



Jones County

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Threshing was big event before steam engine days

The following story has been submitted by John C. Clark, Monmouth, Ia. Mr. Clark is a regular contributor to the "Jones County Historical Review." Issue One, 1979, carried his story, "First ten rows are for the immigrants".

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"After reading the Sylvester Benischek article on threshing last fall, I have thought of sending in my photo of a horse-

power rig and adding a few items of interest in connection with the threshing game about 90 years ago. The photo accompanying this story shows the rig owned and operated by my father, Calhoun Clark, and Johnny Carson, both of the Center Junction area.

They called their outfit a 12 horse-power machine, but it is interesting to note from the photo that the horses pictured were not of a size that would be labeled "draft horses" by our modern method of judging.

It is doubtful that any of them weighed more than 1200 pounds. We may have our doubts about the 12 horsepower, but at any rate, they were able to make the separator do a satisfactory job of threshing.

The lighter horses had to be kept moving at a good pace to keep the power up; therefore, the man with the whip, standing on platform in center of the circle, had an important job. He could "touch up" any lagging team and try to keep the motion steady.



THIS PHOTO of an early grain separator (threshing) machine was taken near Center Junction in August 1888. Six teams are hooked to a 12-horsepower machine. The man feeding

the machine is J. Calhoun Clark, father of John C. Clark of Monmouth, who submitted the photo and wrote the accompanying story.

Skill was required in feeding the machine--

KEPT ON PATH

You may wonder how they kept the horses on the required circular path. The photo dimly shows that the outside horse had a tether from his bit to the sweep of the team in front.

The man feeding the machine had to use skill in scattering or spreading the sheaves going in, so as not to "plug the cylinder", and stop the motion. This could, and did happen, especially if some damp straw, perhaps mixed with weeds, was being fed in. The owners of the outfit usually took turns feeding the machine; as they hesitated to trust hired help at this task. The man in a white shirt standing at the feeding position in the photo is my father, Calhoun Clark.

The separator pictured had a 28-inch cylinder, so the work was done at a slower pace than with the 32-inch cylinder mentioned by Mr. Benischek in his article. In the 1880s, power and speed had not yet arrived.

About 1890, Clark and Carson got a HUBER traction steam engine and that changed the picture all around. It was no longer necessary for the neighbor farmer to furnish a team for the horse power machine, a practice that sometimes caused friction. There were good teams and poor teams, and the good team man could easily imagine his horses were over-worked, even though the equalizer on the sweeps was supposed to avoid any difficulty on that score.

HAND MEASURED

In the photo, you do not see any weighing device on top of the separator. All grain, therefore, had to be measured and tallied by hand. The bushel measure when filled from the elevator spout, was "stricken off" by a straight-edge board and the tally marked down on the record sheet.

The measure sat in a wide tight box on top of the separator, so that the spilled grain could be scooped up, saved and counted. The grain haulers received the full measure and handed up the empty one to repeat the operation. The later machines, with weighing devices, did away with this messy job and was far more accurate.

A story told on Johnny Carson, who was the tally man, was that in a good grasshopper year, some very lively grasshoppers came from the elevator spout into the measure and still had power enough to jump out. Carson was heard to say "Dammit!! stay in there till I get this measured."

NOT HAY AFTER ALL

One other story on Carson -- It was their practice, after getting the steamer, to move on to the next job at night after supper, while the steam was still "up" in

the boiler. Sometimes it was quite dark when they arrived. On this occasion they pulled into a sandy field in east Scotch Grove township, and in the dim light it appeared they were in a nice field of hay. Carson remarked what a shame it was to smash down the nice clover. When they got off the engine and found themselves in a thick patch of sandburrs, the things Carson said could not be told in polite society.

In the photo, you will note that the separator has a straight stacker of not very great elevation. About half of it doubled back over the machine for transport on the road. Note also wooden wheels with wide steel tires. For the most part, the separator was of wood construction, as sheet steel had not yet come into general use.

TUMBLING ROD

Mr. Benischek in his article explained the "tumbling rod", placed below ground level where the horses passed over, and in the photo with this article, it was elevated at the machine to reach the cylinder level, where it turned a gear wheel to rotate the cylinder. All joints and cog wheels needed plenty of oil or axle grease. The axle grease was the forerunner of the present so called "hard oil" of modern times. The whole outfit worked and served its day until something better came along.

The two men in the photo, standing to right and left of the feeder were "band cutters". They stood on small platforms attached to the machine. I, also, like Mr. Benischek, had a turn at cutting bands when I was about 14 years old. (But not of course at the machine in photo). Early in this century such old-fashioned machines became "laughing stock", when combined self-feeders and mechanical band cutters came along, together with the winging stacker and other improvements.

