



NEWS 'N' NOTES

JONES COUNTY GEN. SOC.
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Forgotten Community

George Burrichter lives at the intersection of National and Church streets, but the Richland township farmer's mail comes addressed Route 3, Monticello.

And if you really want to get technical about it, the Burrichters don't live on the corner of National and Church streets. But if we could turn back some 75 years to the days when Jones county's first town, Bowen's Prairie, was still a growing community, George would probably be an inn-keeper instead of a farmer.

Plats of Bowen's Prairie, which straddled the Old Military road about 4½ miles northeast of Monticello, show that when Mr. and Mrs. Burrichter go about their farm chores they often walk on a driveway which many years ago was Church street in the pioneer Jones county town. Highway 151 which runs by their farm between Monticello and Cascade follows fairly closely the Old Military road and was called National street in the days of Bowen's Prairie.

HOUSE WAS AN INN

The Burrichter's home was once used as a roadhouse or inn and served for a time as the post office. And where the Burrichter's barn now stands was once the site of a hotel.

Bowen's Prairie landmarks have all but disappeared. Tombstones, somewhat hid by tall grass, still stand in the cemetery between the Burrichter and Clifford Decker farms. An old brick schoolhouse across the highway from the Burrichter farm has tumbled down, leaving only a pile of brick and wood.

The blacksmith shop, which once stood where the Burrichters have a garden, now is gone. Many houses and shops have disappeared. Huge

stones from the Congregational church's foundation were used in the foundation of the Burrichter barn. Bowen's Prairie had two creameries, the Diamond and Farmer's creameries, but both buildings have long been absent as landmarks.

ABOUT "SAILOR JACK"

The town's last non-farming resident, John Albert Holmes, a veteran of the Spanish-American war, died about 15 years ago. "Sailor Jack" and his wife, who was Susan Flint Raffety before her second marriage, are buried in the hillside cemetery where the wind blows swiftly through the aging pines. Mrs. Holmes, who died about 10 years before her hus-

band, was organist for the Congregational church and was postmistress for a time.

They lived in a house near the church. The war veteran's nephew, Bill Holmes, was in the process of taking lumber from the house to build another home for "Sailor Jack" in Monticello when his uncle died. That house now stands on East First street and is occupied by the Bill Michaels family.

South of the Burrichter farmstead stands a row of trees said to have been planted near the site where the Great Jones County fair had its beginning in 1853. A county-wide picnic was held on a hillside, that would have made a natural amphitheater for the fairgrounds.

WITHOUT RAILROAD, RIVER

Why did Bowen's Prairie disappear from the Jones county scene after a vigorous life of some 60 years after Hugh Bowen and John Flinn came to Iowa from Ohio in 1836 to seek a permanent home in the newly opened land?

There are probably two answers. Bowen's Prairie never got a railroad, though there were plans for an Interurban between Monticello and Dubuque, and it was without a river.

The Will Burrichters, who live in Monticello after retiring from the farm on which their son now lives, remember when rows of corn were cut so that surveyors could mark the route of the proposed railroad. But plans for the railroad were abandoned, leaving Bowen's Prairie without a drawing card.

The elder Burrichters also can remember when Bowen's Prairie was served by a stage that traveled between Monticello and Cascade.

Charmed by the "beautiful scenery, the fertile soil, the salubrious springs and other desirable attractions," Bowen, a bachelor, and Flinn chose the prairie upland between the north and south forks of the Maquoketa river as well fitted for farming. As others came to make their homes near theirs, the settlement soon acquired the name of its first settler.

PLAT STUDIED

After considerable investigation, George Specht, Jones county auditor, found that Otis and Harriet Whittemore were owners of the land in the original plat of Bowen's Prairie.

The plat was dated July 2, 1853, and filed for record Feb. 14, 1854.

This plat consisted of six blocks of land north of National street (now irregular size, blocks 1, 2 and 3 lying highway 151) and blocks 4, 5 and 6 lying south of National street.

Two years later, July 21, 1856, Otis Whittemore and Daniel Forrestall added 25 additional blocks to the plat. All together the re-plat of Bowen's Prairie included 31 blocks, also one block not numbered is shown as Park square. The town covered about 90 acres.

According to Recorder's Book 21, page 557, dated June 15, 1861, much of the area in the plat was vacated.

Streets north of National street running east and west are numbered First, Second, Third and Fourth streets. Streets running north and south are West Church, Park street, Center, Phenix, Summit, Prairie, Emerald and East streets.

Streets running east and west, south of National street, are Washington and Franklin.

