



Jones County

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Jones County's 'killer blizzard' of 1856

It was Dec. 3, 1856, and it was to be a day of tragedy, long to be remembered in Jones County. On that day a killer blizzard struck Iowa, moving into the state from the northwest.

It entered early in the day, and by late afternoon had churned its way across the prairie, leaped the Mississippi River, then continued on until the following day it spent itself on the windward side of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Kentucky. It had dumped 16 inches of snow in this area.

A pioneer family by the name of Wade, consisting of Mother, Father and 10 children, had homesteaded on a piece of ground some two years before, slightly south and west of the then small village of Monticello. The military trail passed directly in front of their cabin.

The cabin, of more than average proportion had been constructed with a large rock fireplace at one end of the combination kitchen and eating area, and two large bedrooms, narrow, but long at the other end. The bedrooms were

separated from the eating area and one another by log partitions.

Crude bunks for beds had been fashioned against the outer walls, then covered with prairie grass "ticks," and in these two bedrooms, children of the family slept — boys in one room, girls in the other. Brothers and sisters were almost evenly divided in number.

Mr. and Mrs. Wade retired nightly to a made up "tick" in the kitchen area, so they might keep the fireplace stoked, especially in damp or cold weather. A kitchen range, upon which the meals were cooked, stood in one corner.

Other buildings

Few other buildings had been constructed — a small log barn for livestock and a lean-to for storing prairie grass for winter fodder. It's also possible that there was a granary of some type, and possibly a combination chicken brooder and hog house.

This early homestead, with its crude

frontier type dwelling, would never be recognized today. Subsequent owners built it into a showplace, and for many years it was known as the "Wilcox Place". The area today is owned by the Ballous.

This early homestead was the first place on the left-hand side of the "Lower Prairieburg Road," from its intersection with today's highway 151. In 1856, this portion of the Lower Prairieburg Road was still part of the original military trail from Dubuque to Iowa City.

Mr. and Mrs. Wade had business in Langworthy on that ill-fated day. All of the children except the very youngest, a baby girl less than one year old, were left at home to fend for themselves, which for pioneer children wasn't too difficult, and seldom was cause for anxiety to the parents.

The day had dawned bright, clear and relatively mild. Not a great deal of snow lay on the ground; in fact, not enough to warrant taking the "bobsled", rather than the farm wagon. Very little traffic at that time assured that there would be bare spots which would require an exertion on the pulling ability of the team, should the sled be used.

Heading out of the driveway, they turned left at the Military Road and progressed westward about a mile, where the trail then followed the land contour into a small gulley, where the trail crossed a clear running stream.

Mrs. Wade was probably in high spirits, for she was going to Langworthy, and it would give her an opportunity to bargain for a few of the simple niceties at the "Buckhorn," a combination provisions store and tavern.

(Editor's note: At this particular time the settlement was not officially known as Langworthy, but was most often referred to as "Spencers Place" due to the fact James Spencer had been the first to build a log cabin on the north bank of the stream. It was also referred to as "Buckhorn," although there were many other "Buckhorns" scattered throughout the area.)

The Wades most likely were going to Spencers Place to conduct business relating to the new railroad coming through from Dubuque, as the tracks were to pass along the east edge of the ground



THE BODIES of Mrs. Wade and her baby were found frozen under snow near this site southwest of Monticello, near the present "lower Prairieburg road." Mr.

Wade's body was found some distance to the east, but almost within shouting distance of the family's cabin. See map on page 2.

Weather changed by early afternoon

upon which they had laid claim, and a negotiations office had been set up at that place by Cyrus Langworthy, a prominent figure in the early rail line, and the man who later gave his name to the place.

The railroad line was finished to Monticello from Dubuque in the fall of 1858. The journey to Langworthy was quite uneventful. The business was conducted, and the Wades took dinner at the home of friends.

The weather had changed by early afternoon, and while no clouds were in evidence — no blackening of the western skies gave cause for alarm — a heavy haze had begun settling and quickly closed in to such an extent that it became impossible to see more than a few hundred feet.

(Editor's note: Many who read this article will recall the Armistice Day blizzard of 1940. This writer was caught two miles from home, with no more clothing on than a sweat shirt and light trousers. Dropping a large sack of traps right on the spot when the blizzard hit, I stumbled into a line fence, and was then able to find my way to shelter. This was in west central Iowa, where the blizzard had roared in from the Dakota and Nebraska plains. Many in this locality recall that day, for Anamosa and Monticello were playing a football game at the Great Jones County Fairgrounds. We who remember that blizzard and the weather leading up to it, can understand what the Wades were confronted with.)

Hurriedly, the Wades loaded into the wagon, bundling the baby into a heavy robe. Mr. and Mrs. Wade pulled collars up around their necks, and tucked coat tails between their knees, for now the wind had begun to rise, and cold blasts came one upon the other.

Starting out from Langworthy, they headed north by east, following the military trail to that point, which is today called the rock cut, where it turned due north.

(Editor's note: Evidence of the original route can still be found in this section for almost three-fourths of a mile, and is perhaps the ONLY clear cut portion of the "old military trail" still in existence between Dubuque and Iowa City. This portion is not only part of the military trail, but is part of "DILLONS FURROW," which pre-dated the military trail some six months, and which the Military engineers, under command of Jefferson Davis, later President of the Confederacy, followed in large part.)