LARGE CREW

A full threshing crew needed about 20 men. Pictured in photo are 15 workers, but there are also grain haulers, field pitchers, water man, cooks and waitresses, etc. As Mr. Benischek said, it was one of the big events of the year on the farm -- they even had spectators.

From the photo, it appears that half the workers wore white shirts. Of course cotton and wool are naturally light in color and colored shirts did not come until a later period. And there could be another side of it. I recall a former neighbor of mine, who when asked about his wearing a white shirt in doing farm work, said, "I'll have you know I haven't got down to wearing colored shirts yet". Back 75 years ago we did have some "genteel farmers". Today we wonder what has happened to the farmer's dress code, if indeed any dress code exists today.

-- John C. Clark

President's message

Again it is necessary to ask you to excuse us for being late with this issue. It should have been in your hands three months ago.

The Society still isn't over the shock of losing Joe Messerli, and all the work Joe saw to getting done has fallen on other shoulders, and, believe me, there was a lot of work scheduled for this season. Many able hands have turned to, and it is getting done -- perhaps not on the schedule Joe would have set, but before the season is finished, about Oct. 1, most of the jobs will have been finished.

Galen Brady has taken care of the trees that needed felling, and-or trimmed, and has generally kept the grounds picked up of sticks and stones. Kenneth Hasler, Joe's nephew from Anamosa, has seen that the grass is kept mowed, and this season has been a good grass growing one.

Jim Hughes found us a windmill, donated by the Vernon Nulls, and Dave Schoon of Schoon Motors donated his time and big lowboy to move it to the "Village". Hopefully, it will be raised next year, if not this fall, and will be wheeled with an old direct action head.

George Burcher, Bill Buol, Bill Lang, Ernie Recker and Edwin Freese, with his tractor-mounted post hole digger, put in the split rail fence across the front of the grounds. Galen Brady saw to the cement mixing for setting the steel gate posts. These steel gates were a gift from Bernie Barker and Franklin Equipment Company.

Hopefully, we will get the building finished off that will be known as the library of historical documents. We will be better able to control humidity in this building, a must when you have old paper documents.

Hopefully, the next issue will be in your hands within three weeks -- maybe give us a month, and the fourth and final issue for this year should be midway of the last quarter.

The Society needs your encouragement and any assistance you might give.

Thanks,
C. L. "Gus" Norlin, Pres.

Do you know anyone
who is interested in
Jones county history?

Invite them
to join the
Historical Society today.

Early pioneer in Canton, Jones county areas took part in many mercantile adventures

HIS EARLY LIFE

Man is but dust - his energies crushable beneath the weight of care.

Easau M. Franks was born in Columbiana county, Ohio, Feb. 2, 1818, and was in his 61st year at the time of his death in 1878. He lived in the town of his nativity until his 12th year, when he removed to Licking county, Ohio.

His parents died when he was a mere youth, and thus orphaned in one of the richest, and at that time, one of the wildest portions of the country, his naturally shrewd and unfaltering mind was impressed with the pioneer spirit of his surroundings, and he grew to manhood like a sturdy oak, unmindful of the hardships and privations of life in a new country, for he had never been tempted by the luxuries and gayeties that cluster around the centers of civilization.

There is truth in that sentiment of psychology which says that there is a soul in things inanimate, and that there are visions beautiful and instructive garnished up in hearts of stone, and truths eloquent upon lips of wood, that have no visible significance to the human eye or ear, but still do exert an influence upon human life, and thus it is that men's lives and impulses are moulded and modulated by unseen influences that exhale from the bosom of nature on every side.

The natural bent of the mind of this man was speculative and this predilection early developed itself. In Licking county, where he spent a large part of his life prior to his removal to Iowa, he bought and sold horses, ran a threshing machine, dabbled in merchandise in the town of Hartford, and turned his hands to many different schemes and occupations.

REMOVED TO IOWA

Restless and unsatisfied with the Ohio country, he determined to seek a home further west, and on the 3rd of May, 1842, in the full energy of manhood, he first touched Iowa soil and settled in Brandon township, Jackson county, two and a half miles east of Canton, and on the 3rd of June was married to Miss Sarah Potter, daughter of Nathan Potter of Jackson county, who had emigrated from Ohio in the fall of 1841. Mr. Franks came to Iowa empty handed.

Fifty cents in silver is said to have been his sole possession. The first work of importance he undertook after reaching Iowa was at Cascade, which point he removed to from Jackson county in 1842. This work was the construction of a bridge across the north branch of the Maquoketa,

the specifications of his contract providing that the timbers of the bridge should be 40 feet long without knot rot or sap.