Lands included in the plat are now owned by George Burrichter, Len Buol and Dorenz Allamand.

TOWN'S DEVELOPMENT, DEATH

How Bowen's Prairie developed, steadily increased in population and then gradually slumped is told in the following passages taken from the

July 1928 "Killian's Store News," published in Cedar Rapids. The information is believed to have first appeared in "The Palimpsest," Iowa State Historical society magazine the same year.

Hewing down the trees on the site they had chosen for their home, Bowen and Flinn constructed the first log cabin in the neighborhood. The structure did not long stand alone, for other men who were also seeking greater opportunities came from the east and joined the two hardy pioneers.

Among these early patriarchs of the prairie were Moses Collins, Charles and Joshua Johnston, Alfred Weatherford, Thomas Denson, Gillespie Laughlin, Franklin Dalby, and Thomas Dickson. They were a rugged lot, with a vigor and determination that characterized the future generations on Bowen's Prairie.

Some of these early settlers were heads of families, while others, like Bowen himself, were bachelors. One of the latter group, William Moore, was not to remain single long, for he was courting Elvira Neal. The affair culminated in their marriage in 1837, and the tongues of both men and women buzzed with pleasurable excitement over the first wedding on the prairie. Happiness was predominant, overcoming trifling difficulties.

OUTSIDE JURISDICTION

The ceremony was to take place on Bowen's Prairie, and Jacob Hamilton, a justice of the peace at White-water in Dubuque county, promised to officiate. Dressed in his best homespuns, he came to the scene of the wedding on the appointed day, only to realize that he was outside his jurisdiction!

The bride and bridegroom were momentarily disconsolate; it looked as if the wedding must be postponed. But the bride's face brightened when the justice suggested that the wedding be transferred to a spot just over the Dubuque county line, three or four miles distant. Accordingly Mr. Moore and Miss Neal, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Dickson, the only attendants, walked along the narrow road to the

neighboring county. With the blue sky as canopy, and a group of massive oak trees as a background, the marriage vows were exchanged. The only music was the song of thrushes, the only flowers, woodland blossoms—yet it is hard to imagine a more romantic setting. How much more beautiful and impressive was the ceremony than if it had been performed in the dimness of a log cabin!

FIRST WHITE CHILD BORN

The first white child born in Richland township was Martha Ann Dixon, whose birth occurred in 1839. Mary E. Moore, born April 12, 1840, was the second. Her parents were the couple who had been married in the out-of-door ceremony two years before. Mary Moore grew to young womanhood on Bowen's Prairie, was married to Thomas A. King, and later moved to live with her son at West Union.

While Bowen's Prairie was still young, political development of Iowa territory made elections necessary. The first election on Bowen's Prairie took place in 1838, in the cabin of Barrett Whittemore, who had just come from New Hampshire. Whittemore, later known as "the old schoolmaster of the prairie," was one of the most active workers in building up the settlement. When ground was broken at Iowa City in May, 1839, for the foundation of the Old Stone Capitol, it was Barrett Whittemore who was the plowman.

At this first election, 11 votes were cast. On Aug. 5, 1839, a general election was held, and Hugh Bowen was named as the first sheriff of Jones

county. One candidate for justice of the peace was accused of not being able to spell or sign his name. Denying the charge, he proceeded to show the voters he could qualify, and when he spelled Daniel "Danil," he produced an affidavit that he had always spelled his name that way.

MILITARY ROAD BUILT

In 1839 the sight of United States soldiers constructing the military road from Dubuque to Iowa City became familiar to the Bowen's Prairie settlers. In May the surveying engineers passed through the prairie locating the highway substantially where it now passes. James L. Langworthy of Dubuque was in charge of the construction of the road.

In later years the Jones county fair was established on Bowen's Prairie, and an incident that took place during August, 1839, was perhaps a forerunner of this annual exhibition. Charles Johnston and Alfred Weatherford wagered a gallon of whisky on the outcome of a horse race. Their horses were to run eight

rods to a "stake and rider" fence. The contest was exciting. As the horses neared the goal, Johnston slackened the pace, but Weatherford, with an eye on the whisky jug, kept on "with all the madness of a Calmuck Tartar." Within 20 feet of the fence his horse slipped, throwing the rider and demolishing the fence. However, Weatherford was jubilant, for he won the whisky.

POPULATION 475 IN 1840

Bowen's Prairie became a separate election precinct on July 6, 1840. In the same year Hugh Bowen was appointed to take the official census.

His report showed 290 males and 185 females residing on land which four years before had been inhabited only by Indians.

