, and within two years of its founding the town hosted the annual meeting of the Congregational Association of Iowa on June 4-6, 1856, just one year after the official organizing of the Grinnell Congregational Church on April 8, 1855. It was at the 1856 meeting that the principal speaker—the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Tappan, Secretary of the Board of Missions for Maine—remarked that what he saw about him was "a transplanted New England colony."

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*Professor Emeritus John Kleinschmidt of Grinnell College uncovered the second Samuel Cooper. Most local sources have for years assumed that Col. Samuel F. Cooper, one of the first school teachers, was also the first mayor of the city. Professor Kleinschmidt has shown that these were two different persons.

By 1856, there were 107 families in town, the total population being 471. Of these, 188 were recorded as having been born in New England states; 198 in

Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and New York; and a scattering in other states, including the South. Thirteen were listed as born in England, 11 in Germany, ten in Ireland, one in Africa (Edward Delaney), and one in Canada. Five groups of Mormons, mostly Europeans converted to Mormonism, passed south of the village of Grinnell in 1856 but continued their hegira toward "the everlasting hills" of Utah. Although there were some oldsters in the community, the average age of what could be called working residents, including homemakers, was between 30 and 40. Seventy-nine of the residents owned land, and there were 70 dwellings in the town.

All of this was evidence enough that the community was nearing permanence. This status brought it a U. S. post office, but only after some haggling with federal authorities who reportedly held back because of the community's views on slavery. The town's growth also brought a new schoolhouse to replace the earlier church-school structure. The new school, completed late in the summer of 1856, was a 40-by-40-foot wooden structure topped by a handsome cupola and ornamented with scrolled brackets at the roof line. There were two storys, with a large classroom on each floor. The school stood on the northwest corner of Fourth Avenue and Park Street facing south toward Central Park. Central School, as it was called, remained in use until destroyed by fire in 1871.

As the first structures rose in town, the prairie at the same time was readied for food production. Bull plows, pulled by oxen, broke the sod in the late spring and summer of 1854. A visitor would not have seen J. B. Grinnell or any of his partners behind the oxen. The first plowings, and even later ones, were the work of itinerant workers or laborers already living in Poweshiek

County, with John Hays contracting to supervise the efforts on behalf of his fellow settlers. The latter remained onlookers as the whip-cracking, swearing ox-drivers broke furrows, usually a half-mile long, in the rich soil.

The colonists had to be on guard against land speculators who were ready to take advantage of those who had settled on desirable land. Ownership of any tract was not official until it was surveyed; as soon as a survey was completed, speculators could be expected to try to outbid the original claimants and take the now-improved land. Often they simply "jumped the claim" by occupying an acreage when a settler's family was absent. Eventually, the settlers were able to fight off the speculators by combining in "claim-clubs." Under this arrangement, outsiders were immediately identified and prevented from pre-empting land known to belong to a member of the club.

In Poweshiek County, as almost anywhere else in Iowa, there was good reason to buy up as much land as one could. N. C. Condit of Montezuma, writing in the Iowa Gazeteer in 1865, described the soil as

> ... chiefly a rich, black loam, composed of vegetable deposit, with a clay subsoil underlaid with carboniferous limestone. The depth of this vegetable deposit, which has been accumulating for centuries, varies from two to six feet in depth, and is almost inexhaustible in fertility. The ease with which the soil is cultivated, is an item of great importance to the settler. One man with a team can tend from forty to fifty acres of corn well. There is no waste land in the county. It can all be brought under

cultivation.

An important factor in the land's fertility was (and is) the average rainfall of about 35 inches per year and the excellent drainage afforded by the county's elevation which averages 850 feet above sea level (1,010 feet at Grinnell) and between 400 and 600 feet above the low water mark of the Mississippi River.

In the 1855 growing season wheat, corn, and potatoes were harvested in surprising abundance. Wheat raised on one farmer's land yielded 30 bushels per acre, and corn grown on what is now the Grinnell College campus came in at 90 bushels per acre. Potatoes also grew well, one farmer claiming that he got almost a pailful of them from a single hill--"to which almost incredible story," a later chronicler declares, "there are living witnesses."

GRINNELL AND SLAVERY

As the new town developed, its growth was part of the push and shove of westward expansion. Thus, Charles Payne writes that the years

> . . . that saw the establishment of the Grinnell settlement also witnessed the rapid growth of the State as a whole. Settlers were not only pouring in by prairie schooner and railroad, but they were also swarming up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers by steamers, landing on both borders of the State and then pushing on

> into the interior. In one year alone four million acres of land were transferred to settlers—the applicants sometimes standing in line at the land offices until their feet were frozen . . . The movement reached its peak between 1854 and 1856. For the next five or six years immigrants came more and more from the North, and less and less from the South. It was this new element with its small New England alloy that became the energizing force in the State.

This burgeoning statewide settlement found the town of Grinnell immediately involved in a broader context of political and economic issues. The development of railroads in Iowa, the building of a public-school system, taxation, banking regulations, issues in agriculture—all these were matters that Grinnell, and all other Iowa communities, had to face along with national concerns like slavery. But the difference in Grinnell was that the issues were literally brought home with considerable force because of the interest and involvement in them by the town's leading citizen, J. B. Grinnell.

On the question of slavery, the New Englanders of Grinnell, and some others, were agreed: they despised the institution. Led by J. B. Grinnell, many of them placed themselves at risk with federal authorities by conducting an Underground Railroad operation that reportedly saw some 1,000 blacks routed through the town and on to other waystations leading to Canada and freedom.*

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*The Underground Railroad in Iowa started in Tabor in the southwest and then went across the state, with stops at Lewis, Earlham, Des Moines, Grinnell, Iowa City, West Liberty, West Branch, Springdale, Tipton, DeWitt, Low Moor,

and Clinton. There were also waystations off the beaten path at Washington, Crawfordsville, and Muscatine. — From The Negro in Iowa, Studies in Iowa History, The State Historical Society of Iowa, February 1969, p. 25.

Gershom Hill remembered that as a lad of 15 he once drove a wagonload of slaves to Marengo, 40 miles from Grinnell. And Joanna Harris Haines recalled that "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 alert as crickets to the course of public events, especially those relating to slavery."

National and local history merged when, in February 1859, J. B. Grinnell brashly gave shelter to the fanatic John Brown. J. B.'s fervid abolitionism clouded his assessment of the erratic Brown who in 1856 believed he was exercising the will of God when he had five defenseless Kansans (one of them a 20-year-old) killed at Pottawatomie Creek. Breaking into their homes at night, Brown terrorized the families of the men and then had his underlings hack the five to death with broadswords. He was not moved by the pleas of the victims or by the sight of the mutilated bodies, asserting that he was called to "regulate matters" in that part of Kansas. This and other half-crazed acts made him a powerful prophet to eastern abolitionists and a blood-thirsty terrorist to all in the disputed territories.

Brown's activities added greatly to the tension that existed on the

Missouri-Kansas border in January 1859. Pro-slavery Missourians, 200 strong, were ready to push their way into southern Kansas near the Osage River. John Brown was not only on the scene, he was considering invading Missouri. His decision was quickened by a slave who, fearing he was about to be sold literally down the river, asked Brown for protection. Brown with 12 men reconnoitered the Osage with a view to taking more slaves. Brown worked one side of the river, and his lieutenant, John Henrie Kagi, worked the other. Brown not only freed the family of the slave who asked for help, but he also took along other blacks, the total coming to ten. Kagi freed only one, but he killed the slave's master and took his horses. Later, one of the slaves gave birth, so that the total "contraband" under Brown's protection was 12 persons.

Brown and his band then headed for Tabor, Iowa, just above the Missouri border, where he had taken refuge during earlier forays. The once hospitable citizens now upbraided him at a public meeting "as a disturber of the peace and safety of the village" who had committed murder and horse-stealing. Forced out of town, Brown left for Lewis some 40 miles to the east and then pushed on toward Des Moines and Grinnell, fully mindful that there was a $3,000 reward offered by U. S. marshals for his capture. On Saturday, February 19, he hid his men in a grove near Grinnell, declaring that he did not want to endanger the citizens by having his cohort enter the town. But Brown himself went directly to J. B. Grinnell's house where he told the owner: "I have heard of you and do not feel like a stranger, for you married a daughter . . . of my old friend, Deacon Chauncey Chapin of Springfield, Mass., where I once resided . . . I am the awful Brown of whom you have heard."

J. B. replied that he "was reading just now in the New York Tribune that you

were leading a company of fugitives through Iowa to Canada; that there was a large reward for your capture, and the United States marshals were sure to capture the party." Grinnell hastened to say that, despite this news, Brown was welcome in his home. Other members of the band could use the stalls in his barns, and the rest could stay at the Reed Hotel. With the freed slaves included, there were 28 persons in Brown's entourage.

The excitement in town on this February morning was intense as snorting horses, clinking wagons, and rough-looking men in muddy boots and unkempt garb approached the town. According to Amos Bixby, the weather was mild, and the members of the band were on foot, leading rather riding their mounts. As the visitors moved toward the center of Grinnell, hotel owner Loyal Phelps and a few other citizens trudged forward to meet them, but when the band reached the Reed Hotel, Bixby recalled, "there was quite a gathering to greet them." A bivouac was established on J. B.'s property at Park and Third; swords, rifles, and other arms and ammunition were taken out of concealment in the wagons and stacked in J. B.'s parlor. Some of these weapons would later be used at Harper's Ferry.

Grinnell described Brown as "very erect for a man nearing sixty years, [with] a full, long beard, almost white, with hair parted and standing up, suggesting Andrew Jackson as pictured. The chin was broad, lips compressed, the eye was a keen, light gray, deep set and mild, only flashing in moments of excited action, or when crossed in debate. . . . There were no spurs on his boots, and he was only clad in a plain, well-worn suit, with nothing to suggest border warfare save a wide-rimmed hat and half-concealed pistol."

Grinnell hosted Brown and Kagi in his house, and the two leaders spoke of their mission. Brown was invited to use the Grinnells' parlor as a kind of office, and in his autobiography J. B. adds a larger dimension of history to Brown's visit by saying that "a part of the draft of the Virginia Constitution I have no doubt was made then . . . " This document, also called the Provisional Constitution, was an outline of Brown's quixotic scheme to invade Virginia, rouse the slaves to insurrection, capture a large piece of territory, and then help the freed slaves to form their own state. To commemorate Brown's use of the parlor, J. B. and his wife thereafter called it The Liberty Room. J. B. does not say that he actually saw Brown working on the constitution, but if Brown did indeed do some writing on it, it must have been a revision since the document, containing 48 bizarre articles, was completed a year earlier, in January of 1858.

In the evening of February 19, 1859, Brown addressed "several hundred persons" from the town and environs, telling the gathering of the death of one son and the torture of another at the hands of the "assassins from Missouri." Brown's demeanor when talking of his personal tragedies gave J. B. "the first indication of a kind of insanity, and I appealed to him to 'take rest or . . . your severe sacrifice of your boys will drive you to madness.'" But this Joshua who saw slavery as the country's Jericho, retorted, "No--the battle is raging, and I must fight."

At one point, Brown eased the tension of his visit by comparing notes with J. B. about the wool business; he, too, Brown said, had been in the trade. "I can with my eyes closed tell the texture of a fleece, and by the touch if strong or weak, if grown on a poor or fat animal; and honest selling on merit

was my aim." But by being honest, Brown himself was fleeced, his failure in the wool business being one of a series of financial setbacks that had inevitable effects on his psyche.

Speaking on Sunday, February 20, at the Congregational Church in Grinnell, Brown uttered bloody threats against "my enemies," declaring, in contravention of both law and logic, that "if I ordered men shot, it was because they planned murder." He added, however, that his principal mission was not violence but the forging of a "peaceful settlement and [saving] a great state [Kansas] from slavery."

On February 25, Brown arrived in Springdale, a Quaker community just east of Iowa City, and he challenged the authorities to try to take him. At the same time, J. B., helped by abolitionist William Penn Clarke of Iowa City, contrived to have a railroad car sent to West Liberty, a town situated southeast of Iowa City. Grinnell said he had a "shipment of wool" for consignment to Chicago. The contraband safely aboard, the train left West Liberty for the Windy City where, with the help of Allen Pinkerton, the detective and future bodyguard of President Lincoln, the blacks were placed on a train to Detroit, with Canada as their final destination.

On February 26, Brown, who went unchallenged in Iowa City, wrote a vindictive letter back to the Tabor community, comparing his reception there and at Grinnell. First he noted that his entire band was put up at Grinnell without cost and had received food and clothing (the latter mainly for the slaves). He boasted that at the church there were:

> Full houses for Two Nights in succession at which meetings Brown and Kagi spoke and were loudly cheered; & fully indorsed. Three Congregational Clergymen attended the meeting on Sabbath evening (notice of which was given out from the Pulpit). All of them took part in justifying our course & in urging contributions in our behalf & there was no dissenting speaker present at either meeting. Mr. Grinnell spoke at length & has since laboured to procure us a free and safe conveyance to Chicago: & effected it . . . Contributions in cash amounting to $26.50 . . . Last but not least Public thanksgiving to All-mighty God offered up by Mr. Grinnell in the behalf of the whole company for His great mercy; & protecting care, with prayers for a continuance of those blessings.*

For his efforts on behalf of Brown, J. B. was subjected to some local criticism and to harsh censure by many other Iowans whose feelings about abolition were less intense than his. Dubbed John Brown Grinnell by his critics, J. B. not only took the epithet in stride but continued to work implacably against slavery. The Washington (Iowa) Democrat, however, accused him of hypocrisy, making the claim that he himself used some of the freed slaves as cheap labor on his farm and in his home. Harriet Grinnell Dunham, J. B.'s cousin, lends some credence to the charge when she recalls that J. B. "always had plenty of help for all his undertakings. He kept a fine team of horses and had a negro driver, and help in the house was sometimes colored." Whether these employees were cheap labor or evidence of J. B.'s way of helping freed slaves remains a speculative matter.