The Wades were now heading into the very teeth of the storm, and while it was uncomfortable due to the severe weather change, it wouldn't take long to cover the approximate two and one-half miles to home, shelter and warmth. They were beginning to worry about the children still at home, and the children, as well, were

worrying about their Mother, Father and baby sister. Each of those at home had visions of what "Mother is bringing us from the store."

Hardly had the Wades made the last turn, when a blinding snowstorm hit, and within minutes the temperature plummeted to far below freezing. Mr. Wade was a fearless man, and were he not so concerned for his wife and child, he would have undoubtedly played the role of protector differently. Such, however, was not to be the case.

With a tight rein he forced the team of horses directly into the storm, knowing that they had to hold their course for the next mile and a quarter to stay on the trail home. After this northerly direction of one and one-quarter miles, the trail turned east and the storm would then be at their backs with less than a mile to home.

Panic

Common sense very often gives way under panic, and panic was now gripping Mr. Wade.

He suddenly realized that even though he had been holding a tight rein, the team

had left the road and canted to the right the shortest distance to shelter, but across a swamp area. The realization came to him when the wagon wheels began scraping over limestone boulders found alongside, but off the trail.

Oh, but had he let the team follow its instincts, it would have delivered the family home safe and sound, for as any horseman knows, that animal has the ability to find its way back to stable when caught in any condition where eyesight is of little or no help.

Panic continued to mount in the Wades, and Mr. Wade attempted to force the team back to the left in order to stay on trail again and again. This tug of war between driver and team lasted for the next mile, and finally in desperation, Mr. Wade let them take their head. Had he only known at this point that they were now headed easterly on the trail — but in the blinding storm, there was no way Mr. Wade could know, and he gave up as lost.

Desperation

In further desperation he brought the team to a halt next to an overhanging limestone embankment that outcropped just across from the stream he should have recognized. Here he unhitched and turned the team loose, lifted his wife and baby from the wagon, placing them next to the embankment and covering them with the quilt. A small stand of cedar and willow trees also gave some relief from the howling wind and driving snow. With a final word of encouragement, and a promise to be right back, he disappeared into the swirling storm.

Near frozen

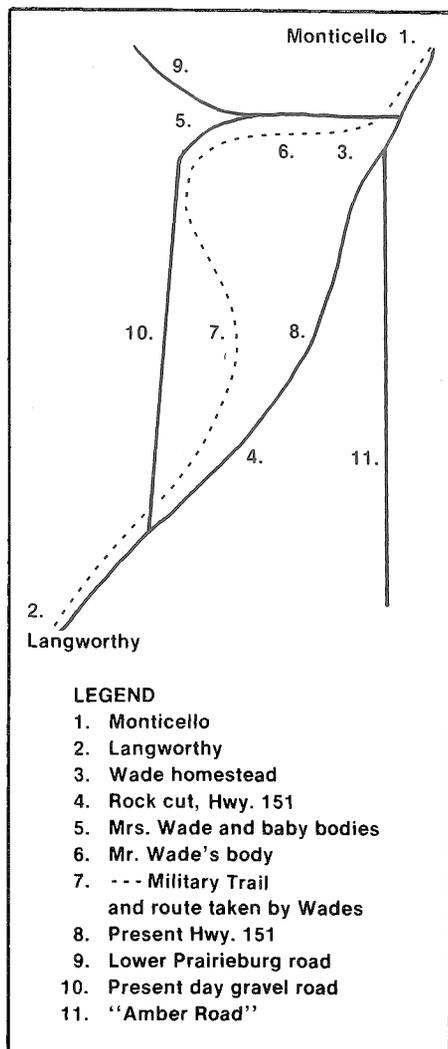
Now the question arises as to why Mr. Wade did not mount one of the horses and ride, and it can only be assumed that he realized his dangerous near frozen state, and had presence enough of mind to know that walking would warm him.

The horses did get home, and were discovered next morning by the eldest of the Wade sons, who fearing the worst, aroused what few neighbors lived near. A search was begun immediately.

The hunt lasted all of that and the following day. Near dusk on the second day, one member of the party noticed a corner of the robe protruding from the deep snow. Beneath it were the frozen bodies of Mrs. Wade and the baby. Mr. Wade's body was found some distance farther on, but almost within shouting distance of his cabin.

Townpeople and area neighbors opened their hearts and homes to the nine orphans, and all were reared in the area. The eldest son, William, joined the Union forces during the Civil War and was killed upon the battlefield.

Research and story by C. L. "Gus" Norlin



Sherman's march through Georgia detailed; Farwell book continues

Editor's note: "The Farwell Biographies — 1751 to 1865" continues in Volume 7, Issue 1, of the Jones County Historical Review.

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My Dear Wife:

This is election day, and we have been helping make Old Abe president for another four years. Our march after Hood is over now, only to prepare for another one longer, I suppose, than any we have ever made.

Sherman has not told us where we are going, and rumor assigns every point, from Memphis, to Charleston . . . We are going light, only one wagon to a regiment, and one ambulance. All teams are to haul provisions, and ammunition.

This program does not make it possible to obtain a leave of absence, as I had thought of doing, and I have now given up seeing you, and the dear little girls, until the close of my time of service, which is nine months away.

The paymaster is with us, at last, and I shall send the money to Marcus, as that is the only safe way to send it, and he will send you all that you need. I want you to make yourself as comfortable as you possibly can for the winter. Buy plenty of vegetables, and meat. Go warmly clothed, and buy such things that may interest, and instruct the children. . .