Barrett Whittemore constructed the first schoolhouse on the prairie, completing it on Oct. 19, 1840, and taught the 29 pupils who enrolled in the first session, which opened on June 21, 1841. This term lasted until March 4, 1842, with but two vacations. The tuition was \$3 a quarter, except for children under seven years, for whom the rate was \$2.50. For many years Whittemore continued as schoolmaster, teaching the settlers' children.

For years the schoolhouse was also the center of community activities; "spell downs," singing schools, and elections were held within its walls. The settlers were of a social nature, and glad to break the routine of pioneer life with neighborhood gatherings.

In June, 1841, the schoolhouse was the scene of the first of a series of religious meetings conducted by the Rev. Ira Blanchard, a Baptist minister from Castle Grove township. He made appointments to preach there every fourth Sunday, and at his second meeting on July 24th, about 75 persons were present, the largest number assembled in Jones county up to that time. Some of the audience came 15 miles to hear the sermon. John Gillman had conducted the first religious service on Bowen's Prairie on Feb. 28, 1838, and preached every three weeks thereafter.

Gradually Bowen's Prairie was coming in closer contact with the rest of the middle west. In 1840 the weekly mail was still brought on horseback over the new military road, but in 1844 Frink and Walker started a four-horse stage coach which ran daily from Dubuque to Iowa City. The arrival of the stage was always an important event, and both driver and passengers were questioned eagerly for news from the east.

POST OFFICE ESTABLISHED

It was not until March 24, 1849, that a post office was established at Bowen's Prairie. Hitherto mail had been addressed to Cascade. Ebenezer Little was appointed the first postmaster, his home serving as an office. The mail itself was kept in a walnut secretary.

Mr. Little was of Puritan descent, and possessed an uncompromising conscience. At one time Mrs. F. M. Hicks, his daughter, received a newspaper from a New York man who enclosed his written card, but Postmaster Little would not let her read the paper until the sender had forwarded extra postage for the written matter.

News of the gold in California rang in the ears of many Bowen's Prairie men, who saw this as a means of obtaining capital to improve their farms. Not a few groups assembled supplies, and resolutely set out for the west during the late forties. Many of the gold seekers crossed the western prairies directly, while others went back east and took the water route to California, going around Cape Horn, or crossing the Isthmus of Panama by foot. The majority went by water at least one way.

Some of the gold seekers were lost, but most of them returned safely to their Iowa home after absences of from 18 months to two years. Not were their journeys fruitless, for several washed enough gold to buy fertile farm land and build substantial homes.

The return of the Iowans from California marked the beginning of the most successful decade for the prairie settlement. The men began to farm in earnest; they were no longer pioneers, but residents of a settled community. They considered conveniences and improvements for which previously they had neither time nor money.

CHURCH ERECTED

The building of the Bowen's Prairie Congregational church in 1853-1854 was one of the first signs of community development. A Bowen's Prairie Congregational society was therefore organized on April 2, 1853, and in October, the foundation for a church building was laid. By the following June the structure was completed and dedicated with appropriate services. The first pastor was the Rev. E. Wright of Anamosa, who with four other men and five women constituted the list of charter members.

The choir at one time was composed of 60 voices with Otis Whittemore as director, and their singing brought visitors from all parts of the county. The steeple of the church contained a bell which called the congregation to worship every Sunday. Part of the funds for the bell were contributed by Asa Bowen, Otis and Barrett Whittemore, and other men, while an additional \$100 was raised at a bell festival.

Otis Whittemore, who had donated the land for the church site, also gave a plot to the Methodist congregation for a building place in 1858. The Rev. Mr. Briar, who had been conducting Methodist services as a circuit rider, found a sufficient number of worshippers to start a definite organization.

CHURCH FORMS NUCLEUS

It was the Congregational church, however, which formed the nucleus for the actual settlement which today is pointed out as the Bowen's Prairie of the past. New houses were grouped around it, with the steeple towering above the other buildings as an inspiration.

The cemetery was a short distance to the east, and in 1854 Otis Whittemore opened a store near-by, at which he sold dry goods and groceries for many years. C. G. Banghart was at one time proprietor of another store. In 1853 the immediate territory around the church was divided into lots, and again on July 21, 1856, another plat of 100 lots was recorded.

Thus Bowen's Prairie began to assume the outward appearances of a town, although a portion of the residents lived in a radius of four or five miles. The village was never incorporated.

CIVIL WAR TURNING POINT

The Civil War was perhaps the turning point in the growth of Bowen's Prairie. Until the sixties the community had been constantly increasing in population and prosperity, but the onrush of the war, with increasing calls for enlistment, checked the development temporarily. Afterward, Bowen's Prairie seemed unable to recuperate.