As for John Brown, his trail ended in Virginia where he and about 20 followers gave lasting notoriety to the little place called Harper's Ferry. Captured on October 16 by U. S. Marines under Col. Robert E. Lee, Brown was hanged on December 2, 1859. Also executed was one of Brown's lieutenants, Edwin Coppoc, "a reckless, dare-devil fellow" late of the Quaker community of Springdale, Iowa. In many Iowa towns, including Grinnell, flags were flown at half staff in honor of the Free Soil "martyr."

The John Brown episode served to dramatize what the country at large was facing: the rending of the Republic over the issue of slavery. Grinnell was a microcosm in which the presence of blacks was leading to division in the same way that slavery was leading the entire country to division. Grinnell's instincts, guided by the militance of its founder, were on the side of liberty and justice for the blacks. But when it came to direct relationships with them, particularly as national tensions rose over the slavery issue, trouble broke out in the otherwise temperate community.

Much of the tension was fomented by those who had migrated to Grinnell with anti-black sentiments that ran counter to the views and values of those with New England backgrounds. Attention was focused on a group of five blacks, all fugitive slaves, who on reaching Grinnell were taken in by abolitionist residents like the Bixbys and given most of the rights and privileges of other citizens, including the right to attend school. One of the blacks was a 26-year-old husband and father who wanted to learn to read so that he could return to Missouri and lead his family from signpost to signpost to freedom. Another was 16-year-old Fannie Overton who came from Missouri and lived with the Amos Bixby family. She was soon outstripping the white students in her

ability to read, write, and accurately recite verse after verse of Scripture, causing "offence to some white competitors."

In March 1860, with the country on the verge of open conflict, a farmer stood up at the annual public-school meeting and proposed that all "foreign students" (that is, those from outside Grinnell Township) be denied access to the school. County Superintendent of Schools Leonard F. Parker, hired in 1856 as a kind of transitional teacher between the school and the proposed university, argued against the motion on various grounds, pointing above all to the revenues that would be lost from the excluded white students. The motion lost. The proponent then made it clear that the only ones he meant to exclude were the blacks. Again, the motion was voted down.

Parker rightly anticipated trouble. Armed with a heavy cane, he was ready to do battle and almost had to do so when two residents came to Edna Marsh's classroom where four blacks were enrolled. The two invaders were Samuel "Scotch" Cooper, who despite his nickname was a native of Ireland, and N. W. Clark, an erstwhile sea captain. The students had not yet arrived for class, but the intruders demanded that they be denied entrance and sent packing, for good. Parker faced the men and said "I am here to defend all students who are permitted by the board to come. I mean what I say." After assessing Parker's demeanor and the effect his cudgel might have, the two invaders retreated. Parker then spoke to the small mob that had gathered in support of the Cooper and Clark. Some in the crowd, now chastened, joined Parker in counseling against violence. The gathering dispersed. To prevent another confrontation, Parker held classes for a day or two and then called off the rest of the school session.

At this juncture Sarah Bixby, Sumner's wife, courageously provided night classes for the blacks, but her efforts were frustrated when some of the dissidents informed a St. Louis newspaper that there were fugitive slaves in Grinnell, thus alerting U. S. marshals and forcing the blacks to move to Quaker communities in other parts of the state. Amos Bixby expressed some bitterness in recounting this part of the story, noting that Sarah Bixby "was firm where some notable men of the town faltered." As for the activist duo, Scotch Cooper was held in high enough esteem in the community to be elected its mayor; Clark, on the other hand, was characterized by one resident as simply "a bad man," one who was in fact sued for hurling a pitchfork into one of Dr. Holyoke's horses, killing it.

The net effect of the episode was the barring of blacks from any access to public schooling in Grinnell for many years. Although L. F. Parker and Loyal Phelps clearly opposed the ban, J. B. Grinnell, one of the country's leading abolitionists, did not enter with any force in the effort to help the beleaguered blacks, and this may account for Amos Bixby's comment. The fac is that the town was not different from other communities in Iowa on the question of schooling for blacks; Muscatine, for instance, did the same as Grinnell and at first barred them from attending. The state itself, in its legislation on black enrollment, underwent progressive change from 1847 to 1862. The phases, as summarized by Clarence Aurner, were as follows:

> 1) The total exclusion of the colored youth, but exemption of [their parents'] property from taxation; 2) the permission of limited school privileges [for blacks] in separate schools; and 3) the allowance of

equal school privileges to all. The decision of the lower court to compel admission of colored youth to a grammar school in Muscatine was affirmed.

The reason for J. B.'s lukewarm attitude to his town's approach to the probl is not hard to find. His method was always to do the politic thing, to wait things out (as he did the issue of coeducation at Grinnell University) and s which way public opinion and his own instincts directed him. He was fully aware, as Joanna Harris Haines writes, that while Grinnell was "in fact an anti-slavery community, there were sharp differences among us as to the prop limits of agitation." Grinnell found it prudent at times to test those limi before committing himself.

In this, as in other issues, it was Parker, the educator, who repeatedly showed the courage of his convictions and moved both the public school syste and the college toward a measure of integrity and progressivism that they might not otherwise have had.

THE 1860s: LOCAL GROWTH, NATIONAL CONFLICT

In 1860, Grinnell's population stood at 600, or about 130 more than the population of 1856. This was marginal growth and far from the 10,000 people that J. B. said would inhabit the town by 1859. The place was, as a Davenport Gazette reporter wrote, "stuck in the mud." A resident agreed, noting that besides lacking sidewalks, the town had "no churches worth the

name [church buildings, that is]; no railroads . . .; few bridges; no fence mile from town."

All this was because the Panic of 1857 had slowed the railroads from coming town and delayed the second wave of settlement. In his autobiography, J. B recalled the hard times in Iowa: "Taxes were unpaid for years, drawing heav penalties, while hundreds of thousands of acres were abandoned to tax-title purchasers. There was brooding a financial cloud of inky blackness--no cre and poor money, up to the mad treason of 1860." Eli Clark adds personal detail to the picture. His father came to Grinnell in 1855, built a flouring mill in 1856, and began to prosper as the large wheat crops of 1856 and 1857 were harvested. But then came the "great crash," says Clark, and "everyone was hurt, and my father was no exception." Along with financial chaos "came three years of very poor crops, the wheat yield was light and injured by blight, smut and chinch bug, so that only a very poor quality of flour could be made. The last of those years the mill was shut down. Then the War."

But J. B. was too much of a promoter and optimist to brood about all this without action. He continued to work hard to bring the trains through, and i other ways he strove to keep the community on the move. As he had done in 1854, he again advertised in eastern newspapers for new settlers. He told th New York Tribune's readers that living in Grinnell "is cheap" and they could buy land "in 40 or 80 acre tracts of superior prairie, at from $3 to $10 the acre." He told of "men who came to this country with less than $300 four years since that are now as independent farmers as you will find in New York or Ohio."

Ever resourceful, he even tried, in the spring of 1859, to intercept the owners of some of the 300 or more wagons passing through town on their way to the riches promised by Colorado gold. J.B. sensibly wrote in a newspaper article that the gold-seekers would do much better to settle in Grinnell where the trains would soon arrive and would connect the town to both eastern and western markets. Why not stop here, buy land, get some crops going, and wait for word from Pike's Peak? If there was indeed gold for the taking there, the information would get back quickly and there would be time enough to go after it. If the gold was a myth, the prospectors would have a stake in Grinnell, with land bought and crops growing. J. B.'s advice would prove sound, the Colorado gold turning out to be too deeply embedded for placer mining, thus frustrating the 50,000 or more hopefuls who soon found both their pans and their pockets empty.

But J. B.'s bid to the wagoneers went unheeded, and the town even lost some of its own best citizens. One of these was George Washington Cook who had come from Connecticut with his family in April 1857. By 1860 he felt he had to move, not farther west, but back east. "There is plenty of everything [in Grinnell] but money, and everything [is] cheap for this reason, making the labor of a year of but little value . . . . I [now] have the opinion that the East is much the better place to live & labor in from every consideration except this rich & easily worked soil."

The richness of the land was not the issue. "The curse of the west," banker Erastus Snow declared, "was general indebtedness, usury and 'red dog' money." Cook knew what Snow was talking about, noting that "thousands of dollars are loaned here at from 20 to 25 per cent, mostly at 25." When it came to money,

much depended on when one arrived in Grinnell. If one came in the first contingent, there was indeed opportunity for making money before the real downturn struck. Cook wrote to his family back in Meriden that, although he and other late-comers were struggling, others "are making their thousands selling land." He cited one settler who bought acreages for $8,000 and sold them for $27,000. The Bixbys bought at less than $5.00 per acre and were now selling for $50 or $100 per acre. George Norris paid $200 for his land and sold it to the railroad for $8,000 "in cash." And, Cook noted, J. B. Grinnell "is doing the same, he having several thousands Acres both timber or prairie." J. B. was also a lender, at the rates then prevailing.

Among settlers with wherewithal, living standards were thus quite good. Cook reported in 1859 that "seven good houses have been built this summer. Several [others] have been finished, nice additions have been made to 3 or 4. The cellar is being dug to another & others are being talked of . . . . Capt. Clark has built a large Barn & Matteson in the grove has built a nice house costing $900." The economy was therefore not all that bad for some, but it was clear to Cook that, with high land prices and low commodity prices, he an other newcomers would have severe problems.

The town's growth between 1854 and 1860 was thus slow and uncertain, but it was not absent. It showed itself in the three general stores that succeeded Anor Scott's little enterprise and in the small shops where customers could buy hardware, harness materials, millinery, drugs, tobacco and other products For industry, there were three sawmills, two flour mills, a tannery, brick manufacturer, and a sash-blind factory. Residents who got sick had three doctors to call on, and anyone needing legal advice could consult Grinnell's

four lawyers, each of whom engaged in other enterprises as well. There would be no bank, on the other hand, until 1865, although there was a private banking "exchange" that Dr. Holyoke established next to his pharmacy, with fellow druggist Charles Spencer as its cashier and loan officer.

To this aggregate of economic resources, J. B. added another and crucially important one in the depressed year of 1858. His hope was that it would become a further inducement to potential settlers and might also shore up the financial condition of those already in Grinnell. With wheat down to 50 cents a bushel and corn to 20 cents, J. B. felt that another product was needed if farmers were to profit from their labor. Thinking back to his experiences on his guardian's farm in Vermont, he introduced the first flock of sheep to Grinnell, bringing the animals in from Michigan.

In September of 1858 he wrote in the New York Tribune that "sheep raising and wool growing is the business for all localities remote from a railroad, where men of small means are seeking a home." J. B.'s argument, as Charles Payne summarizes it, was that "land in Iowa [is] worth for wool-growing purposes eighty per cent of that in Ohio and New York, whereas it could be purchased for twenty per cent of its value in those states. Transportation charges to the best American markets would cost but five per cent of the value of the wool. Forty acres under cultivation would furnish the grain necessary for each family and for a flock of five hundred sheep that would yield four and one-half to five and one-half pounds of wool to a sheep."

With wool bringing between 60 cents and a dollar per pound, clearly this was a promising prospect, and J. B. and his neighbors were soon in business. With

J. B. himself owning some 7,000 head of sheep, it was not long before Grinnell was overrun by the animals and the community became known as Sheep Town. As such, it would point with pride to its being the site of the first sheep-shearing festival in the west. J. B. himself became the spokesman for the industry as he assumed the presidency of the Iowa Sheep Growers' Association, published his authoritative booklet, Sheep on the Prairies, and brought his expert knowledge to Washington when he debated agriculture and trade policies in Congress.

Grinnell made the right move at the right time, just two years before the outbreak of the Civil War. Wool production became highly profitable during the war when the need for uniforms, blankets, and other cloth products increased considerably. There was in fact one year during wartime when a single shearing reportedly brought $100,000 to Grinnell farmers. In due time, the yen for ever higher profits and lower costs spurred the introduction of inferior animals (old, poorly bred, or diseased animals from other flocks) and this, coupled with the rampant killing of sheep by roving dogs, led to the decline of sheep-raising and to greater concentration on cattle and hogs. But the industry by this time had done its work, and there is no question that its introduction was one of J. B.'s most productive accomplishments, serving to restore the town to economic stability and to new opportunities for growth and development.