Timber of this description was so scarce in the vicinity of Cascade in those days as it is now, and he drew the supply for his contract from the woodlands near Canton, where he now lies buried. During his four years residence at Cascade, he engaged in brick-making in company with Mr. John Taylor, now known as the venerable Judge Taylor of Washington township, this county, and also cut wood for G. G. Baughart at the rate of 25 cents per cord.

MERCANTILE ADVENTURES

In 1846 Mr. Franks returned with his family to Jackson county, and settled in the timberland now occupied by the Levi Wagner farm. His stay in this locality was



E. M. FRANKS

brief, and he soon afterward located himself in Canton, where he ran two threshing machines with J. W. Dillrance, (now a citizen of Dubuque), for a period of nearly two years.

This business, however, did not give him wide enough scope for his speculative tendencies, and the thresh machines, belts, a dun horse and a farrow cow were traded for a family residence in Canton.

Then in company with his uncle, Luke Potter, he opened a small store in a building 10x12 on the ground, J. W. Dillrance officiating as clerk. This was about the year 1848, and at a time when the country was entirely new, Wyoming nad Onslow were unknown and Anamosa and

Monticello were mere post offices.

The territory for 30 miles around was tributary to Canton, and the business of the new firm rapidly increased. One addition after another was added to the little store building until Mr. Franks became its sole proprietor, and found himself the master of a large and prosperous trade.

In addition to his mercantile enterprise, Mr. Franks engaged in stock buying at this time, also operated a cooper shop and a grist mill at Canton, and turned out 50 barrels of flour every 24 hours, which were shipped to Dubuque and sold, being conveyed to that market by wagon. B. B. Ryan, lately of the Burnett House, Monticello, acting as one of his teamsters. He also bought oak shingles which he sold to parties living near Monticello, and packed pork and marketed it in Dubuque. He was in fact interested in every branch of business carried on in that part of the country. He was in every sense a pioneer and the brain and muscle of every enterprise, but in carrying forward so many schemes at once, he became badly involved in debt, and at one time owed J. P. Farley not less than \$13,000.

But this was not a feather's weight in repressing the spirit of enterprise and speculation that characterized Mr. Franks, in illustration of which it is related that at the very time it seemed that he was hopelessly encumbered with debt, he went to New York and bought \$18,000 worth of goods on credit. E. M. Franks was a man of great natural abilities, of large and active brain.

Dr. Geo. Trumbull, who has been intimately acquainted with him for many years, estimates that he has done thinking and work enough in the last 30 years, to wear out any four ordinary men in Jones county.

He had one of the most remarkable memories of any man I ever knew. His advantages for education in early life were limited; he never went to school but three days; he was a poor boy that had to make his own way through the world. Had his mental and moral culture been equal to his natural abilities, he would have been one of the strongest men in Iowa. Mr. Franks has been for a number of years known as one of the most extensive farmers, stock dealers and shippers in Northern Iowa.

HE FOUNDS ONSLOW

November 25, 1860, he relinquished his business connections at Canton and moved upon 200 acres of land now partially occupied by the present site of the town of Onslow. Even at this time he was heavily

Franks generosity results in founding of present town of Onslow

encumbered with debt, but his marvelous energy and success in every emergency, gradually overcame all obstacles and he increased his possessions of land until he was the proprietor of not less than 1280 acres all told, of the richest soil for agricultural purposes that the sun shines upon.

The bulk of his land was in the vicinity of Onslow, and the rest was located near Canton. When the Midland branch of the Chicago Northwestern approached this region of country, Mr. Franks had his plans laid for the founding of a new commercial port on its line, and this creature of his speculative mind was Onslow, now one of the thriftiest grain markets in Jones county.

Mr. Franks was the soul of the new town. He gave the railway company the right of way for their track through his lands, gave them 12 acres of land for a stockyard and furnished the posts for fencing it, and gave them every other lot for laying out the town, also depot grounds.

Not satisfied with this piece of generosity, his farsightedness led him to give substantial encouragement to public improvements. He built the present grain elevator in Onslow in 1871, and built several store buildings, besides donating the lots on which stand the Catholic and Presbyterian churches. He contributed liberally to every project for the material improvement of Onslow. It is estimated that he spent not less than \$30,000 in buildings in and about Onslow.

He bought more cattle and hogs than any other man on the line of the Midland. He loaded the first two car loads of stock ever shipped from Onslow, and in fact was the first man who ever shipped stock from Jones and Jackson counties to an eastern market.

About two years ago he embarked in general merchandise at Onslow on a large scale, and it is altogether probable that this enterprise was the prime factor in the financial troubles that ultimately overwhelmed him, and which were really the cause of his death.

To write the history of Onslow from its foundation would be to write the history of E. M. Franks for the last 10 years. He was the soul of the town but we can give place to only a tithe of his business schemes and transactions.