I would like to see little red-cheeked Luna, while she is so young and pretty, and I want to see Mary. It hardly seems possible that she is large, and old enough to go to school . . . They must be good little girls, and Papa will have lots of stories to tell them when he gets home . . . It may be weeks, and possibly months before you hear from me again.

Affectionately your husband,
S. S. Farwell.

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA

Although Sherman was so intent on carrying out his plan for the march through Georgia, he held his desire in check and, until within six days of starting, was ready, if it seemed best, to unite with Thomas in pursuit of Hood. During this time, however, supplies were being gathered, the army was weeded of all but hardy, capable men, and all preparations were being made to start at once.

Satisfied, at last, that Hood would be delayed in collecting supplies, thus giving

Thomas ample chance to collect his scattered troops, and receiving a last message of assurance from that general, he answered, "All right," . . . a bridge was burned, thus cutting off all communication with the North, and he was ready to put his great army in motion.

Nothing but rumors of its fate reached the North for over a month. Even Grant received no direct message from Sherman until he reached Savannah.

This great army, consisting of four corps, was divided into a right, and left wing, commanded by Major-Generals Howard, and Slocum, both young men. The 31st Iowa was in the right wing, under General Howard. This division, with one corps of the left wing, left Atlanta on the morning of the Fifteenth of November. General Sherman followed with the 20th corps, the next day . . . The city lay in ruins behind them. The machine shops, the depot, and the business section had been burned. What dwellings that were left were empty. It was a dead city.

But the spirits of the men were not affected by this scene of desolation. The sun shone; the air was exhilarating, and there was a "Devil-may-care" feeling among the officers, and men. As Sherman worked his way, on horseback, past the marching columns of men, soldiers called out to him: "Uncle Billy, I guess Grant is waiting for us at Richmond."

Sherman's imagination was fired by the situation: Four great divisions of men, marching by different roads; twenty-five thousand army wagons loaded with ammunition, and supplies, eight hundred to each corps, each drawn by a team of six mules, with shouting drivers . . . a long line, extending along the way for six miles . . . There were six hundred ambulances; sixty-five artillery guns; droves of cattle, horses, and pack mules. There were six long pontoon bridges, and all manner of repair supplies . . . Sixty thousand marching men, with their officers riding along the way; colors flying; bands playing; the men breaking out in one grand chorus, "John Brown's body . . . His soul goes marching on!"

This great army, which would cut a swath sixty miles wide through the state of Georgia, burning bridges, consuming the food and forage, and destroying the railroads, which would have kept alive the Army of Virginia, this surely was the most awful, spectacular movement of the war.

The troops on the march made an average of fifteen miles a day. They started at dawn, and made camp by noon. They lived on the country, and foraging became an organized occupation. This

had to be, as the country was sparsely settled, and there were no magistrates, or civil authorities, upon whom requisitions could be made, as has been done in European wars.

Each brigade commander had authority to requisition fifty men each day, and they were selected for their boldness, and energy. These started out before dawn, with a knowledge of the route the brigade was to take that day, and their intended camping place. They started on foot, and spread out for five or six miles, visiting every farm and plantation in that range.

They would procure some vehicle, a family carriage, or wagon, and load it with supplies: bacon, chickens, ducks, turkeys, flour, cornmeal, anything that could be used for food, or forage, and thus loaded they would come back to the main road, in advance of the train, ready to deliver to the Brigade Commissary, the supplies they had gathered.

The foraging parties, gathered along the roadside would present a strange, and amusing appearance. Here would be mules, horses, and even cattle, loaded with spoil: All kinds of eatables, meat and vegetables, loads of corn and farm produce, and sheep, pigs, and cattle on the hoof . . . Every day these "bummers," as they were called, would start out in the morning on foot, to return mounted on some kind of a beast, which was at once taken away and appropriated for the general good, and they were ready to start out again the next day on foot to repeat the same experience.

They had orders not to strip any place entirely, to leave enough food to prevent starvation, but no doubt a great deal of suffering was left in their wake . . . Then there were cases of theft and pillage, although the sentiment of the best men in the army was against this, and the punishment of a culprit caught in the act was severe. But Sherman's army was not responsible for all of these acts ascribed to them.

The Confederacy had opened their jails, and there were roving bands of outlaws following the army, taking advantage of the situation. They committed many crimes that were ascribed to the soldiers, but the South would never believe this, and many people, to this day, believe Sherman to be an Atilla, his soldiers Huns, and terrible stories of the outrages they committed are still told, and believed.

During this march, the major of the 31st Iowa was absent, and Sewall Farwell performed the duties of that office, without receiving the official title until sometime after. He was a mounted officer, and

Groups of men, looking like so many demons tearing up rails

missed the close contact with his company as their captain, but he kept in as close touch with his men as possible, always feeling a responsibility for the care of the weaker ones.

There were many things in this march through an unknown part of the country which interested him greatly: -- The southern people he came in contact with; their homes, and their ways of cultivating the land; the timber tracts of yellow pine trees; the motley throng of slaves meeting the soldiers everywhere with ecstatic rejoicing.