There was one bitter disappointment for the town, and that was the delay in bringing trains to Grinnell. The 1859 Poweshiek County census showed, under "number of miles Railroad finished," none, and under "number of miles Railroad unfinished," 14. This lack of progress was keenly felt by Grinnell residents,

particularly by J. B. Grinnell who said that he "wasted years and vitality by a nearly a hundred stage and hack trips to bring the Rock Island west." Having been appointed a director of the line, he even traveled to New York to try to persuade Henry Farnam and Thomas C. Durant to push the trackage into and beyond Grinnell, all to no avail. But the founder and the community were not disposed to drop their efforts; to do so would mean the inevitable decline of the place. The push for rail service continued and eventually succeeded—but not before 1863.

Those settlers, then, who persisted to 1860 and could see these developments as holding promise for growth were largely those who had wherewithal to start with and made the most of their opportunities. L. F. Parker described these residents loftily as "men and women [who] came here with high purpose; they made heroic efforts; they achieved important success." Erastus Snow, writing in 1896, resorted to alliteration: the Grinnell folk, he said, were "a pioneer population possessed with pluck, push and principle." That this population did not accommodate everyone with these traits—Henry Hamilton, T. B. Clark, or George Washington Cook, for example—was forgotten in the nostalgia suffusing some 50 years of memory.

The general view outside the community was that its members were high-minded, forward-looking people who had the will to make the town "the best one in this best state in the nation." This was not an unrealistic aim, and there were two strong means for fulfilling it: first, a ready-made publicity machine in J. B. Grinnell and, second, an educated cadre of citizens who made the town a leader not only in discussing but in acting on issues affecting state and nation. As L. F. Parker recalled, "We had a large proportion of thinkers and

speakers, an unusually large number of graduates from colleges and the higher schools, probably larger than old Boston or Eastern Massachusetts or any other town in [Iowa] . . . . " For such a community the period from 1854 to 1860 abounded in questions which wrought minds up to a white heat.

"Bleeding Kansas," or the whole issue of slavery, was among these heated issues, although (as Joanna Harris Haines pointed out) not all residents were willing participants in the ferment, which included the near-violence over blacks attending the schools, the excitement and dangers of participating in the Underground Railroad, and the controversy over John Brown's visit. These were the local outcroppings of controversy, but the issue of slavery and its implications for American unity were being played out on a larger stage, and it was clear that the issue was approaching a critical stage.

The year 1861, with the crisis at breaking point, proved to be a watershed for the Grinnell community, with two important things occurring: the first was the election of J. B. Grinnell to Congress, and the second was the opening of hostilities between North and South. The first brought the name of Grinnell (J. B. and his community) into the national arena; the second, by the irony of war, changed the Grinnell economy for the better and spurred the town's development.

". . . . AND ALL TOGETHER BUILD A COLLEGE"

Besides the resources, described in the previous chapter, which made for both the social and economic development of the community, there was another which gave Grinnell its defining character. This was not the Grinnell University

that Hamilton and J. B. Grinnell had envisioned, although an institution by that name was in fact incorporated on August 13, 1856. For two years after that date, Grinnell University remained an enterprise in name only, its faculty being a handful of town residents who would teach courses when and if the institution had a student body.

Although J. B. in 1858 would say that the university had "a half hundred of students," he was promoting rather than reporting. There is no evidence that the university was serving any more than a few preparatory students from the local school. The fact is that Grinnell University would not become a four-year collegiate institution until Iowa College, founded in 1846 in Davenport, moved from the river city to Grinnell in 1859. To this day, therefore, the entity known as Grinnell College counts its history uninterruptedly from 1846, the founding date of Iowa College, rather than from the date of the move to Grinnell. The reason is not only that Iowa College and Grinnell University effected a merger, but also that the two institutions had convergent aims in the general Congregational effort to develop higher education in Iowa.

Whether operating or not, Grinnell University did have one feature that gave it some significance in American higher education. Its aim was to admit women as well as men, although not in a fully integrated way. The university was to be "separated into two departments—a male department which shall resemble eastern colleges, a female department which shall be modeled in its domestic arrangements and in its general course of instruction, after the Mt. Holyoke institution at South Hadley, Mass."—that is, the institution that Julia Chapin Grinnell had attended. The impulse for coeducation was present in the

colony from its earliest years; Eliza Bartlett, for instance, noted that in September of 1855 one of the weekly lyceum meetings took up the question, "Shall Males and Females Be Educated Together?"

Some difficulty arose when the Iowa College trustees showed that they were not disposed to have a coeducational program in the merged college. L. F. Parker recalled in an Old Settlers Association speech that Grinnell partisans to the merger "were inclined to insist on co-education, but, at Mr. Grinnell's suggestion, did not, with the expectation that it would come without insisting." J. B. proved to be right in his assessment, and though his pronouncements about higher education in Grinnell were mostly hyperbole, there is no question that Grinnell College, founded as part of the frontier movement, would become an important influence not only in Grinnell and Iowa but in the educational growth of the West itself. As such, the institution's origins, in time, place, and ideology, require more than a brief description.

The impulse to establish a Congregational college in Iowa had come from the Iowa Band, a group of eleven Congregational ministers who were all 1843 graduates of Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts. Responding to the missionary dictates of the mother church, the seminarians journeyed to Iowa with two purposes in mind: "If each one of us can only plant one good permanent church, and all together build a college, what a work that would be!" There was a precedent for the Iowa effort in the work of a Yale Band of missionaries who founded churches as well as a college in Illinois. One of these missionaries, Asa Turner, pushed on to the Iowa territory where in 1836 he joined a few other settlers in the town of Denmark near the west bank of the Mississippi. Turner and his fellow ministers erected a church there, and

the town has been recognized ever since as "the cradle of Congregationalism in Iowa."

Turner was elected pastor of the church and, to enhance his income, also soon became agent of the Home Missionary Society. A colleague in that work, Reuben Gaylord (later to be one of the inaugural trustees of Iowa College), arrived in 1838. Turner and Gaylord were joined by Julius A. Reed who returned to Iowa in 1840 after a period of service in the east, and the three became the principal organizers of the Congregational Association of Iowa.

As thousands poured into Iowa as a result of the Black Hawk Purchase, the trio agreed that more missionaries were needed. Turner took the lead in urging the Home Office to send seminarians who would be ordained in Iowa and would open churches in the territory. There was not much of a response at first, but in due course Turner received an inquiry from a group of Andover students who expressed interest. Skeptical about the zeal of these young men, Turner tersely told them to come along if they really meant it.

They did--and nine of them arrived in Denmark on October 23, 1843. Later joined by the other two, they spread out to found their churches and proceeded with the work of starting a college. There was more than a little significance in their mission. As Professor Charles Noble of Grinnell College notes in a 1931 article, the Iowa Band was the product of an institution that

> had been founded . . . for the special purpose of counteracting the influence of the theological tendencies of the Harvard Divinity School. In the early 1840s, there had come to Andover a

> group of young men in general sympathy with its special theology, but who had been granted a vision of usefulness in the modern world which included something much broader than fighting Unitarianism or carrying out the routine duties of a New England parish.

this is the filcrum on which this whole new ethos both theological and secular was built

Andover's program at this time was wholly conservative, prescriptive, and austere, diametrically opposed to the liberalism of Harvard and bent on fending off the Unitarianism that was threatening orthodox Congregationalism. Andover's orthodoxy was close to unique; it required that "every article of the [creed adopted by the institution] shall forever remain entirely and identically the same, without the least alteration, or any addition or diminution" and that each professor must pledge himself to oppose "not only Atheists and Infidels, but Jews, Mahometans, Arians, Pelagians, Antinomians, Arminians, Socinians, Unitarians, and Universalists"! Given this view of things, it was not surprising that one Andover board member would find reason to complain that "candidates for ordination [are] not measuring up to the standards in the matter of total depravity."

Happily, the members of the Iowa Band soon found that the theological strictures of their alma mater had little relevance for the new society in the west. Allan Bogue explains that, although "the churches, the major private agencies of social control, were never far behind the settlers, the denominations to greater or lesser extent modified their doctrines and organization to meet the special problems of the frontier." What was most useful for the Iowa Band missionaries, besides the bedrock of Christian faith,

was the physical and emotional hardening that Andover's spartan living conditions had given them.

This abandonment of doctrinal excess at least partly accounts for Grinnell College's development as a tolerant, socially oriented, and progressive institution. Inevitably, then, the Iowa Band's "vision of usefulness" was present at the creation of Iowa College and made the institution a departure from the older eastern tradition of higher education. To this day the concept of usefulness to the community gives the college a distinctive role among its sister schools. The Iowa Band's vision has translated itself into an imperative of public service ingrained in the college's charter and curriculum, and in its students, faculty, and alumni.

More will be said about this tradition later, but what should be noted at this point is the presence of the concept in the very first efforts at founding the new college. It was present when, on March 12, 1844, members of the Iowa Band and other ministers met at Denmark to explore funding of the new school and to suggest possible sites. It was present on April 16 when, more formally, the Congregationalists joined with five New School Presbyterian ministers in approving a resolution by Reuben Gaylord that they "adopt measures preparatory to laying the foundation of an institution of learning in this territory."

As fund-raising efforts were undertaken in the east, the committee on October 6, 1845, chose Davenport as the site of the college and in June of the following year the Association approved this action "provided the citizens would raise fourteen hundred dollars, and provide certain specified grounds for a location." As John S. Nollen reports in his history of Grinnell

College:

> At this historic meeting, James J. Hill of the Iowa Band laid a silver dollar on the table and asked that trustees be appointed to care for it as the nucleus of an endowment. A board of twelve trustees was accordingly selected,* and thus, on June 10, 1846, Iowa College began its corporate existence.

What is not reported in this account is that it was not only the men who established the new college. James J. Hill's wife, Sarah, was present at the founding along with the wives of members of the Iowa Band and of other ministers. She reported that the women, "anxious to share in the enterprise of founding the college, resolved to raise one hundred dollars out of their own resources and seventy dollars were subscribed by fourteen who were present."

The articles of incorporation,* filed with the state on June 17, 1847, said that "the object of this institution shall be to promote the general interests of education and to qualify young men for the different professions and for the honorable discharge of the various duties of life." The college's first building was erected in 1848, with classes beginning on November 1 in that year, although at this point the institution was really a preparatory academy and not a full-fledged four-year college. The first college class entered in 1850, and the first graduates were the brothers John and William Windsor of Maquoketa, Iowa, in 1854. As such, they were the first students to receive a four-year degree from any institution west of the Mississippi River. How young the American republic was at this time is demonstrated by the fact that

the Windsors' immigrant father, John Wesley Windsor, had been a British seaman in the War of 1812, serving on the British frigate Cyane which in February 1815 engaged in a losing battle with the USS Constitution.

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*The 12 original trustees of Iowa College were Ephraim Adams, Harvey Adams, Ebenezer Alden, Daniel Lane, and A. B. Robbins (all members of the Iowa Band); Congregational pioneers Reuben Gaylord, J. C. Holbrook, Julius A. Reed, and Asa Turner; Presbyterian ministers J. M. Boal and W. W. Woods; and layman W. H. Starr. The 15 trustees under the articles of incorporation were Ephraim Adams, Harvey Adams, Ebenezer Alden, Charles Atkinson, Gamaliel Beaman, Reuben Gaylord, J. C. Holbrook, Henry Q. Jennison, Daniel Lane, James McManus, Julius A. Reed, A. B. Robbins, W. H. Starr, Asa Turner, and W. W. Woods.

The building in which the Windsors received their education still stands as part of a mansion that was built around it. Its address is 517-523 W. Seventh Street in Davenport. Looking like a typical one-room schoolhouse, this was the first Iowa College structure, and the first college building in the 29th state. Although the citizens of Davenport had raised $1,362 for the founding of the college and had deeded land to the institution, they soon showed that their own values ran counter to those of the devout teachers and abolitionists who were running the school. The River Citians soon decided that they needed new streets and heedlessly rammed one through the tiny campus. Adding insult to injury, they also taxed the college for the unwanted thoroughfare.

In 1854, the college literally retreated to a site some six blocks to the

north of the original site. But the harassment continued. In the new location (between Brady and Harrison Streets, where the present Davenport Central High School stands), the city fathers again said they needed a new street and proceeded to build one through the otherwise beautiful tract. The college's trustees ran out of patience and began looking for a new location outside Davenport.

The city fathers, deciding they had gone too far, made an effort to hold on to the college. Thus, Davenport's Daily Morning News of July 15, 1858, acknowledged that many citizens, "differing from [the college] in religious belief, have objected to its government." But if "liberality and impartiality [were] shown in the management of the institution, they would come forward liberally to its aid." In fact, the editorial continued, the city was willing to shift the institution to a site "in the lower portion of the city" which the college could buy "for the low price of $1.00 per acre, with twenty years to pay it in, at ten per cent interest per annum, an interest which a number of the citizens have offered to pay."

The editorial asserted that the issue of street-building "is now settled, and we cannot see how the College can complain of the citizens on that score, as the property holders on the street merely claimed a right on the faith of which they had bought property long before Iowa College was thought of, and which the Courts have since confirmed."