Until July 19, 1861, Jones county had sent no company of its own to the Union army. Four men from Bowen's Prairie — Howard Smith, Orin Crane, Theodore Hopkins and Isaac White — had enlisted in Cap-

tain William E. Lettingell's mounted company. "Their departure for the seat of war was the occasion of a very pleasant scene which occurred at their rendezvous in the beautiful grove near the residence of Otis Whittemore. The Home Guards of Bowen's Prairie escorted them some miles on their way, after a solemn leave-taking."

On the same date the following month, a newly organized company of Jones county volunteers met at Clark's grove near Monticello, for the presentation of a flag by the women of Bowen's Prairie. Men from Scotch Grove, Clay township, and other communities arriving during the morning, after partaking of a dinner furnished by the landlord of the Monticello House formed a procession of 64 teams. The parade went to the grove with banners flying and drums beating, and was met by a procession from Bowen's Prairie.

Emma Crane, representing the women of Bowen's Prairie, presented the flag with a "flowery and fiery" speech, exhorting the soldiers to be loyal to the Union and to be courageous in battle. Captain David Harper gave the acceptance with a pledge that his men would return with the flag or on it.

MORE VOLUNTEERS CALLED

Similar incidents followed, as the calls for volunteers became more frequent and insistent. The majority of Bowen's Prairie residents were intensely loyal, but a few who criticized

the Union were compelled "by hempen persuasion" to take the oath of allegiance. While the men were in the South fighting for their country, the women and old men operated the farms, and in their spare time the women scraped lint for use in military hospitals.

The days after the close of the war when the husbands and fathers were reunited with their families were joyous occasions. Tales of heroism and suffering were related to eager wives and children. A reunion for Jones county soldiers was held on Aug. 14, 1865, at Clark's grove, the same place which the men had left three and four years before with heavy hearts. A large southern flag captured in Columbia, South Carolina, was proudly displayed by Company H of the Thirty-first Iowa Infantry, whose roll carried many of the Bowen's Prairie soldiers.

But the trials of the war were soon forgotten in the zeal to renew farming activities. The men had perhaps aged more than their years implied, but they had a quickened interest in their homes and the welfare of their families.

Interest in education grew. Many of the farmers sent their sons to Lenox college at Hopkinton after they finished the district school, while others enrolled in the Iowa State college of Agriculture and Mechanic arts at Ames. The general custom was for these young men to attend college a term, and then teach a country school for a like period.

BUILD CHEESE FACTORY

Farming was established on a sounder basis; the men began to raise better stock and to plan their work more scientifically. In 1867 the Ross cheese factory was started on Bowen's Prairie near the residence of F. M. Hicks. It was a two-story building, 26 by 100 feet in size, and as "neat and tidy as an old maid's band box," according to a represen-

tative of the Monticello Express, who visited the place. The factory received the milk of 150 cows, and manufactured as much as 400 pounds of cheese a day.

The period of reconstruction, however, was not conducive to general prosperity, and while the Bowen's

Prairie residents were financially able to weather the period of hard times, the settlement as a whole did not progress. Furthermore, the first settlers were growing old, and as the sixties and the seventies slipped by, they dreamed of spending their declining years in well-earned rest and comfort. As a result many removed to Monticello, while a few went to Cascade. In both towns they built fine homes and did much to improve the communities.

Their farms were sold to energetic young Germans who had migrated to the United States and Irish farmers who had been living in the Cascade and Dubuque neighborhoods. The influx of Germans was noticed particularly in 1868, when a German Reformed church was built in Richland township on the south edge of the Bowen's Prairie district. The Rev. George Rettig was the pastor. After a few years the organization of the church was changed to German Presbyterian.

Even in 1879 the Congregational church on the prairie was passing into disuse, and was transferred back to the building society. In a few more years it was closed entirely, except for an occasional funeral, most of the members having affiliated with the Monticello Congregational church. The building was eventually sold, the bell being purchased by the Golden Congregational church at Buck Creek in Delaware county.

SHOTGUN UNDER HER ARM

When a group of men from that community came to remove the bell, they were halted in the church yard by an old woman who lived in the shade of the house of worship. With a shotgun under her arm, she defied the men to enter the church, and it was only after considerable pacification that she relented.

The post office department records the official death of Bowen's Prairie on Nov. 19, 1902, when the village post office of Bowen — the latter part of the name had been removed in June, 1883 — was discontinued. For some years the office had been virtually inactive, but the establishment of rural routes from Monticello and Cascade made its use entirely unnecessary.