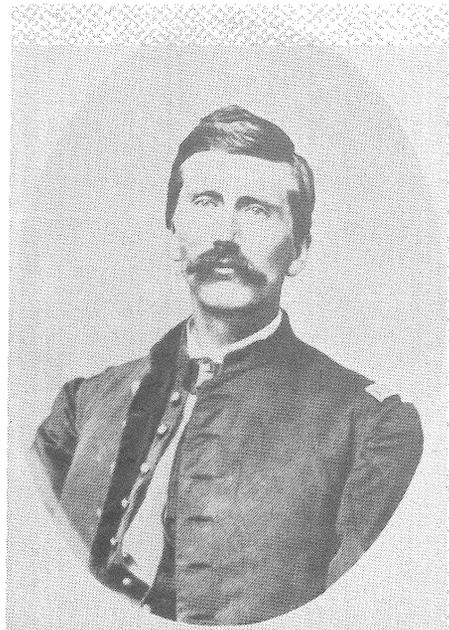
Then there was the sight of that great army camping at night, the whole horizon, under the stars lighted by blazing pine knot torches . . . Groups of men building shelters, and making beds with pine boughs. Groups of men sitting about campfires, cooking, talking, singing, playing cards . . . Groups of men, looking like so many demons tearing up steel rails, heating them to a white heat in blazing fires, and twisting them, hissing, about the living trees . . . There were teamsters caring for their horses, blacksmiths at work in front of improvised forges; mechanics repairing wagons. Men washing and mending clothes . . . A moving mass of men . . . Taps; steady tramp of the sentinels; noises of the night; and health-giving sleep. Then the clear notes of the bugle; the odor of hot coffee; and the stir and business of a new day.

He lived many years after the close of this war, that had made what seemed to be a hopelessly divided country into one of growing power, respected by all the world, and as these years passed, he realized how little the generation that was growing up about him, accepting conditions so complacently, knew how much they had cost . . . The young men who had died during the war had not paid. Death had ended all for them. It was the lost men: those who had enlisted in immature years, who had formed habits of intemperance, of idleness, acquired a lax code of morals . . . Those who had failed from lack of education, and training in formative years.

Some of these were gathered in Soldier's Homes, waiting for their one holiday a month, when their pension was due. Others, wearing their Veteran Buttons, were living on the charity of relatives, or eking out a miserable existence, welcoming anyone who might listen with tolerant amusement to their stories of heroic exploits . . . These were given a place of honor, once a year, in some public hall, where children shrilled "The Star Spangled Banner", and some local lawyer or preacher, made a speech to an audience of women. And he knew that this, too, would soon be a thing of the past, and taps would sound for all.

He knew it was human to forget. He had not lived in the past: his life had been too

full of active interests, and work; but as he neared the end, he lived over again his army days. His thoughts turned back to the friends who had died in sickness, and battle; the old, shattered men about him he remembered as young, and full of vigor, as they had been during that march through Georgia, and he wanted to do something to perpetuate their memory.



Sewall Farwell at Savannah

SAVANNAH

By the 10th of December, Sherman's army had reached the defenses of Savannah, and had surrounded the city as nearly as it was possible to do so. When the position of the defenses were fully reconnoitered, General Sherman gave the command to General Hazen to march, with his division, directly down the Ogeechee River to take Fort McAllister. This was the first step to be taken, as Sherman knew that a fleet was supposed to be waiting for his arrival, with supplies for his army, and was prevented by this fort from coming up the river.

On the afternoon of the Tenth, Sherman and his staff, at a point where they could see the Rebel flag flying, from this fort, detected a faint cloud of smoke on the river. Soon a smokestack of a ship appeared, and then the flag of the United States was visible. A signal from the boat asked if Fort McAllister was taken . . . The answer was, "No, but it will be in a moment."

Then came the signal from General Hazen, that Sherman had been so impatiently watching for, saying that he was ready. Sherman signaled, "Go ahead." Fort McAllister sprang to life. The big guns belched forth smoke and thunder . . . The United States' colors were down, but up again in a moment. Then the parapets were blue with Union

men. Fort McAllister was taken, and the news signaled at once to the boat on the river.

General Sherman found General Hazen, after the attack, at the McAllister plantation. Here he had supper with him, and they had as their guest the captured commander of the fort. Afterwards they visited this fort, where they saw sleeping soldiers, hardly to be distinguished from the dead, as they lay side by side, in the moonlight.

General Sherman, accompanied by General Hazen, were then taken down the river in a row boat, where they boarded one of the ships of the navy . . . Here Sherman learned that Grant was still besieging Petersburg, and Richmond, that Hood, and Thomas were still facing each other at Nashville, and that military affairs were about as they were a month ago, when he had left Atlanta.

All thoughts had seemed to be turned to the march in Georgia. No official news from his army had been received. The southern papers had reported his army to be harassed, defeated, and starving, fleeing for safety to the coast. Although the Government had not been greatly disturbed by these wild reports, those in the North, who had husbands, sons, or brothers in this march had suffered great anxiety . . . Sherman now could send official dispatches telling of the safety of his men. In a few days he would send his famous dispatch to President Lincoln: "I beg to present to you, as a Christmas present, the city of Savannah, with 150 heavy guns, and plenty of ammunition, also about 25,000 bales of cotton."

But before this, Thomas had crushed Hood at Nashville. This made the march to the sea an assured success. Together they had broken down the military power of the South, and hastened Grant's capture of Lee's army, and the end of the war.