The defensive tone continued to the end of the editorial, and it concluded that if the trustees "should see fit to move off with their Institution, shall we not have good reason to think that they have acted out of sheer obstinacy

and spite?" The trustees, having had their campus not once but twice invaded by streets (Main Street on the second site to this day looks randomly placed), were not moved by the newspaper's arguments, particularly since the trustees had in hand relocation proposals from Anamosa, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Maquoketa, Marion, Muscatine, Webster City—and Grinnell. The decision was in favor of the community that showed a clear commitment to higher education and to Congregational principles, and thus Iowa College merged with Grinnell University in September of 1859.*

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*The Davenport property was sold by the Iowa College trustees to the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa which opened its own Griswold College on the site in 1860. The new college was named for the great evangelical bishop Alexander Viets Griswold of Massachusetts. The college continued in operation only until 1872,and the Episcopal Kemper Hall School for Boys succeeded it, operating until 1895. In the period 1904-1907, the Davenport Central High School was built on the site and continues as of this writing as the administrative center for the Davenport School System. — Arthur Ben Chitty, "Griswold College," Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church, March , 1968, pp. 73-75. I am indebted to the Rt. Rev. Walter Righter, retired Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, for supplying this article. Also, Davenport: Where the M ississipii Runs West, by Marlys Svendsen and Martha Bowers, City of Davenport, Iowa, 1982, Chapter 9, page 4.

The move was facilitated, not by J. B. Grinnell, but by Henry M. Hamilton—if we are to believe the latter's Historical Sketch of 1892. Hamilton recalled that he

took the first steps, and from my own purse expended the first money in the effort to secure the removal of Iowa College to the town of Grinnell.

After asking Mr. Grinnell to go with me, and his declaring it of no use, I went alone to the meeting of the Trustees of Iowa College in Davenport, held about commencement time in 1859.*

Upon my representation alone, the first committee of the Trustees of Iowa College to investigate and consider respecting the removal of the College to the town of Grinnell, was appointed. I was invited to be present at the meeting of the trustees, and, being present, I saw the resolution adopted, by which that committee was appointed. Reference to the Trustee minute book will, I think, corroborate this statement.

The ball which I thus set in motion, did not stop rolling until Iowa College was established in the town of Grinnell.

Regrettably the 1858 and 1859 minutes of the Iowa College trustees were lost in the cyclone of 1882 and so Hamilton's claim can be neither upheld nor denied, although his statement makes a strong case for him.

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*The usually precise Hamilton is wrong here. He must have meant 1858, since by 1859 all actions had been approved for moving the college to Grinnell.

What is certain is that all operations ceased in Davenport in September of 1859 when Julius Reed, member of the board of Iowa College and its treasurer, journeyed to Grinnell with the institution's "scanty library, our few pieces of apparatus, our meagre nucleus of a museum, and the old safe containing the college papers and $9,000." To these lean assets, the city of Grinnell provided a ready site, $36,000 from its Literary Fund, the structure of a "university," and a sympathetic community.

With no students or faculty members moving from Davenport to Grinnell, the Poweshiek County superintendent of schools, L. F. Parker, became principal of the Preparatory Department of the merged college and later was named professor of ancient languages (and later still, professor of history). His wife, Sarah Pearse Parker, was the first principal of the Ladies Department. Ten students had graduated from Iowa College in Davenport between 1854 and 1858, but there would be no B. A. degrees awarded again until 1865, all the men who could have completed their courses of study having enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War.

The merged college retained the name Iowa College and was incorporated on August 13, 1860.* The first building on the Grinnell campus was East College, opened in 1861, and it stood approximately on the site now occupied by Burling Library, facing north. In that year, 12 male students enrolled in the regular college course. But before long, the war would reduce that number to four, and the newly revived institution would depend on women enrollees for its very existence. The four male students were Robert Miller Haines, born in Columbiana County, Ohio; Stephen Henderson Herrick, born in Crown Point, New York; John Denton Hornby, born in Wiscasset, Maine; and Charles Scott, born in

Cabrach, Scotland. In 1865, they were the first students to receive B. A. degrees from Iowa College in Grinnell (hereafter to be referred to as Grinnell College).

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*The trustees of the merged institution in 1860 were: Ephraim Adams, Harvey Adams, Charles Atkinson, Jacob Butler, Oliver Emerson, Josiah B. Grinnell, Jesse Guernsey, Stephen L. Herrick, John C. Holbrook, Thomas Holyoke, Henry Q. Jennison, George F. Magoun, James McManus, Julius A. Reed, Alden B. Robbins, William Salter, George B. Sargent, David Sheldon, and Asa Turner. The trustees continued to run the college, and there was no president until George Magoun assumed office in 1864.

In 1861 the first women enrolled on the Grinnell campus were Mary Apthorp, born in Quincy, Illinois; Joanna Harris (later the wife of Robert Haines), born in Harrisville, Pennsylvania; Maria Emily Hart, born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Hester Abbie Hillis, born in Parkersburg, Iowa; Alice Jane LaDue (Gaylord), place of birth unknown; Mary Plumb (Boynton), born in Oberlin, Ohio; Mary Stearns (Waller), born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts; Eliza D. Sutherland (Schuyler), born in Bath, New Hampshire; Mary M. Sutherland (Kelsey), sister of Eliza Sutherland; and Jane Wilson (Smith), born in Girvan, Ayrshire, Scotland.

All 10 of these were enrolled in the Ladies' Course which did not offer a B. A. degree. The only one of the ten eventually to receive the degree was Mary Apthorp who continued beyond the two-year Ladies' Course and was graduated in 1867. She was Grinnell College's first alumna of the four-year curriculum.

But before the first graduates, either male or female, could receive their diplomas from the barely established college, an American holocaust would intervene, with casualties at the college proportional to those affecting the entire country.

THE RAILROAD COMES TO TOWN

The Civil War brought turmoil to America but it also brought a long-sought benefit to the people of Grinnell, Iowa: modern transportation. When the members of the Iowa Band made their journey from Massachusetts to the Mississippi River in 1843, they were able to go only as far as Buffalo, New York, by train. Beyond that point, they went much of the way by water, first on Lake Erie to Detroit, then north on Lake Huron around the Michigan peninsula, and finally south on Lake Michigan to Chicago. From Chicago they traveled by farm wagon and stagecoach to Rock Island, Illinois, crossing the Mississippi to Davenport by ferry. There had to be, and there was, a better method.

It was only 12 years after the Iowa Band's journey that the railroads moved across the Mississippi and began serving the settlements to the west of it. This was in response to the clamor for rail transportation that started in the earliest territorial days of Iowa. As population grew and farm produce increased, the clamor became a roar. Not only did Iowans want to be connected by rail with their Illinois neighbors, they wanted to see rail lines spanning the entire state.

The speed with which railroads developed generally in the U. S. is reflected in statistics showing that in 1830 there were only 32 miles of railroad track in the entire country. By 1845, the total trackage was more than 4,500 miles, and in 1855 it was more than 18,000 miles. Unfortunately, this progress was slowed somewhat when the lines moved into Iowa. Although the Mississippi was spanned and rail traffic started into Iowa in 1856, it would be all of 15 more years before Council Bluffs was reached.

The Iowa effort was a logical part of the thrust to bring the railroads beyond Buffalo to Chicago and then to the Mississippi River. The first link, from Buffalo to the Windy City, was completed by the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad in 1852. The second link, from Chicago to the Mississippi, would take only two more years.

The project was actually begun as early as 1847 when the Rock Island and LaSalle Railroad Company was organized to build a rail line from Rock Island eastward to the Illinois River near LaSalle--a point about half way between Rock Island and Chicago. But towns along that route did not respond as the developers hoped, and the sale of stock was frustratingly slow.

In the fall of 1850, engineer Henry Farnam came from Connecticut to see what the prospects were for westward expansion of rail traffic. Already credited with major canal and rail projects, he was a highly successful builder who immediately gained the respect of the Midwesterners. Joined by his partner, financier Joseph E. Sheffield of Connecticut, Farnam made a strong case for extending the Rock Island-LaSalle line even farther east, to Chicago. In thi way there would be uninterrupted rail transportation from the east coast to

the Mississippi River.

But the enterprising engineer also looked to the lands west of the Mississippi. He was fully aware of the bill before Congress "to grant the State of Iowa land to aid in constructing a road from Davenport to Council Bluffs, intersected by another from Dubuque to Keokuk." This possibility accounted for his advising J. B. Grinnell in 1853 to go to Iowa where he (Farnam) was "to build a railway across [the state] to the Missouri River."

Given the prospect of linking Rock Island and everything in between with the bustling commerce of the Great Lakes, it was not only the towns along the proposed route but also eastern capitalists who now showed great interest in the project. With Farnam and Sheffield taking control, the name of the corporation was changed to the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad in 1851. Under Farnam's supervision, the tracks were laid according to the corporation's timetable, and on February 22, 1854, the new line was declared finished. Speaking to a celebrating crowd at Rock Island, Farnam declaimed: "Today, we witness the nuptials of the Atlantic with the Father of Waters. Tomorrow, the people of Rock Island can go to New York the entire distance l railroad, and within the space of forty-two hours." The accomplishment was dramatic one when we recall that it took the Iowa Band three weeks to trave the same distance.

As the Chicago-Rock Island work was progressing, Iowans began looking to th eventual linking of the Illinois line with a trans-Mississippi one. A grou headed by Antoine LeClaire of Davenport formed the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad in 1853 with the intention of laying tracks from Davenport to Iowa

City. With work progressing well, a locomotive appropriately dubbed "The Antoine LeClaire" was ferried across the Mississippi in July, 1854, and I had its first piece of rolling stock. On April 21, 1856, the first bridg across the Mississippi was opened, making it possible for a traveler to g from Chicago to Davenport entirely by train. By the winter of 1856, the traveler could go on to Iowa City. *

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*This account of the development of railroads in Iowa is drawn from Vol. pp. 551-590, of The Story of Iowa: The Progress of An American State, New York, 1952, by William J. Petersen.

J. B. Grinnell was steeped in these developments. All Americans at this and particularly those in the developing west, were caught up in railroad fever. They were well aware of the economic power that accrued to commun with direct access to rail transportation. Thus, J. B.'s letter of Decem 1853 to Julius Reed about possible sites for a new town made it plain tha was interested only in places "where lands are cheap and there is sure in to be a[n] R. R."

Enterprising Americans like J. B. knew that the vastness of the country opening up west of the Mississippi meant an America of new opportunity a a new style and character. But to achieve it there had to be, in Leo Ma term, the machine in the garden--the locomotive pulling freight and pass through the vast pastoral landscape of the west. Marx points out that t country tried to retain the older ideal--that of the pastoral or bucolic

as technology threatened it. Railroads "enabled the nation to continue defining its purpose as the pursuit of rural happiness while devoting its to productivity, wealth, and power." In describing the great painting by George Inness, The Lackawanna Valley (1855), which Marx uses to illustrat argument, he says that "instead of causing disharmony, the train [seen m through a beautiful natural landscape] is a unifying device."

J. B. Grinnell was fully aware of these implications and eloquently anticipated the thesis that Marx would later advance. J. B. saw not onl economic value of railroads but also their importance for other aspects vast garden being cultivated west of the Mississippi:

> The iron rail has achieved far more for the new West than for the c states. It has invited refined society where before pastoral life only congenial to a people with nomadic habits. It has rendered th expanse which before had only the value of a clear sky, the home o contented and prospered millions. It has determined the value of farms by proximity to a depot, and promoted the social unity of the people, who have found easy and swift ways of travel. In the facilitation of exchanges of products and speed of locomotion, human life at every locality distant from seaboard or crowded city, has been lengthened by one half . . . .

When, therefore, the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad (later to be absorbed into the Chicago and Rock Island line) reached Iowa City in 1856, J. B. looked eagerly forward to the trains' coming through his town. Once this was accomplished, the Grinnell community would be on a straight line of railroad

development from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and as such it would have a favored economic and political position among the vast number of cities rising in the west.

It's not hard to see why J. B. was such a vocal partisan of the federal land grants that directly subsidized the railroad companies. In 1856 four such grants were made to the state of Iowa, and the state in turn gave the acreages to four railroad companies, including the Mississippi and Missouri line. Each of the companies was awarded every odd-numbered section of land within six miles of the company's line. William Petersen notes this was the same as giving the railroads 3,840 acres of land for each mile of trackage that they built. By selling everything not needed for the roadbed and for maintenance properties, the companies defrayed the cost of construction and gained a considerable amount of free capital as well.

The Grinnell community's hopes for railroad service were high in the first two years after its founding, particularly in view of J. B.'s close friendship with Henry Farnam. Grenville Dodge had finished his survey for the railroad in 1854, and all that remained was the completion of tracks from Iowa City to Grinnell. It soon became obvious, however, that the line was not moving with any speed beyond Iowa City. The tight money resulting from the Panic of 1857 brought a stop to this and other major projects. With a prime incentive to settlers thus removed, there was a drop in the number of newcomers to Grinnell, and J. B. and the community had cause for worry.