Jones County School Status.
From the Jones County Teacher.
Josephine Foley is a beginner at Hazel Green.

Ernie Lamb, of Chin, is teaching her first term at Pleasant Hill.

The Bunker Hill school in Chin has been equipped with a new slate board.

Prin. Burrell, of Oxford, reports the largest enrollment his school has ever enjoyed.

Kenneth D. Miller has just recovered from a severe sickness. He will be able to teach a winter school.

Gertrude Lang has discontinued teaching for some time. She is enrolled as a student in the Iowa State Normal.

At Center Junction, Oscar Gillilan, Cornell '00, is at the helm. He enters upon his work with great promise of success.

Ex-Principal Stinson has been spending the summer months in Europe. He expects to enter the ministry of the Methodist church.

The many friends of Professor Betts will regret very much that the state of his health is such that he is unable to perform his duties at Mt. Vernon.

We were much pleased to see that the music instruction given at normal was bearing fruit in many places. Several of the teachers are anticipating the law.

The institute manuals sent out by the state department have been placed in the hands of the teachers. A part of the work indicated will be covered in the next institute.

Louie Mitchell has been elected to fill the vacancy in the Anamosa schools caused by the sickness of Miss Erwin. Nellie Young, of Monticello, will finish out her term in Castle Grove.

Since our last issue we notice that the following of the teachers have taken unto themselves husbands: Edna Young, A. R. Miller; Maude Armstrong, Delbert Chapin; Agnes Dennison, John Kennedy.

Prin. F. E. Fowlie and Carrie Paul were united in marriage during the summer at the home of the bride's parents in Onslow. They are at home to their friends at Stanwood, Iowa. We wish them much joy.

Stone City has as fine a new school house as you would find in a week's travel. Fred Sturtevant, a graduate of the Valparaiso Normal has charge of the upper room. Jessie McKean, of Springville, is the primary teacher.

The people of Wyoming are enthusiastic over their new principal, C. C. Gray. Prof. Gray, before his graduation at Cornell College, was at the head of the Center Point schools. He had instituted a new course of study bringing the school up to college requirements.

Express Finds Copy Of Letter About Bowen's Prairie Written In 1851

In gleaning material for the Way Back When column this week, the editor came across a short selection consisting of reprints of letters dated November and December 1851—exactly 100 years ago. Express readers will find them interesting. The entire article is reproduced as published in the issue of December 12, 1901.

BOWEN LONG YEARS AGO

Extracts from Letters Written from Bowen's Prairie in 1851

A friend who has access to the letters written by Mr. Curtis Stone from Bowen's Prairie to his parents in the East during the early 1850's furnishes us with the following extracts. Mr. Stone was an honored resident of that beautiful part of our county lying east of Monticello, during the active years of his life, and it is interesting to note his impressions of the country during an early day, not penned in a reminiscent mood forty years after, when they had been tinged by the results of progress, but written at the time.

November 12th, 1851. Curtis Stone left his home in Southern New Hampshire, his intended destination being Western New York. Forming the acquaintance, on the cars, of a man who was going to Western Illinois, he accompanied him. Writing to his parents November 15th, 1851, he says: "I have been 78 hours out, and find myself in Chicago, Illinois. Expect to leave tonight for Peru a hundred miles west. We took steamer Atlantic to Buffalo, reached Detroit safely after being on the lake nearly 20 hours, were then transported across Michigan by the Mich. Central R. R. Later shipped aboard the steamer Pacific, 45 miles to this spot in 7 hours—owing to rough winds—usual time is four hours."

"December 18th, 1851—I am writing from Bowen's Prairie, Iowa, some 30 miles out from Dubuque. This prairie has the reputation of being the healthiest place in the state. I do not regret that I am west of the Mississippi. My search is more for the recovery of health than anything else. I think the atmosphere is more clear and dry than in the east. There is more rain, more sunshine. The people work less.

"The prairies are less level than in Illinois. I came out from La-Salle, Illinois, with Daniel Hoyt, who had a team. He volunteered to give me a bit of advice where to locate, which was: 'Be sure to stop at the first place that you think you will like.' They made their pitch at Geneseo, Henry County, Illinois, on a flat bottom prairie (pronounced pra-rar) away from any vestige of anything but the sky and prairie. I came on to Sister Lucy's at Rock Island. Reached there the 20th, then ascended the river by steamer to Galena, a city of much wealth,

derived from the mineral deposits in the surrounding hills. From Galena to Dubuque, some 15 or 16 miles by stage, we had to wait an hour for the horse ferry which had just started over from us. There were three gentlemen and a lady in the stage, the latter an assistant in a Mr. Rice's school in Dubuque, where we arrived November 22nd.