Anderson's Plantation,
Near Savannah, December 15,
1864

My Dear Wife,

After silence of more than a month, I again have the privilege of writing to you. Mail communication has not yet been opened with the North, but I think it cannot long be delayed. The capture of Fort McAllister makes the way clear for vessels to reach us. We have plenty of food, but we are in need of other things.

We left Atlanta the 15th of November, and marched in the direction of Macon, meeting with no opposition until the railroad was crossed, about ten miles out of town. Here the rebels attacked the 2nd Brigade of our division, and were repulsed, with great loss to them. Our own loss was about fifty men, many of whom were from the 2nd Iowa. Our Brigade was not in the fight.

As we marched we found plenty of sweet

Many carried household goods into the swamps

potatoes, hogs, cattle, and other provisions, so the greatest of plenty prevailed in camp the most of the time.

Savannah is level, and surrounded by swamps. The timber is almost exclusively pine. The people we came in contact with on our march were mostly poor and ignorant. Nearly all of them had the greatest fear of the Yankees, and supposed their dwellings would be burned, and themselves outraged in every possible way. Many carried their household goods and valuables into the swamps and hid them for safety, where they were found by foraging parties. The army marched by so many divisions, and different roads that many who were running away from one column, would find themselves caught by another. It is truly a terrible thing to have a hostile army pass through a country, and I hope that Iowa may never have to bear that affliction.

I would like to see my family so much, and had we remained near Atlanta, I would have made another effort to get away to see you, but now I must give up the idea, and wait until my term of service expires . . . Our communications with the North were cut off before I could get my money, and I hope that Marcus has sent you enough to make you comfortable. If he has not you may have suffered some inconvenience. I do hope not . . . I am so anxious to hear from you, and we certainly will have a mail in a few days.

We are camping eight miles southwest of Savannah. The town is in about such a position as Vicksburg was in before its capture. It must fall soon. It is supposed that there are a large number of negroes, and refugees in the city, and they will be out of provisions. The weather is pleasant, with few cold days or nights. Affectionately, S. S. Farwell.

Savannah, Georgia
December 17th,
1864

Dear Brother Marcus,

Although we have not had a chance to send letters we received a mail last night, which brought me three letters from you, and a large number of papers . . . Before this time General Sherman has communicated with the Government, and the North, announcing the safe arrival of his army at this point.

The fleet came up the Ogeechee River yesterday, with the mail, and rations for the army. The former was never more welcome, or the rations more needed by a portion of the army. In our division there has been no suffering owing to the facilities here for foraging, but in some divisions of the army there were some hungry soldiers. We now have an unfailing source of supplies by way of the river, and the capture of the place is certain, I think without any bloodshed. We are in plain sight of the city.

On our march we had some hard days, but on the whole they were not hard . . . nothing to compare with our chase after Hood. The country from Atlanta to Macon was good, and there was abundance of provisions. Ten miles from that place we struck the railroad, and here was the only severe fighting on our march. Our Brigade formed a rear guard, while the rest of the army moved on to destroy the tracks. The rebels were soon repulsed, with severe loss to them.

From Macon east the country is heavily timbered with pine. It took nearly all of the corn raised to supply the mules and horses of the army. Our foragers were often fifteen miles from the main body of the troops. The army extended out over sixty miles in width. Horses and mules enough were captured to replace the poorer ones, and thus kept the teams in fine condition.

The rebels troubled the army very little . . . They seemed to be powerless to resist our advance, and kept themselves well out of the way. Colonel Jenkins, being our field officer, the major being absent, appointed me to take his place, so I had a horse to ride, and was relieved of the labor of marching.

I received eight drafted men in Atlanta, and there were more who wished to come into my company, but the most of those drafted were assigned to places, without consulting their wishes.

I hope to be able to send you my money soon. We were paid in 7.30 bonds, drawing interest from August 15th. The most of the soldiers took them without grumbling.

I have heard from Linda and the children, and am so thankful that they are well. The boys are reading the papers eagerly. This morning, the Eighteenth, we are very short of things to eat.

Your brother, S. S. Farwell

Savannah was an old city, before the war prosperous, and wealthy. It was built on an elevation forty feet above sea level, and overlooked the ocean. In the streets, and parks, were fine shade trees, the beautiful live oaks draped with gray moss. Its houses were substantial, and roomy, mostly built of red brick, set in deep shady yards . . . In the city was a monument erected in honor of Count Pulaski, who was killed in 1779, at the time of the Revolutionary War, when England was in possession of the city.

Sherman had completely surrounded the city on the north, south, and west sides, but there remained in General Hardee's possession an old plank road, leading to South Carolina. Sherman knew that General Hardee, who was in command of the southern forces in Savannah, would have a pontoon bridge across the river, and while Sherman was making plans to capture this road, and capture Hardee's army, that General, after blowing up his ironclads, and navy yard, managed to escape across the river, leaving the heavy

guns, stores, cotton, railroad cars, and a vast amount of ammunition, and public property, behind him . . . General Sherman was sorry to have him escape with his army, but had great reason to be satisfied with the result. The river was cleared of torpedoes, and from that time Savannah became a depot of supplies for his army.

Savannah, Georgia,
December 26, 1864

My Dear Wife,

I suppose that you have heard before this of the fall of Savannah, and its occupation by our forces.

We entered the town on the Twenty-first, and everything is moving along quietly, as if there had never been a contest for the city . . . Yesterday I attended church. A great many citizens, and ladies were present, sitting in the same pews with the Yankee soldiers. After the service a collection was taken for the Orphan Asylum, and greenbacks, and Confederate bills, went into the box together. As our men remarked, "It did not seem as though we were enemies."