The only course the town could see was to buy stock in the Mississippi and Missouri company in the hope that, by having a vested interest, it could move

the railroad to faster action. The community voted a bond issue of $100,000 which the residents exchanged for stock in the company, with the condition that the railroad reach Grinnell by a date certain. In addition, J. B. was elected a director of the line, and it was felt this would push things along. But neither of these developments helped the cause; the value of the stock steadily declined and the entire transaction later resulted in bitter litigation which, when it was concluded, yielded only $1,800 to the bondholders.

But there was another problem that the community had to face. Delayed though they were, the plans for rail service remained active, and the company continued mapping the line that the railbed would take through Grinnell. Before long, however, the engineers found that the best route into town would require a mile-long cut in the terrain between Sugar Creek and Rock Creek, southwest of the business district. The cut would be so deep that it would reach the blue clay, a material that invariably loosened, slid down the sides of the clefts, and obstructed the roadbeds. Engineer Peter Dey decided that this factor, plus the prohibitive cost of cutting through the terrain, made the direct route into Grinnell unfeasible. The alternative was to move the line about six miles south of Grinnell and thus avoid expending some $100,000 for the large excavation. But this would mean a railroad access outside the town itself--a highly undesirable prospect.

It fell to Henry Hamilton to solve the problem. While inspecting some land owned by Anor Scott between Sugar Creek and Rock Creek, Hamilton saw a narrow rim on the west side of Sugar Creek and another rim on the east side of Rock Creek, with a depression in between. His own engineering knowledge told him

that tracks could be run through this area without making any cut at all. Not only would this permit trains to go directly through town, but it would also save some two miles in overall length of the rail line. Peter Dey was unimpressed, assuming that his own surveyors would have found this route if it existed. Hamilton, with J. B. Grinnell and Dey in tow, pointed out the site, and the surprised Dey conceded "This is where we will build it."

This was in 1859, and the extension itself would not be completed for another four years. Finally, however, the first train lumbered into town on June 29, 1863, in the very midst of the war, and Grinnell entered on a new phase of its economic history. For J. B. Grinnell, this was a capstone achievement for the community and for the scheme he launched when he elected "to do service . . . in some portion of the west where lands are cheap and there is sure in time to be a R. R." In 1863, that time had come.

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE . . . RACE AND RELIGION

The Grinnell covenant called for settlers of "congenial moral and religious sentiments and pecuniary ability to make the school and the Church paramount" in the new community. Both enterprises--education and religion--were first housed in a crude structure built in June of 1855 but were soon replaced by a two-storey building that would be the town school until 1871.

The first three teachers, successively, were Lucy Bixby, originally from Norridgewock, Maine: her sister Louisa, who had taught in Illinois; and Samuel

F. Cooper, a native of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, who was an Oberlin graduate. As settlers doing service during the community's first year, all three were earnest teachers who used the rote style of instruction then prevalent. One citizen, Darius Thomas (who would later found the Hazel Dell Academy in Newton, Iowa, an institution that would subsequently become the Newton Normal College), didn't like that style and set up a private school in his own home to which many Grinnell parents sent their children.

Samuel F. Cooper felt that the community should not be divided in this way on the matter of schooling. What it needed was an educator of some authority who could plan and direct a genuine school system. In this respect, the town was to be different from many other frontier communities where ungraded one-room schools were the rule largely because the citizens there lacked the "pecuniary ability" that J. B. required of his own townspeople.

Cooper saw to it that a professional educator, Leonard F. Parker (1825-1911), was hired as the first superintendent of schools. An Oberlin alumnus, Parker would become the guiding force not only of the school system but also of the nascent college in Grinnell. He was in fact hired with these two roles in mind. As he explained:

> In 1856 I took my trunks off the stage coach here [in Grinnell] . . . 'Stop with us' was the proposition of School Directors & University Trustees: 'take charge of our public school until the University is opened, & then if we all agreed, go into our University.'

Parker was an imaginative and enthusiastic teacher who reflected the progressivism of his alma mater, which was noted for its anti-slavery stance and its advocacy of women's rights. His wife, Sarah Pearse Parker (1828-1900), was also an Oberlin graduate and, like her husband, a teacher of considerable skill who would have a major influence on women's education at Grinnell College. There were some in Grinnell, like Dr. Thomas Holyoke, who distrusted anyone from Oberlin, an institution they considered radical and arrogant. But Holyoke and his fellow conservatives were willing to give Parker a chance and soon found they had little cause for regret.

Parker's arrival thus gave the commmunity an early start toward quality schooling. Joanna Harris Haines writes that although pioneer schools generally "followed a simple treadmill routine in reading, writing, and arithmetic," Parker's program in Grinnell was different:

> 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. Recitations were not a dull round of repeating what we had memorized. He illuminated the schoolroom and made our lessons vital.

In his first year, Parker divided his school into grades and began classwork with four boys learning the alphabet. A year later, in 1857, there were enough pupils for three grades, and another teacher, Mrs. Samuel F. Cooper, was hired to preside over the second-storey classroom in the school.

In 1858 Parker became superintendent of schools for all of Poweshiek County.

This was a tactical move designed to attract students from places outside Grinnell. The aim was two-fold: first, to derive tuition revenues from the outsiders and thus supplement the other funds being exacted for education in Grinnell, and second, to bring students to the Grinnell schools so that later they might enter Grinnell University. These students included a number of former slaves whose enrollment spurred dissension in the community (as described earlier). J. B.'s abolitionism was not enough to stop the school board from barring the freed slaves from any formal schooling in Grinnell. The board's strategy was to declare that students over 21 were to be considered foreign students (that is, outsiders); that all foreign students would have to apply to the school board for admission and pay half the tuition in advance and the balance at the school's mid-term; and that tuition would be raised to a range of $1.00 to $1.25, depending on the grade attended.

These regulations seemed to belie the community's reputation for morality and fairness, but what they in fact reflected were the sectional differences in a frontier community. While the main contingent of Grinnell settlers came from New England, people from other regions were welcome if they demonstrated they could pay their way. Settlers therefore included Ohioans from the Western Reserve, Marylanders, Pennsylvanians, Hoosiers, and Illinoisans, among others. It was therefore almost inevitable that there would be sectional strife on the matter of slavery.

The most disturbing notion raised in Grinnell was that admission of black males to the schools would pose a sexual threat to white girls. As Thomas Lucas points out: "Like many Americans of their day, anti-abolitionists in Grinnell equated freedom for black people with miscegenation." In 1860 Parker

admitted four black males to the schools, with vocal support from J. B. Grinnell. But where the founder could prevail in other matters, he failed in this one. Lucas shows that even up to 1863 strong opposition persisted in Grinnell, as evidenced in the following resolution by the the opponents:

> On account of the respect and affection we have for our wives, sisters, and daughters, we will resist all schemes, let them come from what source they may, to fill our schools and domestic circles with the African race.

The racial issue was thus a divisive one, but the new community had more than this to contend with during the period immediately preceding the Civil War. The Panic of 1857 created major problems. With diminishing returns on farm products, and a consequent downturn among all other sources of income, school revenues were not as forthcoming. This meant fewer books for the school library, very little in the way of school supplies and equipment, and difficulty in paying more than a meager salary to Parker and other teachers.

But the town, whose original citizenry was a relatively moneyed one, was not as badly off as other communities. And there was also the fact that J. B. Grinnell was pre-eminent in pushing for good schools both in Grinnell and throughout Iowa. In April of 1858, the District Township of Grinnell (which would proceed to have five sub-districts) was formed under the free-school law that J. B. had shepherded through the legislature. Grinnell's informal four-member board was abolished and an official board of directors took its place. Members gained office in a public election each spring and were empowered to deal with finances, school regulations, student discipline,

hiring of teachers, and other matters.

In 1865 Grinnell was incorporated as a town, and in March 1867 the Independent School District of Grinnell was founded. Although still operating from a single schoolhouse, the new District set up an optimistic eleven-grade system divided into four primary grades, four of grammar school, and three of high school. In July 1867 John Valentine was named the first principal of the graded-school system as well as district superintendent.

As in other towns, there were very few high school students during this period. The high school in America was still a developing feature of the public school system, and on the frontier there was neither compulsion nor incentive for parents to enroll their children in it. High school was a luxury that most families could ill afford, given that young people were vital to the task of boosting family income. Thus, even as late as 1871 in the Davenport, Iowa, school district, the superintendent reported that, although there were 1,448 pupils in the first three grades and 805 in the next three grades, the enrollment was only 244 in grades seven to nine and 102 in the four grades of high school. Of the latter students, only ten were slated to graduate.

The high school was nevertheless seen as a logical part of the American approach to education, prompting the Poweshiek County school superintendent, for instance, to call for the establishment of central county high schools in Iowa as early as 1867. In Grinnell itself from the beginning, there were hig expectations for a complete system, and though reality did not meet expectations, the first high school class of a few students was graduated in

1869.

The idea of a public high school derived from the historic operation of the private academy in the U. S., and it was in this way that the high school became a high priority in Grinnell education. In Iowa, the first such institution, Denmark Academy, was founded by Congregationalists in 1843, and by 1870 there were 14 other academies in the state. This accounts, at least partly, for the thrust to found Grinnell University. Established speculatively as a collegiate institution, it was more realistically an extension of grade-school for students who could afford to go on to a higher curriculum. It was, in short, a high school.

This development in Grinnell and elsewhere on the frontier was not accidenta it had its origins in the Boston school system in 1821. Thus Cremin says:

> Where a local high school developed as a continuation of the primary or grammar or intermediate school, it constituted an additional rung on what was increasingly perceived as an American educational ladder, or unitary school system, in contradistinction to the dual school systems of England, France, and Prussia, where the institutions that prepared the vast majority of young people for life were structurally separated fro those that prepared a small minority of young people for further education in the university.

J. B. Grinnell and his fellow pioneers were thoroughly familiar with the academies back home, and so they could be expected to found one in their new

community. Grinnell University was never a college but the town's academy, the high school where one could prepare for college. When Iowa College merge with Grinnell University, the new institution continued a division called The Academy which, like the University, had operated in Davenport as a preparator school. The Academy was thus the visible link between the college in Grinnel and the town's schools.

By 1869, the school population in Grinnell burgeoned to 342 students in the eleven grades. All of the students were subject to the District's rules on attendance, deportment, punctuality, and academic progress. Valentine, as district superintendent, also instituted student reports at this time. The system itself seemed to be a quality operation for its time, but not because of any overwhelming interest among parents. In his report for 1869-71, County Superintendent George W. Cutting said he found parents "exceedingly wanting in interest in relation to the prosperity of the schools or the educational welfare of their children. There are very few School Registers that show any record of their names as having visited their schools." He did not cite Grinnell as an exception, but there is evidence to show that the picture there was, at best, mixed. There were many families, especially the relatively affluent New Englanders, who valued education and paid heed to what their children were doing at school. Less advantaged parents, working hard for survival, were not as concerned.

But there was progress in the schools, and it was paralleled by progress at the college. L. F. Parker welcomed his promotion to county superintendent in 1858 because he saw this as an important step toward eventually presiding over Grinnell University. As a circuit-riding superintendent, he could keep an ey

out for bright young people who might be persuaded to enroll at the college. It was this tandem relationship—the school system and the college—that made Grinnell arguably a contributive, if not pivotal, community in the developmer of education in the Midwest and West. Many of the pupils in Grinnell or surrounding schools became students at the college, and as they pursued their careers in later years, they carried into other parts of the country the Grinnell experience and the Grinnell ethos.

From 1854 through 1896, Grinnell College graduated 601 students. Of that total, 213 entered the teaching profession and, remarkably, 95 of these becan superintendents or principals, 37 were college professors, four were named college presidents, and one was chancellor of a university. Fifty-three students entered the ministry, and an additional 23 became missionaries. There were also 51 attorneys, 95 businessmen, 27 journalists, 20 farmers, 20 physicians, and a number in other occupations.

During this period Grinnell graduates held teaching positions in 25 states of the West, South, and Midwest (exclusive of Iowa), with many holding the rank of principal or superintendent. In addition, there were 28 men and one woman who held pastorates of various denominations (although mostly Congregational) in 15 states of the West and Midwest (again, exclusive of Iowa).
The Iowa College graduates from this era who were nationally recognized scholars included George Whicher in classics; Charles Davidson, Oliver Emerson, Richard Jones, and Selden Whitcomb in literature; Henry Carter Adams in economics; William A. Noyes in chemistry; and Albert Shaw in history and political science (Shaw was editor of the influential Review of Reviews).

Two of the most notable of the early student recruits at the college were J. Irving Manatt from Bear Creek Township just east of Grinnell, and Jesse Macy from Lynnville, a community to the south. Manatt, a member of the class of 1869, would become an eminent classicist at Brown University, chancellor of the University of Nebraska, and American consul in Greece. Macy, class of 1870, would found the country's first undergraduate political science department at Grinnell in 1883, publish America's first civics text, and cou President Woodrow Wilson, Viscount James Bryce of American Commonwealth fame, and historian Frederick Jackson Turner as scholarly colleagues and friends.

Another graduate who became an influential educator was Henry Holmes Belfiel of the class of 1858. Belfield was principal of North Division High School Chicago from 1876 to 1883 and then directed the Chicago Manual Training School. Founded during the expansive period following the Chicago fire of 1871, this was a pioneering institution supported by Marshall Field, George Pullman, and other businessmen and industrialists. Belfield was selected as director because of his excellent background and his reputation as an innovator. In 1892 the U. S. Commissioner of Labor published Belfield's definitive report on trade and technical schools in Europe and the U. S. A member of the board of education of Cook County and of Hyde Park, as well as of the Chicago Literary Club, Belfield and his wife were considered among th leading citizens of the Windy City.