HIS CHARACTER

He never had the advantage of an education, and the success he achieved was the result of strong natural capacity. His perceptive powers were immense, his memory remarkable - it is related of him that he could tell the name of every man living between Onslow and Dubuque, unless it was some newcomer.

He was a kind friend and generous. He never suffered himself to be idle, and he

could not endure an idle person. There were weak points in his character, but they are deserving of charity. He made no profession of religion, but was always willing and always did give lavishly for religious and charitable purposes.

He never belonged to any secret order. He was bold and manly in whatever he undertook and exhibited traits of mind that would have surrounded him with power and magnificence had he been born to a higher estate in life.

HIS DEATH

As we have stated, his death was the result of too great stress of business upon his mind. The depression in the commercial affairs of the country which has existed for several years, tended to complicate the already vexed condition of his affairs which were a constant weight of oppression upon his mind and the fact that he trusted the various data of his transactions to his memory alone without the aid of bookkeeping make it easy to comprehend that a restless and nervous temperament could not always resist the terrible weight of care that continually followed it like an avenging Nemesis.

His last illness was not more than a week in duration and he was conscious until 5 o'clock Tuesday, May 14, the day of his death. At that time his mind seemed to lapse into chaos. His sufferings were painful to witness for several hours afterward, but he finally passed away in calmness at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

The funeral services were held at the Presbyterian church, on Thursday the 16th inst., at 9:30 a.m., Revs. Aldrich and Goodale of Wyoming officiating. The following gentlemen were pallbearers: James McGargill, Wm. Miller, John Paul, Senior, Sam Conally, Jr., David Walters, John Tasker, Geo. Sutherland, C. C. Hinebaugh, H. Orr, Thos. Silsbee.

The remains were deposited in a little graveyard on the farm near Canton, where Mr. Franks was married. He leaves a widow and three sons to mourn his loss, Sylvester, George, John William, and Milan McVay, all of them worthy and energetic young men who express the determination to have the remnants of their father's shattered estate administered to the best interests of the creditors.

FOOT NOTE

Some years ago while doing research on the Dillon Furrow (sometimes equated with or referred to as the Military trail, but different) I stumbled across evidence that Mr. Franks was the original founder of what has always been and is yet today referred to as the 12 Mile House midway between Cascade and Dubuque.

What little that can be determined from meager records and second hand reports

indicates he built the first building and overnight stop for travelers, but very shortly sold this holding and THEN moved on to Cascade, thence to Canton, and finally Onslow. Should any readers have more in evidence to this somewhat fact, I would be interested in learning of it.

-- C. L. Norlin, president,
Historical Society



I am researching my father's family who lived in Jones county, Iowa from 1860 to after 1900, before moving to Swisher county, Texas.

My father was Ira Marion Brown, bn. 1897 Jones county, Iowa, died 1943 Amarillo, Texas. He was the son of Timothy Leroy and Susannah Bixler Brown.

Timothy Leroy (T.L.) was the son of Charles Brown and his first wife Sarah Soper Brown. She died before 1863. Charles second wife was Rhoda -----?

The children of Charles Brown by his first wife, were: John P. Brown, bn. 1852 (John married Katie Supple in 1880); Adelia J. Brown, bn. 1855 (she married F. D. Hanley in 1876); Timothy L. Brown, bn. 1858 (he married Susanna Bixler in 1891).

The descendants of Timothy L. Brown are my generological line.

The children by his second marriage were: Charles Brown, bn. 1867 and he married Maud Ralston in 1890. Mary Brown, bn. 1876 and she married George Franklin Soper, date unknown.

Mrs. James Farley was the daughter of Mary (Brown) Soper.

The 1860 census of Jones county shows the Browns and Sopers lived in Fairview township; the 1880 census shows them living in Fairview and Jackson township, as does the 1900 census.

Are there any members of these families still living in the Jones county area, or any one remembering any of the the above family members? I would very much appreciate hearing from anyone with information.

Sincerely
Mrs. Jess (Patricia Brown) Robinson
Route 1
Hereford, Texas 79045

Nebraska resident shares knowledge of early bits of Jones county history

(The following letter and information was received from Herman Frerichs, Coleridge, Nebr., whose father was born in Jones county, Iowa, near Monticello in 1871.)

To: Jones County Historical Society:

I received my copy of the reprint of the Jones County History and was very much pleased to get it. I have several reasons for being interested in it, one being that my father was born at Monticello in 1871, baptized in St. John's Lutheran church. Also my mother's family were members of Zion Evangelical Lutheran church in Monticello. I have an aunt buried in the cemetery there.

I'm also vice president of Cedar county (Nebraska) Historical Society. We wish that our county had such a record book of the county history such as you have in Jones county. We have a very small history put together by the county superintendent of schools quite a few years ago. This was compiled by the teacher in each school district.