"I remained there several days. At length I came across Edmund Blodgett, who was in the city with pork and to buy lumber. I came out with him to Decon Otis Whittemore's, on what is called by the residents the prettiest prairie in the Prairie Kingdom. O. Whittemore keeps the stage house also.

"If the climate should agree with me I shall wish to remain the short time allotted to me. The timber is little better than scrub oak, and is called near if within five or six

miles. Split rails are used for fences, which they protect from prairie fires by drawing furrows. The want of stone—though there are quarries—as well as springs and little rills, is something of an objection. This prairie world is destitute of nearly all the necessary comforts of older countries. The first settlers claim to have been too poor to set out fruit trees or dig wells, etc., but ask great prices for what they term improvements."

Mr. Stone left Keene, New Hampshire, November 29th, 1852, with a Morgan horse, and made the trip to Bowen's Prairie a second time. May 1st, 1852, he wrote: "I have made some good purchases of land, I think. There are 30 acres under fence and cultivation of the 94 acres, 10 of which are woodland, a

short distance away. The situation, (This land is now owned by F. H. Hicks, and is opposite his old brick house), is central in our new town. A railroad is being located across it. It is on the Military road, established by the government between Dubuque and Council Bluffs on the Missouri River.

"The new Congregational meeting house which is going up this summer is located near one corner, very near Mr. Otis Whittemore's farm buildings. The other farm corners, save a few rods, on the opposite of meeting house corner. I paid \$770 for the railroad farm, which has on it an old log house, and \$1,000 for the mansion or hill farm of 140 acres and 40 acres of woodland at no great distance. On this farm I have a frame house, a good stable and 10 or 12 acres of spring wheat growing. I board with the family of Mr. Rice nearby. Interest here is not limited. As high as 20 or 25 per cent, and even greater. Is soon agreed upon, but 10 percent is more common."

November 15th, 1853, he was married in Vermont, returning immediately to Iowa and taking possession of the hill farm, where he lived until his death October 11th, 1879.

D. E. COOK.

Members and friends of the M. E. Sunday School to the number of one hundred and fifty held their annual picnic on the beautiful grounds familiarly known as the Hopkins place, Tuesday, July 20th. Swings, hammocks and a huge camp-fire, without which etceteras no picnic would be complete, added to the pleasure of the occasion, and a real mountain burr-tobacco belonging to Mr. Geo. Thomas furnished innumerable frog rides to the delighted children. But what makes a picnic a picnic is the dinner, and this one was remarkable, both for quantity and quality. The number of spring chickens that had proved themselves martyrs for the cause was beyond count and everything else was just as bountifully provided. Mr. E. J. Wood was captain-general of the day, ably assisted by Rev. L. L. Lockard and Mr. G. H. Monroe, so it goes without saying that had not the rain in the afternoon dampened the order of the picnics somewhat it would have proved one of the most successful picnics ever held by the Methodists.

28 July 1904
Ananias A. A. A.

Found in wall of home

Diary gives insight to life a century ago

A diary found a number of years ago in the wall of the Melvin Dickman house in Richland township, 4 1/2 miles northeast of Monticello, reveals some interesting facts of life more than 100 years ago.

The "find" came to light this spring when the Dickman's daughter, Trudy, brought the book to Monticello Community high school to use in a class project. Trudy is a 1966 graduate of MHS.

The diary is in exceptionally good condition even though silverfish have eaten the edges of some of the pages. Thanks to these silverfish the name of the writer of the diary, written on the first page, is not legible.

However, the date 1849 is listed on the page. The first entry in the book was made in February 1849 and the last entry was made Nov. 26, 1851.

Mrs. Dickman, who has read the diary several times, believes the setting was Virginia because of the names of some of the towns mentioned in the book. The diary is difficult to read because of the style of writing and type of spelling used.

A MYSTERY

If Virginia is the setting for the events enumerated in the diary's pages, then the mystery is how did it end, up in the wall of a farm house in Jones county, Iowa?

One speculation is that members of the writer's family came to Iowa and settled at Bowen's Prairie, bringing the book with them. The Dickman home is located where the village of Bowen's Prairie once stood.

Bowen's Prairie was settled in 1836 by Hugh Bowen and John Flinn, of Ohio. Two familiar names appear many times in the diary-- Bowen and Ballou.