The soliders were welcomed to the service, and I believe, when the war is over, there may be less bitter feeling between these people and us than there was before. At any rate, the people of the South will have learned to respect us, and no longer think of us as poltroons, and cowards.

I received a letter from you dated December 1st, and was relieved to hear of the continued good health of yourself, and the babies . . . I have sent money to Marcus, and he will now send you all that you need . . . You must pardon me for not telling you to get a new cloak. I consider you abundantly capable of deciding what you need. I know that you will look very pretty in your new clothes, for your taste in dress is good. I want you to have some photographs of yourself and the children taken. The likenesses I have are scratched, and pretty well used up in carrying.

The ladies of Savannah dress much better than those in the North, or the interior of the state. It has been a place of great wealth, and many of the citizens are supposed to have gold deposited in England to live on, should the rebellion prove a failure. The poor are all loyal to the Union.

We will now prepare for another campaign, for there is little hope that the leaders of the rebellion will listen to reason, and return to the Union, before the country is one vast ruin, with scarcely a remnant of its former civilization.

What did you have for Christmas dinner? I had fresh oysters. Only think of that! They were fried, stewed, and made into pie . . . I had the audacity to swallow a couple of them raw, but cannot say that I liked them that way.

'Savannah now completely cut off from railroads'

I hope that you are having a pleasant time during the holidays. I am very busy with reports, but life is dull in camp . . . The war news is cheering, and it may be a year from now there will not be an armed rebel in the land.

Tell Mary and Luna that Papa is now where he sees lots of little girls, some white, and some black. The black little girls love to play just as the white little girls do, but their hair is short and woolly, and it does not look as though their mothers combed it very often . . . Don't you wish that you could see them, and run and play with them, too? . . .

Today I saw a great, big boat, that had come all the way from Boston, and I thought how nice it would be to go on that boat, and take a ride with my little girls.

Affectionately Yours,
S. S. Farwell.

Savannah, Georgia,
January 3rd, 1865.

Dear Brother Marcus,

The citizens here seem friendly, and the streets are alive with well dressed ladies, frequently accompanied by Union officers . . . They have had no idea of the strength, and power, of our army . . . General Sherman has had a review of all the troops, and at first the people mistook a single corps, for the whole army . . . This army makes a great display of strength, and efficiency.

If Georgia still continues in the rebellion, these people will have to move away, as Savannah is now completely cut off from railroads, and the farms for seventy miles around are desolated. The men who took the slave states out of the Union, are now meeting a terrible punishment. The most bitter hater of treason feels that Georgia has suffered enough for her crime, but the army is anxious to move into South Carolina, that hotbed of treason. Its people need expect no mercy, for I fear none will be given. Our northern soldiers feel that it is only justice that the men who caused all this suffering and misery should now meet their well deserved doom.

The army is in excellent condition. The hospitals are empty, and doctors have nothing to do. We drill daily, the discipline is excellent, in equipment, and in every way, this army is ready for active service, and can go from one end of the Confederacy to the other, in spite of any opposition the enemy can bring against it.

It is rumored that General Sherman feels that the war will be over in the spring. It is now much more important to the South that peace should come, than for us. But our work will not be done until South Carolina shall feel the iron heel of the Union army, as Georgia has done.

S. S. Farwell.

Savannah, January 9th, 1865

My Dear Wife, -- We are about to start

again on a march, rumor has it, over four hundred miles towards Richmond . . . it is supposed we go to Beauford, South Carolina, and start on this campaign from there . . . I hope that I may have opportunities to send mail from time to time, but, if I do not, you must not allow yourself to be troubled about me. It will do no good, and the same kind Power, that has preserved me through so many dangers, will still watch over, and protect me, in the future, as in the past.

I attended the Episcopal Church in the morning, yesterday, and the Baptist Church in the evening. It has been a great pleasure to attend church again, having been without that privilege for so long . . . The churches here have been very wealthy, and are provided with fine organs, and have good vocal music. The ministers seem to be talented men, and preach the gospel in all its purity . . . would that they had always done so.

I think there must have been a thousand soldiers in the audience at the Baptist church in the evening. They were very attentive, and I should think coming in contact with such men would make the people realize something of their character. They were led to think that all from the North were mean, and vile.

The exposure of the year has effected me but little. It is really strange that it is so. Lying on damp ground, at the edge of swamps, in the midst of decaying vegetation, I had no hope of escaping ague . . . What the next months will bring forth, I do not know, but hope for the best . . . My next letter will be written from Beauford, South Carolina.

Affectionately yours,
S. S. Farwell.

FROM SAVANNAH TO COLUMBIA

At the time of its capture there were about twenty thousand inhabitants in Savannah. These now were given the option of staying in the city under martial law, or joining their friends of the Confederacy. About two hundred persons, families of soldiers in the army, prepared to follow the fortunes of their relatives, and were sent under a flag of truce in a steamer to Charleston Harbor. But the majority of the people stayed in Savannah.

A new line of parapets was laid off, so a small garrison of soldiers could hold the place. General Geary was made military governor, schools continued open, churches were well attended, stores reopened, markets were established, the poor received regular rations, there were pleasant relations between the soldiers and the people, and the whole government of the place was admirable.