Mary Apthorp, a native of Polk City, Iowa, and the first woman to earn a B. degree at Grinnell,* served as an accomplished school teacher in Iowa, Illinois, and Kansas. Later she taught Latin and Greek at the University of Iowa, was assistant principal of the Ladies' Course at Grinnell, and taught

Latin and German at the State Normal School at Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

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*Joanna Harris (Haines) is traditionally credited with being the first woma graduate of Grinnell (in 1865). However, she completed only the two-year Ladies' Course which did not earn its graduates a B. A. degree. Later she a a number of other Ladies' Course graduates were granted B. A. degrees by resolution of the Board of Trustees, but not because they had completed any further course requirements for the degree.

In the same class with Mary Apthorp was Martha Cleveland who, though she started her career as a school teacher, ended up studying medicine and beca the first woman physician to graduate from Grinnell. Eventually she taught the Kansas City College of Medicine for Women. Edna Snell, class of 1867, joined her sister Mary of the class of 1869 in bringing Grinnell's brand of education to California where the two opened a young ladies' seminary (firs in Oakland and then in Berkeley). Later, Edna Snell taught in Chicago and York before becoming a teacher at the San Francisco Lyceum of Expression. M Snell was cited in her obituary as advocating "higher education for women w California did not; and for a whole generation her influence has been with those who thought that women might be trusted to go to college."

The college's graduates were also actively involved in programs of educatic for African-Americans. Thus, Ella Marsh of the class of 1868 taught freedm in South Carolina for two years after her graduation. Frank Goodrich Woodworth of the class of 1876 was the first president of Tougaloo Universi

in Mississippi. Others who taught at black colleges were: Mary Robbins Magoun of the class of 1879 at the Le Moyne Institute in Memphis, Tennessee; Emma Wolcott of the class of 1886 at Fisk University in Nashville; and Ada J. Ringheim of the class of 1889 at Talladega College i The Parkers thus had a vital p the Grinnell schools and Grinnell College. But along with this extraordinary couple, J. B. Grinnell himself played an important role in educational matters. Much more of a promoter than a pedagogue, he made his contributions by translating the thinking of people like the Parkers into effective legislation. As a member of the Iowa Senate, J. B. was a leader in guiding the state to a coherent system of public education "for all phases and departments of education from the elementary school to the University"—a system that other pioneer states would emulate.

In these efforts, J. B. proved himself an astute politician. This was at a time when state systems of education were not easily superseding local control. According to Lawrence Cremin, "neither the ideology nor the technology of political control at the state level had been developed to the point where it was seen as a replacement for political control at the district, town, or county level." In 1883, historian Edward Bemis found that in many states "every town is left to its own resources with poor results. All educators earnestly advocate county and state control of schools, that there may be uniformity of methods, and that the country districts, the nurseries of our great men in the past, may not degenerate." But there were two obstacles to reform: "the fear of centralization on the part of the small towns which need it most, and the dislike of the rich cities to tax themselves for the country districts."

In Iowa, it was J. B. Grinnell who was the prime mover for state control and for the unitary (that is, elementary to university) education that Cremin cites. Elected to the legislature in 1856 on a "free schools" platform, J. B. persuaded Gov. James Grimes to appoint a high-level panel to upgrade existing school laws. Grimes's signal achievement was his naming of Horace Mann as one of the planners, doubtless on the advice of J. B. Grinnell.

Grinnell had had a long acquaintance with the Massachusetts educator. As he notes in his autobiography:

> Horace Mann, ever since I was a country teacher, had been like a fixed star in the educational horizon. I first heard him at a state gathering in Utica, New York—pale, nervous, with a broad almost deformed brow in massiveness. The speech was fresh in every line, even electrical, as he painted ignorance in all its deformity. I next knew him in Washington, the successor of John Quincy Adams [as a Congressman from Massachusetts], too stern for a popular member, but an educator by speeches. . . .

Grinnell the pragmatist would not have found Mann's talks "electrical" if they had been heavy with theorizing and philosophy. But as Mann's biographer Jonathan Messerli notes, the educator's famous reports were a mixture of common sense and moralism largely devoid of any theoretical or philosophical base. As such, his writings and lectures were precisely of the kind that Grinnell would have found congenial and convincing.

This relationship therefore--between the eastern educator and the western

promoter--explains and gives weight to Frederick Jackson Turner's theory that it was much easier to apply new ideas of governance in the west than to install such ideas in the east, and indeed to have them revert to the east after having proved themselves on the frontier. J. B. Grinnell went directly counter to the tradition of local control of schools that prevailed in his native New England. He saw that his own community in Iowa, along with most other small towns in the state, could not possibly prosper in education if left to local control. State-mandated standards and regulations, state-mandated gradations from the elementary to the university level, and state-mandated property taxes were the best ways to educate for progress in a growing society.

But J. B. was almost alone among the western pioneers in recognizing Mann's agenda. While others were talking about "internal improvement" in terms of railroad development, roads, and the like, Grinnell saw that the great lands of the west could not be exploited and their value increased without education. And education could not be made universal and therefore fundamental as a resource unless it was, insofar as possible, free.

By the time Grinnell founded his town, Mann had already asserted that progress in America required such schools. "An educated people is always a more industrious and productive people. Knowledge and abundance sustain to each other the relation of cause and effect. Intelligence is a primary ingredient in the wealth of nations. . . " Though Mann saw these as axioms, he complained that those who held power over American education were blind to them. This stemmed from "the false notions which men entertain respecting the nature of their right to property." Many legislatures held that it was wrong

to have equity in property diminished by taxes devoted to the education of children. But to Mann the land one "owned" was no more than a temporary gift, a resource to be developed and enriched and then left to another generation. Since children were the most important resource and property was meaningless without them, the "increase" from property was an appropriate means of supporting the education of children.

J. B. Grinnell was fully persuaded by the argument. His own version of it was that "a nation's wealth should educate its youth rudimentally for good citizenship." At the close of his life he could justly claim that the free-school law which he helped enact "became a notice to the world of rich Iowa on an educational march . . . [and] the fact of less illiteracy than any state in our Union is a proud statement, and one so well known as to be no longer mentioned as news . . . " We must remember that he also noted that "farms adjacent to school-houses rise rapidly in value." And more than that, he saw that agriculture itself could be made more productive only through education. Here again he took his cue from Mann who predicted that "skill and science, if applied to agriculture, will . . . yield practical benefits as copious and as wonderful as any that have rewarded the mechanician or the artisan . . ." J. B. agreed, and he was therefore one of the first in the country to propose the founding of state-operated agricultural colleges to bring a scientific approach to farming. As such, he was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862.

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Before the Mann Commission could complete its report, Grinnell got a bill

passed that called for the formation of school districts wherever there were 200 or more residents willing to organize such units. Graded schools would be operated under a board of education, and a property tax would finance them. The tax would replace the older "rate bills" or instructional fees paid by parents in terms of the number of children they had in school. The Mann Commission eventually came in with its own proposals for a complete system of public education in Iowa. Presented to the Sixth General Assembly, which began meeting in January of 1858, the proposals were pushed through to passage under J. B.'s leadership--a task that took "all his tact and talent, all his wit and wisdom" (in L. F. Parker's words--p. 29, Higher Education in Iowa). The country was still reeling from the the Panic of 1857, and taxpayers bristled at any legislation that threatened their already scanty resources.

But Grinnell's arguments about the long-range economic benefits of education prevailed, and the bill became law on March 12, 1858.* Aurner, History of Education in Iowa, Vol I, p. 49. It provided for recognition of the state's obligation to establish free schools (for blacks as well as whites); the

creation of township school districts; support of the schools from public taxes; and creation of the office of county superintendent for the examination of teachers and inspection of schools.* The bill, according to Charles Payne, was "one of Iowa's most creditable achievements"*--as indeed it was one of J. B. Grinnell's.

Payne, p. 80.

In providing for school funding from property taxes, Iowa was supporting quality education when other states were floundering. Cremin cites the Census of 1870 as showing that Georgia was deriving only nine percent of its school revenues from public funds, while Iowa was drawing a whopping 94 percent from taxes.* Even America's cradle of education, Massachusetts, was some 28 percentage points below Iowa in this regard. Iowa, in fact, with a population slightly smaller than that of Massachusetts but with an almost equal school-age population (about 435,000), outstripped the Bay State in 1870 in number of schools (7,500 to 5,700) and in number of teachers (9,300 to 7,500), and its per pupil expenditure was only slightly less than that of Massachusetts.

Cremin, Table III - School ing 1870, p. 184.

Cremin, p. 179.

J. B. Grinnell could take a large share of credit not only for this achievement, but also for other educational advances in state and nation. As Payne notes, J. B. as a state senator could claim responsibility for circulating the first petition in Congress calling for a grant of public lands for the establishment and support of an agricultural college in Iowa. Later the concept would be implemented nationally under the Morrill Act of 1862. Grinnell also took a leading role in getting legislative approval for the founding of the State Agricultural College (now Iowa State University) at Ames; and as a regent of the University of Iowa, he held out for coeducation in the face of belligerent opposition.

As for collegiate education in Grinnell itself, J. B. joined with the Parkers in setting the college's direction and character. Although the matter of the founding of Grinnell University is still controversial (it being clear to this writer that Henry Hamilton had a great deal more to do with it than he has been given credit for), there is no question that after the founding J. B. was the chief protagonist of any operations it could claim. He certainly exaggerated those operations when he said, in 1858, that the university had "a half hundred of students." MEN AND EVENTS P. 328. The Iowa census for 1859 shows only six students (and these were almost certainly preparatory students) attending the college in Grinnell. Though this figure is for the year in which Iowa College moved from Davenport to Grinnell, it has to be assumed that Grinnell University's 50 students, if they had existed, would not have decamped simply because a merger was taking place.

The fact is there was very little activity at the university before the merger

except for the largely honorary appointment of some townspeople to faculty positions. There was nothing unusual about this. Daniel Boorstin in his book

The Americans: The National Experience points out that many a pioneer community was founded largely on the pretensions of its first settlers who believed they were founding a city rather than a village. The community therefore had to have "all the metropolitan hallmarks, which included not only a newspaper and a hotel, but an institution of higher learning." P 153 Boorstin.

Boorstin cites Grinnell University as one of these "booster colleges" whose general fate it was to die aborning. Grinnell, however, was fortunate in that it persuaded the trustees of Iowa College, an operating institution, to move to a new campus. The booster college was thus given heart and marrow, and J. B.'s (and Hamilton's) hopes became reality.

In 1859, when the merger was completed, Parker began offering college courses to what in effect were high school students. As David Harmon reports, the school board agreed to pay the college $10 per month for instructing these students in algebra, philosophy, and American history. Leonard F. Parker gives the details:

> The trustees [of Iowa College] determined in 1859 to remove to Grinnell, and then asked the superintendent of the public schools, Rev. Mr. Herrick, and Qu[incy] A. Gilmore, Esq., to provide the

> instruction in the college building for the higher classes [of town pupils] and without the expense to the college. The first two on the committee complied with that request, and their compensation was the infinitesimal surplus left from tuitions at four or five dollars a term, after paying current expenses for fuel and janitor's services. The superintendent gave only half of his time to the public school during that year. The next year, 1860-1, the college trustees took direct control of instruction in the college, and made the superintendent of the public school principal of the preparatory department [of the college] at a salary of $600, and rev. Messrs. Herrick and Reed assistants. Parker old settlers 1896-1901 p. 15-16

The preparatory department, known as the Iowa College Academy, continued its relationship with the town's students in some fashion or other until about 1870, when the local school system and the college became independent,(Harmon p. 4-5) each enterprise now being mature enough to operate on its own.

Between 1869 and 1878, the number of children in the Grinnell school system almost doubled—from 342 to 586. The latter figure is, however, "total enrollment," where enrollment is not the same as attendance. Thus, the average attendance in 1878 was 396. Even with the lower number, the student-teacher ratio was high by modern standards, the whole school system employing only 11 teachers. But where the crowding was not relieved, there was some attempt to break the lock-step in the grade system by allowing students to skip grades if they were able to do more advanced work.

The three-year high school program was reported as yielding a total of 39 students by 1877, 11 of these graduating in that year. The school district noted that the high school course "prepares pupils to enter the Senior Preparatory Class in [the Academy of] Iowa College . . . and for the Ladies' Course in the same institution." Of the 39 graduates, five were listed in 1878 as having also graduated from Iowa College, 18 were attending other colleges or universities, seven took partial college work, and two were in normal school taking teacher training. 1878 Grinnell Directory.

The first schoolhouse (besides the early school-church structure) was buil 1855 and was used until it burned in February of 1871. The new school remained the only one in town until 1877 when the continuing pressure of enrollment forced the city to build a second school—but only after Superintendent A. C. Hart complained in the Grinnell Herald about the overcrowding.