In going over some records I was surprised how many of the people settling in Cedar county, Nebr. came from Jones county, Ia.

One in particular was a Captain Burdick, and I see he is mentioned on page 374 of your 1879 history reprint. I quote a paragraph from the History of Dixon

county, Nebr. (it borders Cedar county) Clark township, and was written in 1896.

EARLY SETTLERS

"Captain Burdick was the first to settle in this township. He came here 23 years ago, or about 1869-70, as agent for the Boston Land Company, which owned 45,000 acres in Dixon and Cedar counties, and a large tract of it was in this township.

Captain Burdick purchased 160 acres of it for himself, built a house and made many improvements and on his own land, as well as that of the Land company, planted numerous large groves, several hundred acres in all. The Captain sold his farm about 15 years ago (1881) to Mr. A. J. Sparks, and moved to Kansas."

I am also enclosing excerpts from an article written in 1917, by the daughter of an early settler. Captain Burdick is referred to in this article, and it is evident this early settler knew Captain Burdick in Jones county, Ia. This early settlers name was Mr. Dennis. Mr. Dennis was a Civil War veteran and was known in these parts as Colonel Dennis. I remember him well.

There was also a James Morrison who came from Jones county, Ia. He bought a farm for \$5 an acre, and this farm is still in the Morrison family.

There was also a Mr. Dan Starks from Jones county, Ia. who came here with his

father, Seymore Starks, and they homesteaded. Dan Starks kept a diary from 1870, and the family continues this diary up to this date. My family, the Frerichs, came from Jones county; however, they first moved to Plymouth county, Ia., before coming to Cedar county, Nebr. Henry Frerichs listed in your 1879 History Reprint, was my grandfather's brother. There were a great many Jones countians who first settled in Plymouth county.

For your information I am including that brief history of Lawnridge, Nebr. written by Anna Miller in 1917. It mentions a number of former Jones county people who migrated to this sarea.

(Editors note:) This is only part of the history as written by Anna Miller, but is the portion that refers to Jones county.)

HOMESTEADING

The great desire of obtaining land to build up a home and keep the extent of their means in view influenced many people to go west and take up homesteads. A homestead could be obtained by paying \$14, the entry fee, and then to reside upon the same land for five years during which time being exempt of taxes. It could then be proved up and a deed secured.

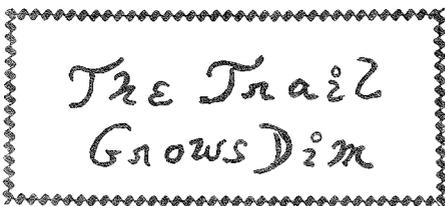
Father and Uncle Specht started on their land seeing trip, leaving Monticello, Ia. the latter part of May in 1871 and bound for Lincoln. A doctor who owned land here had directed them to this place, but on arrival did not see such land as they were looking for so they traveled on to Council Bluffs, Ia., to locate several friends who had settled in this country but the land was too rough and rolling here. They then went on to Sioux City, and would try and locate Mr. Dennis who had come from Monticello and homesteaded in 1870.

Father and Uncle Specht crossed the Missouri river in a small canoe and started out walking, there being no railroad out of Sioux City to here at that time. They walked through Dakota City, Jackson, Ponca and to Martinsburg. From there on they walked through the Prairie.

DISTRUST OF STRANGERS

Finally they came to a dugout and as it was beginning to get dark, they asked to stay all night, but were refused. All strangers were considered rustlers or horse thieves. They inquired at the dugout if Captain Burdick was known, and were told they had traveled a mile and one half too far south.

Father and Uncle Specht hated the thought of having to sleep in the open with the wolves, but it was not with much ambition they turned and left. It was



Need information on the following: David Rolston (Ralston) Wife, Phebe (Clemmer) Climmer Rolston. Came Jones county fall of 1853, located Monticello township.

Had seven children: Martha J., David, John, Ellen, Julia A., Mary A. V. and William. Lost three children: Jacob, enlisted Civil War, Iowa Vol. Infantry, killed at Mission Ridge; daughters Eliza J. and Sarah.

Mr. and Mrs. Rolston belonged to the United Brethern church in Monticello. David (Jr.) married Sarah Jane Rogers.

Also need information on John M. Eldridge and his wife Laura Amanda (Backus) Eldridge. The second David had the following children: Martha J. (who married Agonda -- Miller, a son Edmond, a daughter Pheo, and daughters Mynta

or Myrta, Mary, and Ada B.

Anyone having any knowledge of these people is asked to contact me please.

Mrs. Norma J. Griggs
2521 Felix
St. Joseph, Mo. 64501

I am seeking information about my third grandfather, George W. Trumbull, who was mayor of Monticello in 1875, and about his family. He apparently was born in Connecticut, but I don't know the identity of his parents.