When Sherman, at last, received word from General Grant that he should march north through South Carolina, and then on to make a junction with him at Richmond, he moved his army to Beaufort by sea. It

was a short voyage, but many of his soldiers, even in that short while, were seasick. They begged their general never again to send them to sea, saying, with mild exaggeration, that they would rather march a thousand miles on the worst roads of the South, than spend a night on the ocean . . . Sewall Farwell, however, wrote of this trip as a pleasant experience.

Beaufort, South Carolina
January 18, 1865

My Dear Wife,

Since writing to you last I have had a voyage on the ocean, and now my feet rest on the scared soil of South Carolina.

We embarked on the gunboat, Pontiac, a few miles below Savannah, and were five and a half hours steaming around to this point. We went out into the ocean about ten or twelve miles where the water was deep and blue. A large number of vessels were in sight, some close at hand, some with the sails just showing.

I found that the ocean looked about as I have pictured it in my mind. It was a pleasant experience, and will have its place among the most pleasant of my army life.

Beaufort is an old town, and has many fine residences, where the slave-holding nabobs used to live. Rhett formerly lived here, and citizens point out the place where treason was hatched, and the rebellion had its birth.

The whole town has been confiscated by the Government, and the properties sold. Enterprising Yankees have bought these places, and spruce New England dames are to be seen on the streets, and at church. I suppose they are getting rich, or they would not be willing to live among such a body of negroes, as are here.

Many women have come here as missionaries, and have opened schools. I attended a negro Sabbath school last Sunday, and also heard General Townsend talk to the children, which was very nice, only the little nig's were very noisy, while he was speaking, and I could not help but think how differently our regiment would have listened to his remarks, had he come out to our camp, and addressed us. It was not exactly casting pearls before swine, because negroes are not swine.

The army is being concentrated ten or fifteen miles out of this point, and soon we probably will be ordered to the front, where it may be difficult for me to write you . . . I received a letter from you written New Year's Day, and suppose that you received one from me shortly after. I hope that you may not have another long period to wait for letters from me while I am in service.

I would like to take a look in at you, and the babies with the red cheeks, but cannot do this for sometime to come . . . If you recognize the homely man, whose likeness I am sending, and wish to keep the picture,

Rivers were turned into lakes, and swamps into quagmires

You can do so. You might get a case, with glass, so as to keep the said man's features from being scratched by the babies.

Affectionately Yours,
S. S. Farwell.

Sherman started on his northern march with practically the same army, and equipment, he had brought from Atlanta to Savannah. But it was now the rainy season in the south, and they had hardly started when the Savannah River burst its dikes, and the whole country was flooded. Rivers

were turned into lakes, and swamps into quagmires. The roads had to be corduroyed, only to be washed out again. Washed out and destroyed bridges had to be rebuilt, where the streams were too wide they could not be spanned by pontoons. The men waded for miles in icy water, sometimes up to their waists.

They were harassed by the enemy, the cavalry constantly fighting, the infantry skirmishing, and driving them from entrenchments by outflanking them. In spite

of all these difficulties, they moved steadily on, making an average of ten miles a day.

General Johnson had been appointed by Lee to command all the Confederate forces in these parts. As he watched them, it is no wonder that he decided that there had been no such army since the days of Julius Caesar . . . From a military view, this march was without much incident until Columbia was reached, on the 17th of February.

(To be continued)

Letters: trails grow dim . . .

The following letter was passed to the Historical Society:

To Monticello Chamber of Commerce
Monticello, Iowa 52310
Gentlemen:

Recently I noticed in the Galena Gazette (Illinois) under Historical Happenings in past times that on Feb. 6, 1880, General John O. Duer was elected mayor of your town. I am interested in tracing his whereabouts after the Civil War.

There have been many stories concerning him. One was that it was not known where he died. I am hoping that perhaps you can tell me.

Did he die in your town and if so is he buried there? I know many persons who are interested in the generals who were with Grant in his campaigns. Duer was one of them and I would dearly love to know more about him. Thanking you for your courtesy in this matter.

Sincerely
Mrs. J. Gary (Alice) Barthell
618 Washington Ave.
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

Ed note: The necessary research was done by Society members and Mrs. Barthell received the information she needed. I quote from her reply,

"Thank you so very much for your letter with all the wonderful information about John O. Duer. I am most grateful to your Society for their courtesy.

This man has interested me greatly, and when I give my program on General Grant's generals, I will be able to tell much more about him. For some reason there has not been much information available about him in this area.

Thanks, Alice Barthell."

I am seeking information concerning some Jones county residents of the period 1852 to 1875. They are:

JOSHUA CRAWFORD: born 1823 in

Pennsylvania, came to Jones county in 1852. He married ELIZABETH BENDER, born in Pennsylvania 1825. They were probably married in Pennsylvania. Their first two children were born in Illinois and the next eight in Jones county, Iowa.

A daughter Viola Crawford married JOHN MURRAY KIMBALL, son of ABNER M. KIMBALL and SARAH SPINNEY. All of these people lived in Jones county in Wyoming and Madison townships. The towns of Wyoming and Anamosa were their post offices.

I have the obituaries of Abner and Sarah which were printed in the Wyoming Journal. I need to know the names of the parents of JOSHUA CRAWFORD AND ELIZABETH BENDER, and also of SARAH SPINNEY.