The first two structures (the 1855 and 1871 buildings) were each called C School and stood on the northwest corner of Fourth and Park. South Scho built in 1877, stood at Hamilton and Main. The dividing line between th schools was the Rock Island track cutting in an east-west direction acro town. By 1879, the primary and grammar school children living south of Avenue went to South School instead of to Center.

Harmon p. 13.

The boundary between the two schools was not simply geographic. As the ci
grew, there also developed a socioeconomic split. The cliche about living
the "other side of the tracks" was (and is) as applicable to Grinnell as t
many other cities. By 1880, there was certainly a clustering of the more
educated and well-to-do citizens in the north part of town near the college
with the less well-off living in the section south of the tracks. The orig
of this demarcation are described by Joanna Harris Haines who notes that th
intense competition between J. B. Grinnell and Henry Hamilton was

> accentuated because Mr. Hamilton owned land south of the preser
> line of the Rock Island Railroad 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
> the dividing line and this seemed to be the probable course of
> business, much to the chagrin of Mr. Grinnell [who] 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 Grinnel
> He offered them as a gift twenty acres which were accepted as t
> college campus.* With the coming of the college the tide of
> public interest turned and the trade began to turn to the north
> the median line. Another item in [Grinnell's] strategy was his

gift of the present park which constitutes what in many Iowa tow
is called the public square.

p 9-10, Joanna Harris Haines, "Recollections of Seventy Years in Iowa," interview conducted by Frank I. Herriott, January 2, 4, 6, 1928, typescript in Grinnell College Archives.

*This assumes that J. B. Grinnell was indeed the protagonist of Iowa Colle move to Grinnell, but see previous discussion in which Hamilton is seen as protagonist. The strategy Joanna Harris Haines speaks of may have had les do with bringing the college to Grinnell than it had with J. B.'s co-opting Hamilton by providing a site for it.

Needless to say, the children in the north part of town fared much better those in the south in the early and even in later years of the community. David Harmon speculates that there was probably no provision for assisting poor families before the 1858 legislation established "free" schools, whic were of course not entirely free. The poor could not pay the rate-bills-- e., tuition fees—that all families using the schools were required to pay The bills were eliminated by the legislation of 1858 and were supplanted b property assessments; but under both forms of financing, Grinnell schools difficulties. Harmon points out that by 1860 the schools owed a great dea money (some of it to J. B. Grinnell) and were paying a usurious 25 percen interest on much of that indebtedness. But by 1865, the schoolhouse loan ($900 plus interest) was paid, and from that point on, the system had les stringent financial problems. Harmon pp 14-15

Teachers were generally not well-paid throughout the country, but Grinnel teachers even less so. Harmon points out that teachers in this period w

not seen as professionals but as laborers who worked a short day (six hours and therefore were not entitled to better wages. A table in Harmon's histo

of Grinnell schools shows that, out of 13 Iowa towns in 1877, Grinnell was 12th in the amount of annual salary paid to its superintendent ($975), seve in average salary paid to primary-school teachers ($438), ninth in average salary for grammar-school teachers ($438), and 12th in average salary for high-school teachers ($487). Harmon p. 33 (Make sure these notes differentiate the two sections of Harmon's work!)

The low rates of pay in Grinnell applied to both men and women, but were decidedly worse for women. Harmon points out that in 1859, while teachers Leonard Parker and William Beaton received $50 and $30 per month respectiv their colleagues Helen Tilton and Junielle Phelps got only $20 and $16. I Iowa at large, the average compensation of male teachers rose from $6.09 p week in 1857 to $8.97 in 1867. Female teachers' pay, which averaged only $3.24 per week in 1857, rose to $6.16 by 1867, the total being only seven cents more than the men's pay at the beginning of the ten-year period.* This devaluing of women in teaching was pervasive; in Masschusetts in 1867 they were paid an average of $6.61 per week, an amount a contemporary historian called "a wretched pittance for such services."** But in Massachusetts as in Iowa, it would be long decades before equity finally prevailed.

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*Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the General Assembly at Its Twelfth Regular Session, January 1868, Des Moines, p.11.

**George B. Emerson, "Education in Massachusetts: Legislation and History,"

Early History of Masschusetts: Lowell Institute Lectures, published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, 1869, p.497.

In Grinnell, even the election of the first woman to the Grinnell school board in 1876 made little difference. Men were seen as the "permanent" teachers while women taught only until they married. Harmon points out that a three-year stint was the longest any woman taught in the Grinnell public schools during the first 20 years of the town's existence. (Harmon I 17) In Iowa as in all other states, the result was that women were constrained to work for half or even a third of the pay of men.*(Cremin, p 398).

Ironically, the rationale for hiring women as teachers, particularly in the primary and intermediate grades, was that they were "far more suited by temperament, disposition, and purity of morals to work with younger children and better able to bring the best qualities of the 'domestic circle' to the enterprise of the school." Cremin p. 398 American Ed The Nat;l Exper. In 1854 Iowa's second superintendent of public instruction, James Eads, expressly called for the hiring of more women teachers in the state's schools. And in 1856 a report of one of the first teachers' institutes held that women were "fully equal to men in performing the duties of a teacher." Clarence Ray Aurner, HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN IOWA, VOL II, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, 1914, p. 27 and p 156. But despite this declaration of equality, women continued to see the real rewards go to male teachers and male supervisors.

As for teacher certification, up to 1880 teachers received validation in Iowa by passing an exam given by the county superintendent and by attending a

normal institute. In Grinnell from 1861 to 1874, teachers attended the Poweshiek County Teacher's Institute where they not only upgraded their instructional abilities but also became partisans for better treatment of teachers and for school improvement in general. Harmon I 18

Undergirding all instruction in the minds of the town elders in Grinnell's earlier years was the innate Congregationalism of its founders. As Harmon reports, "the close ties between church and school went unquestioned in early Grinnell." Like many schools at the time, those in Grinnell were required to open the day with Scripture readings and prayer. p I 20 But there was no indoctrination of students. L. F. Parker, in fact, believed that the Bible in the schools should be used as simply a convenient book of reading exercises; and the school board's regulations at one point expressly forbade teachers to

make any comments on the readings from Scripture. Harmon 21

This was not a unique position. Although Grinnell's experience reflected the general American interest in moral education in the 19th century, the question really was: How do you deliver it? Dissenting Protestantism had an answer. Religion was something to impart to young people so that they might achieve salvation, but it was also a means of assuring that they would be trustworthy in the stores and mills and farms where they worked. (Butts, Cremin p. 214-215) More than this, a Superior Court in Cincinnati in 1870 held that "religion and morality were necessary to good government," and hence "the exclusion of all religious instruction from public schools was contrary to a provision of the Bill of Rights." PCH March 2, 1870

Iowans had mixed feelings about the issue but many were quick to draw a line against any incursion of overt or covert religious teaching in the schools, although there were the inevitable hard-liners who insisted on it. The Iowa Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1872 saw a clear danger:

> The influence of an artful teacher over a pupil is very great indeed; and, if besides being artful, he is also a fanatical adherent to some form of proscriptive and intolerant religious belief, . . . he has it in his power, under the pretext of a daily moral lesson, to inflict an incalculable damage upon the pupil, and to set at naught the guaranteed rights of American citizens to enjoy their religion without the meddling interference of the state.*

Bienniel Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the General Assembly at its Fourteenth Regular Session, January 1872, Des Moines, p. 37.

As secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, Horace Mann had already asserted this view in 1849. He argued that

> our system earnestly inculcates all Christian morals; it founds its morals on the basis of religion; it welcomes the religion of the Bible; and, in receiving the Bible, it allows it to do what it is allowed to do in no other system,—to speak for itself. But here it stops, not because it claims to have compassed all truth,

> but because it disclaims to act as an umpire between hostile religious opinions. p. 729-30 Twelfth Report, Life and Works of Horace Mann, edi. by Mary mann, vol. III, Boston: Horace B. Fuller, 1868.

And even earlier than that, Tom Paine had asserted:

> Why may we not suppose, that the great Father of all is pleased with variety of devotion; and that the greatest offence we can act, is thay by which we seek to torment and render each other miserable? . . . I do not believe that any two [persons], on what are called doctrinal points, think alike who think at all. It is only those who have not thought that appear to agree. [Thomas Paine, Writings (Rights of Man), quoted in Daniel J. Boorstin's The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson, Beacon Press, Boston, 1948, p. 124]

It is to J. B. Grinnell's credit that his thought paralleled that of Paine and Mann. Writing in his autobiography, J. B. looked back to his days at the Oneida Institute when his eyes were opened to the fact that "the great educational and benevolent organizations were too generally found upon the side of doubtful conservatism." Although there were those in Grinnell who were upon that side, they were outnumbered by the more tolerant. And so twenty years after their founding the Grinnell schools clearly reflected a tendency not only toward secularization but also toward necessary functionalism.

In the grades up to high school, pupils studied reading, spelling, language,

handwriting (in the handsome Spencerian style), drawing, arithmetic, vocal music, geography (in the third through seventh grades), American history (in the eighth grade), and general lessons covering such subjects as the human body, botany, zoology, and surveying, among others. Harmon I 26 - 27. A classical background was provided by learning the first principles of Latin and translating Caesar and Virgil.

These classes were not taught in the rote style of grammar school education elsewhere. The Grinnell program strove for currentness and enrichment. Thus in the reading classes pupils in the fourth year were asked to bring their own selections to class and discuss their choices. In the sixth year they were required "to memorize sketches of the lives of a few authors of repute for the purity, simplicity, and sweetness of their writings, including anecdotes of their experience and success." (Superintendent's Annual Report of the Grinnell Public Schools for the School Year 1877-78). The authors included Bryant, Longfellow, Louisa Mae Alcott, Dickens, Irving, Hawthorne, Lowell, and others. Harmon I 25

In language and writing, pupils studied punctuation and syntax in the first three years and in the fourth year prepared outlines and wrote their own compositions. By the eighth year they were expected to write complete essays and to prepare letters and execute business forms.

In music, students were taught to work with the "full range of musical notation--rests, note values, dynamic markings, clefs, keys--and to write two- and four-part songs as dictated by the music teacher." Harmon I 26

In geography, map-making was a requisite, students carefully drawing diagrams of their school room and the school environs, and then moving on to maps of the township, county, and state. Harmon I 26 American history, required in the last year before high school, consisted of the usual study of key events but also of the major provisions of the U. S. Constitution and the impact of statesmen, scholars, inventors, and others on the "material and mental development of the nation." Harmon p. 26

Although many students dropped out of school before reaching high school, the three-year curriculum at the advanced level (for those who took it) was as stringent and demanding as that on the lower levels. As testimony to the rigor of the curriculum and the quality of teaching, Harmon points to the fact that, of the 39 high-school students who graduated between 1870 and 1877, 34 were accepted for college—a remarkably high percentage. But not all residents saw this in a positive light. Many complained that the curriculum was directed more toward college-bound students than on behalf of those who clearly could not afford and would not attend college—and, for that matter, never reached high school. Superintendent A. C. Hart responded by proposing that there be a general as well as a college preparatory program in high school. The School Board turned him down. Harmon I p. 29 What year was this?

David Harmon, in concluding Part I of his excellent account, says that at the end of the town's first 25 years:

> We are left with a conception of the [the schools] that is far removed from the popular myth of the one-room schoolhouse: they were a complex amalgam of social forces and individual personalities, not so different form the schools of today. The complexities inherent in the development of a free-school system in a new town suggest eventual conflict . . . One can see such conflct arising in Grinnell's schools from the tension between the stern God-centered beliefs that formed the core of the town's eductional philosophy and the pragmatic policy-making that

was necessary to build a school system capable of serving a fast-growing town. One can have the idealism of the one-room schoolhouse, or one can have the practical efficiency of a school

> system, but not both. The resolution of this tension characterizes the transition from 19th century education to modern education.

Although this is a perceptive statement, one has to quarrel with Harmon's point that the tension in the operation of the early schools in Grinnell stemmed from the "stern God-centered beliefs" of the founders. My own reading of the founders and of the way they developed their schools tends to indicate there was very little that was "stern" in Grinnell's religious attitudes between 1854 and 1880. For one thing, L. F. Parker would not have been hired as school superintendent if such attitudes had prevailed: he was, after all, an Oberlin radical. But there is also the view of a visitor in 1860 who saw the community's religious orientation as being "divested of many of the old sharp doctrinal points and made to inculcate religious sentiments in a very general and (we thought) sensible manner." S. C. Baldwin, publisher, Lacona, NH, Democrat, June 8, 1860. Also, S. K. Fuller writes that Grinnell had "a church organization pervaded with ideas so liberal that all could participate and enjoy its privileges . . . " P. 32 Vol I OS

The tension therefore was not between those of a severe religious persuasion and those looking for a more secular approach. The tension more likely resulted from the rapid growth of the city and the perception that the growth and its attendant needs had to be accommodated in the school system. My own assessment, in fact, is that the town's religious orientation, liberal as it was, facilitated rather than deterred educational progress.