George W. Trumbull's son, Albert Lea Trumbull, married Amelia Schodde in 1876. She was the daughter of William Schodde, a merchant in Monticello. The Schodde and Stuhler families also were intermarried.

I have very good information about Mr. Schodde, and very little about George W. Trumbull.

If anyone can provide any information about the Trumbulls I would appreciate hearing from you.

Very truly yours,
John W. Lawrence
2916 Stratford Raod
Columbia, S. C. 29204

Purchases land from Monticello speculator

raining.

Walking back as directed they soon came to another dugout, and halloo-ing as to where Captain Burdick might live, were answered "Right here". They were received and invited to supper. They slept the sleep of the very weary between two buffalo robes. Next day Mr. Dennis took them around to see the country yet available for homesteading.

They then went to O'Garas, who had settled on Lawnridge. Roger O'Gara homesteaded the Carl Freick's place, the first man to settle in this lonesome country, besieged by wind and snowstorms. His brother, William, was living with him, and homesteaded the southeast quarter of Uncle Spechts. William's brother, Bartley, homesteaded the Frank Specht place. Ferdinand Hirschman homesteaded the old place on Lawnridge.

PURCHASES LAND

Father found no homestead land available, as what had not already been homesteaded, had been bought up by a speculator from Monticello, Ia., one Mr. Fairchild. They then bought land from Mr. Fairchild. They paid \$300 per 160 acres, which Mr. Fairchild had purchased three weeks earlier for \$200.

The folks were now landowners, so in the spring of 1873 they had a sale, and made ready to go to Nebraska. Uncle Specht left with them. The folks and two children, Henry and George, along with "Uncle" and Frank Specht and aunt Kate made ready.

At LeMars, Mother and children visited while the men folk went on with the stock and provisions which included three cows, a calf, two hogs, two teams, two wagons, grain and a summer supply of meat, dried apples, etc., which had been prepared for this new barren country.

Two years had elapsed since buying the ground, and by now more people had settled including the Anthony Wohlmanns.

NEARBY TOWNS

Vermillion and Yankton, S. D., were the nearest railroad towns, but at St. James and St. Helena the people could get sufficient provisions. Blizzards, drought, and large bands of Indians were common occurrences, although the Indians never did any harm.

The first school was started in Father's house, with Mr. R. T. O'Gara as teacher. Although the house consisted only of one room, a curtain was pulled across, and while Mother tended to meals on one side, Mr. O'Gara taught school on the other. There were nine pupils.

Mr. Hines came just before Christmas and settled on his homestead.

One of the most unforgettable oc-

currences was the grasshopper plague of July 1876. That morning broke clear, but the insects coming from the north looked like a cloud. By nightfall nothing growing was left. Father raised one ear of corn from 10 acres.

EARLY NURSERYMAN

(Editor's note: The balance of the history written by Anna Miller told of many hardships and memorable events known only to those early pioneers. From Jones county, Ia., Mr. Frerichs mentions in his letter a fact most Jones county people know, that being that Col. C. W. Gurney, who started the Gurney nursery, was also a pioneer of the Cedar county, Nebr. area. Col. C. W. Gurney came to Jones county, Monticello, right after the Civil War, having been prompted to do so by his friends and fellow Civil War officers, Col. Shaw and Major Farwell.

He started his nursery, where today stands the Yeoman factory in Monticello, and his nursery and vineyards were from that point up the hill between what is now 6th and 7th streets to Birch street. When Hillcrest was platted, the sewer and water put in, and especially when the foundation was built for the late "Shorty" Copley house, much evidence of the old foundations for the storage houses were uncovered.

He also raised and dried hoppers for brewing, and the house at 540 N. Chestnut, now occupied by Paul Chapman's, was originally built for hoppers drying. Col.

Gurney pulled stakes in the latter 1870s and moved to Nebraska, then to Yankton, S. D.

The names mentioned in Mr. Frerichs letter were people from Jones county, and many present day Jones countians will find they are related to these early pioneers.

LAND SPECULATOR

The land speculator, Mr. Fairchild from Monticello (as far as I can ascertain from research) did not reside in the Jones county area for too long. He was an easterner, who generally was at the front line whenever a land rush was imminent.

Many land owners in Jones county will find his name (second entry) on their abstracts. He purchased ground from soldiers, who as a bonus for serving had received (dependent upon length of service) anywhere from a quarter to full section of ground. He would pay them in cash, usually \$1.25 per acre, then sell it to later immigrants wishing to settle upon the ground. He also made the purchase of thousands of acres direct from the government land agent.

If you wonder who built the first log cabin or buildings upon a present day farm, you can be pretty well assured it was the person named on your abstract immediately following Mr. Fairchild, the speculator, or Mr. Sanford, the government land agent. This entry will also give you the year. CLN.