I have read the 1879 History of Jones County. The Benders and Crawfords mentioned are, I am sure, related because of some old letters I have. I am told that some people named FRENCH live on one of the Bender farms and may also be my relatives, but I do not have a first name for them.

It may be that the information I seek will be only in some family records. If you can not help me will you pass this letter on to a family member who may be able to help? I am a member of the Sun City Genealogy Society.

Willis A. Kerns
10621 Hazelwood Court
Sun City, Ariz. 85373

Dear Editor:

I am trying to locate the parents, ancestors and descendants of my great-grandparents. They are as follows:

My great grandparents: Horatio or Horace Stickley, born Feb. 23, 1822, in Virginia. Married to Sabra Jane Willison, born Aug. 13, 1829, in Ohio. She was of English descent.

Horatio or Horace, died Oct. 20, 1888, and was buried at Hickory Grove Cemetery in Jackson County, Iowa. Sabra died, Aug. 7, 1891, and was buried in the same cemetery.

Their son, John Stickley, is my grandfather, and following is the information I have about him and his wife. John (no middle name) Stickley, born Aug. 16, 1854, at Crab Mills, Jackson County. He married Martha Lucinda Clark, born Jan. 10, 1855, at Crab Mills, Jackson County. John died, Sept. 10, 1927, and is buried at Hickory Grove Cemetery. Martha died Dec. 25, 1934, and is buried at Hickory Grove Cemetery.

If anyone can help me locate the descendants, or has additional information, please write:

Mrs. Mae (Stickley) Strawn
4273 Lemon St. N. E.
Salem, Ore. 97303

Dear Editor:

I am tracing ancestors on my father's side and understand my grandmother was born in Madison Township, Jones County, Iowa, in the year 1871, Dec. 27. I imagine her mother and dad would have lived in that area around the 1860s to 1871.

The father's name was JAY SMITH and his wife's name was ELLEN KELLY. My grandmother's name was EMMA VIOLETTA, so I have been told by my aunt, although I have found on a birth record in Spokane, Wash., that the name was recorded as Lalta (could be short for Violetta).

Can anyone help in furnishing additional information from your area? My grandmother married CHARLES C. MYERS, who was born in Newton around 1889, but their first child was born in Jones County in 1891.

Thanks,
Carilda Myers Sones
Rt. 1, Box 56F
Clayton, Wash. 99110

President's message

Dear Subscriber:

Was the box on front page of the last issue, or this issue, marked "YOUR SUBSCRIPTION HAS EXPIRED," x'd out? All subscriptions expire with issue number four, so if you have received issue one of this volume, and the box is again marked, it is only because we know how easy it is to forget to renew and we are sure you don't want to miss any issue of this volume.

We have sent this issue out even though your subscription has expired. WE CAN'T SEND THE NEXT ONE, HOWEVER, nor do we send out "reminders." This little publication is printed and sold at COST, which doesn't leave us one extra penny for "reminder" postage.

Better send in your membership and subscription right now, before you forget it again. Remember, we have no extra copies for those that renew late. Send your check or money order in the amount of \$6 for the combination membership and subscription, or \$5 for subscription alone. Or, if you prefer to just be a member and not subscriber, the membership fee alone is \$2.

Remember, your Historical Society is non profit, every effort that goes into the Society and museum is volunteer, but it does take some green stuff to buy necessary supplies, pay the lights, insurance and phone. It takes 500 \$2 mem-

Judge Rees named to state board

The Jones County Historical Society proudly announces to its readers that a charter member of the society, Justice Warren J. Rees of Anamosa, was elected on July 1, 1980 to the State Historical Board of Directors. He will represent the Second District.

His term is for one year and he succeeds A. W. Allen. As an elected member of the State Historical Board, he is also a trustee of the State Historical Society.

Justice Rees attended the first meeting of the reorganization of the board at the Historical building in Des Moines July 23. He was appointed to serve as chairman of the policy and administrative rules committee, and also to serve on the research and development committee.

The Jones County Historical Society is extremely proud that one of its members has been elected to this important post.

berships just to pay these mentioned expenses. No money is made (in fact a little is lost) on the publication "Jones County Historical Review." With the cost of paper, printing, etc., even though The Express gives us a tremendous break, the fact we have less than 500 subscribers puts the per copy cost each issue at better than a dollar. We then have postage, etc., so there is never anything left.

RENEW NOW, BOTH YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTION. THE SOCIETY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT.

We are still looking for sources of material to use in the JONES COUNTY HISTORICAL REVIEW. Every community has a wealth of such material, whether it be human interest stories, or factual community historical anecdotes. Yes, it takes someone in each community to search these out and submit them for publication.

They do not have to be typed, have

correct spelling or punctuation. The good editor of The Monticello Express, Curt Diehm, like his predecessor Betty Wagner, has offered to help out on that score.

Just get the material to Box 124, Monticello, Iowa 52310 and we'll do the rest. We also need photos of Jones County's people, places and things, and they necessarily do not need to be from the 1800s. There are certainly a lot of stories from days of the depression of the 1930s, along with photos. Come on, get in the act and help keep this publication popular.

Incidentally, there's another humdinger of a human interest story coming out with the next issue. This has its setting in the Oxford Junction-Center Junction areas and is told by our regular contributor John C. Clark, and is titled "A FISHING TRIP 100 YEARS AGO THAT TURNS INTO AN ESCAPEDE."

Sincerely,
C. L. "Gus" Norlin, President

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