The need for progress was clear and insistent. Thus, by the time of Grinnell's 25th anniversary as a town, the number, composition, and character of its

citizens had changed significantly from the the small group of New Englanders who originally populated the community. There were now Southerners, other Midwesterners, and immigrants from Europe. "The exigencies of diversity would soon demand that the schools serve all the public, and not just descendants of first-generation Grinnellians. To do this, a system of education more extensive and efficient had to be developed, and so it was. The emergence of progressivism at the local level meant the passing of the old order of schooling in the town." Harmon, Part II, p. 1.

With Grinnell enrollment standing at 495 students in 1880, the new order had to take into account something that Horace Mann had proposed in the 1840s—that is, making the common school a means of unifying America's increasingly pluralistic society. With westward migration and immigration from other countries on the increase in the mid-19th century, there was a need to fuse disparate populations into the genus Americanus. Mann in 1848 identified the means for doing so: "Without undervaluing any other human agency, it may be safely affirmed that the common school, improved and energized as it can easily be, may become the most effective and benignant of all the forces of civilization. . . If administered in the spirit of justice and conciliation, all the rising generation may be brought within the circle of its reformatory and elevating influences." p. 650-651, Vol III, Twelfth Report etc. Mary Mann

There is some controversy over Mann's ideas, particularly as to their

practical application, but there is little doubt that his central notion--that the common school could be a unifying factor in American society--was sound. In Grinnell, the notion took a very practical form. By the 1880s, the old settlers and their descendants were now joined by more recent residents who

represented a less homogeneous background, and it was these citizens who began insisting that their children's needs were not being filled in the schools. College was fine for those who could afford it, but there were far more pupils destined for the world of work and not for the groves of academe, and those pupils had to be served. This was a prevalent attitude not only in Grinnell but in the nation generally as farming communities burgeoned in the west and the industrial revolution was gaining in force and impact. A curriculum like Grinnell's in the 1870s, combining as it did classical and modern courses, was seen as elitist for pupils fated to become, not collegians, but members of the work force as soon as they could leave school.

At the very least it was felt that there had to be modifications in the curriculum--not radical reform but additions of programs for those who needed training for the kind of work they would pursue. Eventually, this would mean courses of a vocational nature--manual training, domestic science, and experience in commercial skills.

It's not surprising that the community's women were the source of much of the agitation for more relevant schooling (as well as better health) for the city's children. Spurred by their own experience, the women insisted that girls be given appropriate opportunities for a more productive life. At the time, this meant the cultivation of skills in homemaking, including sewing,

cooking, and other household functions. An educational program along these lines was in order, the women maintained, and Grinnell became the first community in Iowa to have a domestic science curriculum. The offering was part of a Girls' Industrial School founded in Grinnell in 1887 as the result of agitation by women activists who wanted to promote "the welfare of the

girls of Grinnell." Harmon Part II p 13 The facility was operated apart from the regular school system.

But the city's professional educators between 1880 and 1890 were also innovators, and were responsible for initiating new programs and effecting reforms. Harmon points out that they tried a number of standardized teaching programs that were nationally available and, though these did not take firm hold in Grinnell, they reflected the degree to which the educators were willing to go in order to have, in today's parlance, a relevant curriculum. Harmon p. 14 Part II

Still, it must be noted that the availability of such a curriculum did not assure the kind of school attendance later years would produce. There was no compulsory attendance law in Iowa until 1902, although Poweshiek County Superintendent Samuel Jay Buck was calling for it as early as 1868.* Biennial Report of the Superintentendent of Public Instruction to the General Assembly, January 1968, Des Moines, P. 101. But even the 1902 legislation called for only three months of required schooling per year through the eighth grade. Harmon Part II p. 2 Harmon defines the conditions that made for the attendance patterns of 1880:

> Boys . . . in Grinnell were not expected to stay in school much beyond the age of 15, if that long; girls, with less post-school options open to them, generally stayed in school for another year or two. Very few took advantage of public education after age 17. Therefore, if these attendance patterns held for a decade, only a

fraction of the males and less than a majority of the females would complete the eleven-year Grinnell course of study if they

> entered at age 6 . . . The attitude in Grinnell was that some formal schooling was good enough for most, while high school attendance, not to mention taking a diploma, was unnecessary for most girls and the vast majority of boys. Harmon Part II 5

As might be expected, the children of the poorer families took themselves out of the school system at much earlier ages than their counterparts from better-off families. Generally, Harmon notes, "most of the town's youth [in 1880] enrolled at age 6 and continued through age 13, regardless of family background. However, children who did leave before age 14 were twice as likely to have been from lower-class families, with the percentage of boys quitting twice that of girls in their respective socioeconomic groups." Harmon PaRT II 6

There was no fixed rule as to the age at which a child could start school. In Grinnell some of the more affluent families would start a child at age 4. By 1890, in fact, it was deemed necessary to establish a kindergarten so that other teachers were not burdened with what were virtually baby-sitting chores.

The addition of vocational or industrial training courses was not easily established. Harmon notes that many in the community felt that such offerings would be geared toward young people of little ability, and standards in the schools would deteriorate. But there were in Grinnell "a principled few" who were the spokespersons for reform and who wanted to give rightful opportunities to the less advantaged children. These critics reflected the view of Ellery Channing who in 1842 complained that "as yet our legislators

have denied to the poor and laboring classes this principal means of their elevation."*

Quoted by A. S. Kissell, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Iowa, in the Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the General Assembly at its Fourteenth Regular Session, January 1872, Des Moines. p. 26. Harmon Pt Ii p15

In 1911 one of those spokespersons was John D. Stoops, a professor of philosophy at the college. Stoops called for the development of students' manual skills, but insisted that they be taught in a genuinely educational way. "Merely doing the thing is not education; it is the doing of it according to scientific principles which counts as education . . . Manual training is not a question of tools and wood; it gives the experience which gives meaning to ideas." kHaRMON PART IIP L6

The result was that manual training became part of the schools' program in 1911. The Girls' Industrial School closed in 1912, and the public school system took over its offerings, including domestic science. Shorthand and typing, key skills in the commercial track for students, were offered for the first time in 1914. Another program begun in 1913-14 at Grinnell High School was designed for the training of teachers for rural schools. The program was authorized by the state legislature as a means of improving education in less advantaged rural areas. Students took two semesters of teacher training and one semester each of agriculture, domestic science or manual training, as well as a teaching methods course. Harom Part II p. 17

> Such curricula give credence to the 1893 assertion of Grinnell Superintendent John Knoepfler that high schools were becoming "the colleges of the common people." The fact is that before 1900 there were not many small towns that

could muster enough students to justify a high school. In Grinnell the small number enrolled up to 1900 were housed in a single room in Central School. But steps were already being taken to expand and to offer needed courses, with [5™bookkeeping, for instance, entering the curriculum in 1902. Harmon II 17

It was the women leaders in the town who prodded the community to build a new high school. They achieved their goal by actively promoting a bond issue in 1904, and when it passed, the venerable Leonard Parker was moved to say that at such a time "we are reminded that woman is first in every good work and last to leave it." Quoted in Harmon Part II 13

The women actively sought to create opportunities for students and make life safer and healthier for them. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, for instance, worked to spread the word about the hazards of alcohol, and though the organization's impact was limited, it did have the effect of opening the door for women to enter into school reform activities. Harmon p. 12 Part II

The Social Service League worked to establish playgrounds and recreation programs for children and to make the school a focal point for adult social activities. The Julia Chapin Grinnell Maternal Association prompted better sanitary conditions in the schools and generally saw to the health of Grinnell's students through various programs. Pt II 25

unnamed 1855 demolished 1856

Center School 1856 burned, 1871

Center School 1871 sold and removed 1922

South 1877 demolished 1917

Northwest 1882 destryed by fire 1896

Parker 1896 1971 demolished

Cooper 1899 1974 sold, later demolished

Grinnell High 1904

addition 1921

Davis 1917

Newburg 1926

Bailey park 1957

Fairview 1960

addition 1979

Senior High 1961

Bissett Addition 1974

Junior High 1979

MUST GET ENROLLMENT OVER THE YEARS US CENSUS

Harmon PT II p22 In 1891 the board sharply curtailed corporaal punishment, stating that it "should only be administered for gross misconduct and only then when all other means fail, and always with moderation."

Harmon PT ii p. 21 "It is probably no coincidence that as Grinnell and other districts in Iowa began to ally themselves more closely with the state's

educational apparatus in the first decades of the new century, the Church drifted away from the schools."

kHa5rom II 26

: The experience of the town's schools from 1880- to 1920 certiainly lends credence to the maxim "the Progressive mind is the educatory's mind"; although scghool reform peacked just before the War, changes wrought by the movement

amount to nothing less than a transformation of public schooling in Grinnell. A gtruly modern school system, firmly under local contrl, had been established. Grinnell's schools in 1920 reached a wider group of young people for a longer period of time, offered a far greater number of curricular options, and were less contrained by ecclesiastical ideolgy than in 1880. Developing into both a center for manual instruction and the sole college preparatory facility in town, Grinnell High School became a meeting place for diverse elements of the population." II 26

Recognition of povery as cause of delinquency -- Harmon p. 23
II "Still, by 1912 there is some evidence that Grinnell school reformers outside the administration were beginning to seek causes other than innate sloth or turpitude for student misconduct. In the year the secretary of the Social Service Leage, the town's clearinghouse for the distribution of charity, also served for a time as truant officer, in her estimation rightly so because 'this duty naturally connects itself with relief work as the same causes which lead to poverty often manifest themselves in truancy and juvenile delinquency."

"In 1911, Superintendent Eugene Henely could declare that there was a 'splendid spirit of the people of the town, when it comes to matters of education.'" Harmon Part II p. 107

1. ADD WHAT HARRY HOPKINS TOOK IN CLASSES AT HIGH SCHOOL 1905-08.

2.

Its development was shaped by events occurring in the town, the county, and the state. Indpendent schol district etc. etc. Show the scdhool enrollments from 1854 to 1920. lAs one would expect, Harmon notes that "school attendance correlated inversely with income." II 6

GIVE A LISTING OF WHEN PARTICULAR SCHOOLS WERE BUILT AND GIVE THE ENROLLMENT FIGURES UP TO 1912.

Use the stuff below thematically but pull out excerpts from the Alumni Directory in order to list the presidents and chief achievements. Work with Nollen's history also.l

Both in its preparatory mission and later as a maturing liberal-arts institution, the college in general developed along progressive lines. (Give Magoun story, but note that blacks were admitted under him) Thus, coeducation was almost immediately instituted after the college's move from Davenport to Grinnell, largely because of Julia Chapin Grinnell who, having attended Mt. Holyoke Seminary, insisted that women have the same opportunities for higher education as men.

The college also developed a residential philosophy that served as a permanent means of integrating student life on campus and stopping the incursion of fraternities and sororities. Grinnell also preceded Harvard and many other institutions in developing a scientific curriculum, and it was among the first to have courses of study involving field work.

But most important was the college's early and continuing emphasis on public service as a logical outcome of the process of liberal education. Grinnell's

achievement was to translate religious impulses into modes of instruction that oriented students toward what was, in effect, secular missionary service. Thus, while institutions like Harvard and Yale were continuing with traditional curricula designed to produce either clergymen or professors of classical studies (and all of them males), Grinnell was developing courses in political science, economics, and other studies that prepared young men and women alike to deal with the problems of the world beyond academe.

It is still being argued if Iowa College (later Grinnell College) was the first four-year collegiate institution founded west of the Mississippi River (it was certainly among the earliest), but there is no question about its influence. coed mt holyoke J. B. Grinnell going east the city was known by virtue of J. B. Grinnell and the experiment as only he could philsophize about it and publicize it. connections with New England the back and forth with it

VERY IMPORTANT: THE THEME OF THE BOOK ———

Envisioning a society of new pattern was in fact the job for Harry Hopkins—the next generation of pioneer, the unsatisfied inheritor of J. B. Grinnell's pioneering, and the farther seeing pioneer interested in building an attrctive place in a news ocial fabric for all.

Out of this small community, with its tensions and ,,,,,,

came a new perception of the larger American community.

etc.

That's why Hopkins brought Wilson here.

Grinnell College over the year was developing the vision of service that a Hopkins would learn from and apply to the country. It was not, then, J. B. Grinnell who lprovided the paradigm for Hopkins: it was Macy and Steiner and, behind them, L. F. Parker. J. b. was the restless unexamining spirit who built up the country; it was Hopkins who came to work against its excesses and make the fair shake for everybody.

remember what you say about the FNB — that its failure changed the image of itself that the community had. Reality took hold. People were greedy and seedy etc. etc. But they were also resourceful etc etc and at their best they wanted to do right. And so comes Harry Hopkins who was brought up on the temporal margin of frontier life. He was born, after all, when the geographical frontier was closed. Hence in his time, and with what the FNB failure closed also, the Grinnell covenant was over and the new frontier was being defined by H. Hopkins.

Grinnell of the covenant was a good example of what Tawney in Religion and the Rise of Capitalism describes as the euphemistic process that motivated many communities on the make. The town of Grinnell exactly fits Tawney's description of the community which is "organized for the purposes of economic gain, ... and screened by decorous draperies of virtuous sentiment and

resounding rheotric." Tawney, p. 234.

The plain-speaking Harry Hopkins, a man who professed no religious affiliation, turned, not Grinnell's, but the country's orientation in anothe direction.