THE MAIN STREET in the Village of Hale in Jones county presented this view in 1910. The photo is from a postcard submitted to the "Historical Review" by Pauline Orris of Center Junction. The postcard was dated July 4th, 1910 and contained the following handwritten names: Helene Peters, Elizabeth Hershberger, Tessie Wilcox, Ernest Balster, Delbert Balster.

The Daisy Collins story -- from a child of the prairie to a hatmaker in Cedar Rapids

The following has been submitted by Herman Burkert, brother of Daisy (Burkert) Collins. Many of you remember Daisy. Truly she was one of the last real old pioneers, if not by age, then by what she experienced as a child of the prairie, as the prairie was some 80 odd years ago. (ed.)

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Pioneer Precept Baby Dies in Iowa Town. So read the headline over the obituary of Daisy Elmiere Collins in the Beaver City Times Tribune in Nebraska.

Daisy was born on the Nebraska prairie in Furnas county on Christmas Day in 1880 -- in an old soddie or house made of chunks of sod. The first winter was hard, and the family subsisted mainly on turnips and a side of bacon. The first eight years of Daisy's life were to be spent here.

Daisy came from a long line of pioneers, people who were always seeking and searching for better things. There were Burkerts in Pennsylvania and at Livingston Manor in Westpoint, New York.

In the early 1700s, her great-great-grandfather Enoch fought with a regiment of Pennsy volunteers. Her maternal great-great-grandfather was Colonel John Van Meter, who fought in the war of 1812 with England. He immigrated to Iowa from Lancaster, Fairfax county, Ohio in the early 1800s, and began farming near Andrew in Jackson county.

Her father, Wilson Burkert, came to Andrew from Berks county, Pa. in the early 1870s. He had been born less than one-half mile from where Daniel Boone had been born and raised.

In 1878 Wilson Burkert met and married Margaret LaVonia Van Meter, the seventh of eleven children. They later immigrated to Nebraska, joining one of the last wagon trains to leave this part of Iowa.

They settled at Precept, Furnas county, and when Daisy was born the county was then only six years old. Daisy well remembered her very early childhood and of the times her father would take grain to the nearest railroad. The round trip took two weeks.

She many times recounted how at night the fleas would come out of the sod and inflict painful bites, and how her parents would light the lamps and swat fleas until the light would drive the fleas back into the sod crevices. Her early pets and prairie favorites were the Prairie Dogs, with their little pointed tails and seeming delight in

playing hide and seek with Daisy and other prairie children. As with all early pioneers, neighbors were far apart, but often groups would gather at each other's houses of prayer meeting, spelling bees and taffy pulls.

In 1888, when Daisy was 8 years of age, her parents, because of the fact that certain interests were pushing for a courthouse and they feared another financial burden on top of all other privations, sold their place and returned to Iowa and Monticello. Their home, when arriving back, was at 204 West Walnut. Here a sister was born, and happy days among old and new friends was welcomed.

Daisy entered school in Monticello, and it wasn't long before her friends had forgotten Daisy wasn't always a city girl.

Visits to her grandparents in Andrew were made by taking the mail coach between Andrew and Dubuque. She often commented how rough the road was, but



DAISY COLLINS

well remembered that at many of the stops she would be treated to apples or goodies of some kind. She never forgot how kindly the old stage driver was to her, but she had forgotten his name in later years.

Daisy graduated from high school in 1898, and she, along with Emma (Schneider) Maurice, were the last survivors of the class of 16 students. At the time of Daisy's death in 1978, at the age of 98, she was the second oldest high school

alumnus. Mary Locher, born in 1875, and still living, was the oldest.

Daisy loved sewing and could do lovely fine needlework. Being creative, she decided to become a milliner. At that time there was a Mrs. Albang, who had a milliner emporium in the building that now houses the Davis Barber shop, and it was here Daisy went to work and to study under Mrs. Albang.

She used to say how cold this building was, and as a result she developed a severe case of chillblains. She told how her mother, using an old pioneer cure which was standard at the time for curing chillblains, boiled potato peelings, and after allowing the water to cool down, would have Daisy soak her feet in this solution.

She continued her study of millinery and went to work for a Mrs. Lanigan, who had an emporium where the Monti Lounge is now located. It was here that she developed her ability to design and create beautiful hats.

Leaving Mrs. Lanigan, she purchased a type of trunk that has seldom been seen, even in present day museums. When opened it unfolded like a dresser, with top and drawers. This contained the beautiful feathers, ribbons and other paraphernalia needed to create ladies' hats of the day. She would board a train, taking this trunk with her, and stopping at the many towns she would stay from a week to a month, creating hats to order.