Other names, still well-known today in this area, which appear in the book include: Aldrich, Adamson, Adams, Cook, Cass, French, Harkness, Martin, Nelson, Read, Thompson, Whitmore.

Regardless of the setting of the diary, it gives a clue to life more than 100 years ago. The writer is an old man who records daily events as he sees them. He mentions many times that he is "home lame today". Apparently his health is poor and he spends time in writing the diary.

SAME FORMAT

Each entry in the book follows the same style. The date is given as "April the 6 day", then a weather report follows, "Day Clear and Windy and Cold"; Then the writer continues with other

events: visitors who stopped by, business transacted, births and deaths of family and friends.

Peddlers apparently were regular visitors at the writers home, for he tells of their visits, of purchases made and of prices paid. He also mentions often Ellsha or John going to WoodBerry or some place else with some product which they sell or trade.

Among some prices listed are: onions at 50 cents for a half bushel; 124 lbs. of beef for \$6.20; eggs, 10 cents a dozen; alcohol, two quarts, 5 cents; molasses, 1 gal., 30 cents; two hens, dressed, 25 cents; black tea, 1 lb., 37 cents; ginger, 1/2 lb., 7 cents; honey, 9 pence per pound.

The writer often tells about John (perhaps a son?) going to the saw mill. Apparently this saw mill is John's livelihood. One entry on a Sunday, states, "John is gone to the saw mill, but what for I know not."

Some excerpts from the diary, with the original spelling, are given. Punctuation, absent in the diary, is added, to aid in reading.

DIARY ITEMS

April the 12 Day 1849--Clear and Windy and cold and John is gone to the saw mill to day. Ellsha Harkness is peddlin tin and mother brought six Brethaneu Ted spones and gave 30 cents.

April the 14 Day--Ilazy and 2 or

3 sq ball of snow this day and the coldest day that I ever knew at this time of the year. There is a drove of hogs to the Corners to sell. They say Ellsha and Henry Ballou are gone to the Corners to git some hogs.

April the 15 Day--Ilazy and colder than it was yistordy. It froze water in our citchon (kitchen) last night and froze milk in the back room (room) and froze water in a puddle hard. Alonza Balou come and stald 3 or 4 hours and Rufus Randa come and stald one hour and then went home and hear I am to home lame.

April the 16 Day Monday--- Cloudy and confoundet cold. I never saw the water froze up worse in December as I know there ant a pubble of water but what is froze almost sollad. The ground is froze on top almost as hard as a Rock.

April the 19 Day--Cloudy and snowed all the forenoon. I mesherd (measured) the snow at 11 o'clock and it was 7 inches deep and is snowed and it snowed till noon and then spt and this make 20 snows.

BUYS GOODS

April the 23 Day--Cloudy but rain any yet. Otis Whipple was hear this fore noon and I swapt

knives with him and I got the largest knife that I ever saw and it cost 2 Dollars amen. Mother went to the Corners and carried 6 pounds and a half pound of butter and got 11 yards of sheeting cloth and 1 pound of salarates and a half pound of tobocco. The whole come to 10 dollar and 26 cents.

April the 28 Day--Cloudy and cold and begins to mist a little at 3 o'clock. Baught 4 yards of denim to make me a pare of pantaloons and gave 46 cents for it.

April the 30 Day--Clear this morning but clouds up before night and the wind blows hard this after noon and I and mother went to the

Corners this day and carried 7 pounds of butter and got 12 cents pr. pound and got 8 yards of cloth for me a pare of shlrts and gave 10 c ts far every yard and got 3 quarts of molasses.

May the 1 Day-- . . . There is a honey pedler bin hear to day and I baught 2 pounds and half of honey and gave 25 cents and 1 oring and 3 lemons and I gave 10 cents for them and I sold my big kniffe to the pedler for 4 half dollars.

May the 8 Day-- Cloudy but dont rain. I drempt I found a nest of eggs-- got Obed to go in to the barn

SS, JUNE 30, 1866

and look and he did go thare I told him and found a nest with 9 eggs in it.

May the 27 Day Sunday-- Clear in the morning but clouds up before night and mother and Prude went to the Friends meeting to Day and said there was 20 folks to meeting, old and young, rich and poor, high and low, good and bad, and all. We movd our bed out of the citchen the 26 day May 1849.

LAST ENTRY

These are only examples of the entries in the book, which records the every day events in the lives of the people. On Aug. 22, 1851, the handwriting changes and the entry states that "father died today at age of 83 years, 8 days."

The new writer, perhaps John, continues the book until Nov. 26, 1851--the date of the last entry.