Finally traveling became tiresome, perhaps because she met a young man who asked for her hand. She married Harry Collins, but the marriage was short and childless as Harry died a short while after.

She later worked for the Lyman Bros. wholesale milliners in Cedar Rapids, and still later for another millinery shop in the same city. After many years she retired in 1965, and returned to live with her brother in Monticello.

Not content to be idle, she turned out hundreds of "hot pads", Christmas stockings and many other fancy sewn items.

In 1978 she attended the alumni banquet at Monticello, it being the 80th anniversary year of her graduation. In July of the same year, she attended the reunion of all employees of the former Newman's store in Cedar Rapids.

October of that year she suddenly became ill, and taking her memories with her, just short of her 98th birthday she left this life.

Truly a remarkable lady.

In memoriam

The Jones County Historical Society has lost its most active member -- a man of tremendous undertaking and determination, without whose assistance, physically and financially, we would not have a County Historical Society as we know it today.

In only six years time, and largely by his efforts, the organization progressed from a small group meeting held in the community room at Monticello, to a membership of nearly 500.

From no place the Society could call home, to the County Museum and Village complex dedicated to the public and located at the original county seat at the ghost town of Edinburgh, he helped to hoe the row all the way.

He matched his thousands of hours of volunteer labor with a like amount of dollars, and nearly always first at the meetings, he was usually one of the very last to leave. He was Society vice president for five years.

Joe Edward Messerli died at the age of 78 on Sunday afternoon, May 20, 1979. Death was sudden and the area citizens were shocked and saddened.

He was born near Coggon, Ia., Jan. 23, 1901. He won the hand of Esther Hasler, and on Dec. 6, 1927, they were married at Waterloo. Joe and Esther farmed for many years, and for eight years Joe was in the tractor and implement business in Monticello. He had retired a number of years ago.

The list of organizations Joe was active in would be as long as your arm, but we can't help but feel "The Jones County Iowa Historical Society" was one of his favorites.

We'll all miss Joe, but he'll be remembered by hundreds for years to come.



JOE MESSERLI

About Grandpa Tate

(Editor's note: Esther Gray of Anamosa one of our regular contributors has again favored the "Review" with a story.

This time it is about her grandfather, Alfred Dorton Tate, and with the story she has submitted a number of original letters, now encased in plastic to preserve them, along with a tin type photo (which we cannot reproduce) of Grandpa Tate.

The letters still very legible, except for reproduction, deal with Grandpa Tate's stint in the Union forces during the Civil war, and particularly while he was in the hospital at Rome, Georgia. These letters immediately follow Esther Gray's story, as follows:)

A FEW MORE ROADS "TO JONES COUNTY"

Grandfather Alfred Dorton Tate was a rather colorful character from all I can gather from his letters to his "Becca", and from my aunt, who was the "little Ella" she was to "kiss for him" - undoubtedly a smoother kiss for a three-year-old cheek than one from him would have been! She would have had to hack her way back to civilization with a machete to get out of his "tonsorial bush"!

But he was brave and he was loyal; Scotch Irish ancestry, though Indiana born and raised; he had always been a Democrat-Jeffersonian - until he heard A. Lincoln talk about "hitting the slave-trade and hitting it hard".

Grandpa said then that "when Abe ran for President, he was voting for him", and he did, and was a loyal Republican from

then on until he died in 1876. He was born in 1826.

BRAVE AND LUCKY

I said he was brave; here is how I know he was. When I was a little girl (so many years ago - it doesn't matter how many), I went with my mother and her sister (again, the "little Ella" of his letters long before) to the State Capitol in Indianapolis to view the mementoes of the "59th Indiana Regiment, Co. A", which were in a glass case. Grandpa's old army hat and jacket were there; the hat with a bullet hole through the brim and another through the sleeve of his jacket.

Talk about the "luck of the Irish" - he never got a scratch and a bullet had broken the flagstaff in two pieces (I forgot to mention that he was Color-Sgt. of Co. A 59th Ind.). There they were, mute testimony to his courage! "The story goes" that he grasped the two pieces and hung on, never letting "the Colors" touch

the ground as his horse, also untouched, galloped on; maybe the horse was Irish, too, who knows? But I never forgot that visit - to this day I cannot sit when Old Glory goes by in a parade!

He had three wives - one at a time! The first two died in childbirth; but Rebecca was made of hardier stuff - she bore him four children, the last of whom was my mother, who came to Nebraska, where she married the VanSlyke who was the "Jones countian" who fathered the six grandchildren that made the only connection Grandfather Tate ever had with Jones county at all.

He had died when Mother was four years old, and six months after his "Becky" had also died. He must have been quite romantic, and perhaps somewhat religious - he was trying to obey the Biblical command to "multiply and replenish the earth"!

(To be continued in next issue.)

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