Mrs. Dicman has lived all her life in the farm house where the diary was found. The farm was formerly owned by her father, Ne-man Moore, and before that by her grandfather, Andrew Ambuehl, who purchased the farm about 1920.

Records, which Mrs. Dickman possess, shows that the first owner of the farm was Horatio W. Sandford. He purchased the farm from the U. S. on Nov. 26, 1847.

On June 14, 1849, he sold the farm to James Miller. Miller, in turn, sold to James Tibbitts on Feb. 25, 1850. The next owner was John Harkness, who bought the farm July 3, 1852--eight months after the last diary entry.

Is this the same John as was mentioned in the diary? No one knows today, of course, but it is

possible that he was: indeed the same John and that when he came to Bowen's Prairie the dairy came with him.

Then, somehow, the diary became lodged in the wall of the house. There it remained until 100 years later when the wall was torn out and the book was discovered, only to become a mystery in the pages of history.

Charles A. Coon Of Hale Died Thursday

1938.
HALE-- (Special) Mr. Charles Albert Coon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Norton J. Coon was born on a farm near Oxford Junction on January 18, 1872. On November 26, 1895 he was married to Miss Cora Tidelia Cave at Tipton, Iowa. They started their home life on a farm in Hale township. Mr. Coon retired from the farm 21 years ago, moving to Hale, Iowa where he made a home for himself and family until his death, February 24, 1938 at the age of 66 years, 1 month and 6 days, following a brief illness of bronchial pneumonia.

He was preceded in death by his wife, and two sons, Perry Arthur and Charles Vernon. He is survived by four sons, Fred of Hale, Floyd of Lisbon, Lawrence of Wyoming and Chester of Emporia, Kansas. Three daughters: Florence, Mrs. Fred Koranda of Wyoming, Iowa; Mae, Mrs. Albert Regenitter, Washta, and Irene, Mrs. Clyde Krenz, Massilon; Nineteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Three brothers and one sister: Herman Coon of Oxford Mills; Eugene Coon of Princeton, Iowa; Fred Coon, Hampton, Iowa; Mrs. W. A. Mott, Sr., Oxford Junction, Iowa.

Funeral services were held at the Hale M. E. church Monday afternoon, February 28, with Rev. O. J. Felter officiating.

A quartett composed of Oscar Kinler, Arthur Gilmore, Mrs. Felter and Mrs. Gerald Kruse sang "The Old Rugged Cross," "In The Garden" and "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere". Mrs. Kinler was pianist.

Pallbearers were: Archie Wood, W. D. Woolison, Ernest Behnke, Morris Tubbs, Bert Dea. and Clifford Jones.

Burial was made in Mayflower cemetery, Oxford Junction.

OBITUARY.

Amster K. Cook was born in Indiana, Jan. 1829, and died in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Dec. 5, 1904, aged near-ly 75 years.

Mr. Cook came to Iowa in 1855 and settled near Cascade, Dubuque county, where he married Miss Harriet Sommers. After a few years they removed to Langworthy, in this county, where he resided at the outbreak of the war of the rebellion, and where he enlisted in the 31st Regiment Iowa Volunteers. He served three years in the army and lost a limb in the battle of Lookout Mountain, on account of which he was honorably discharged from the army.

After the close of the war he returned to Cascade, where he resided about 20 years, thence removing to Missouri, and then to Sigourney, Iowa. While residing in the last named place his wife deceased about nine years ago.

Ten children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Cook, six of whom survive: Charles, of Boone, Neb.; James of Farley, Ia.; Frank, of Deep Water, Cal.; David, of Spooner, Wis.; Logan, of Stone City, Iowa; and George, of Granite, Idaho. Besides these, he leaves a sister, Mrs. Maria McClary, of Abamoa, and one brother, George, in southwestern Missouri.

His remains were brought to Anamosa on Tuesday morning the 6th and interred in Riverdale. The pall bearers were selected from the U. A. R. Post of this city, and the burial service was conducted by Rev. L. L. Lookard.

6 Dec 1904

Anamosa Area

15 April 1920

THE WYOMING JOURNAL, WYOMING, IOWA.

MRS. J. K. CONMEY.

Mrs. Mary Kimball was born at Troy Lake, Walworth county, Wis. Dec. 25, 1844, of Puritan ancestry, dating from 1637, and parted on from her material life, April 6th, 1920.

In early childhood she, with her parents, moved to Green County, Wisconsin, then, in 1856, to Jones Co., Iowa. The remaining 64 years of her life has been spent in this vicinity. She was married to John K. Conmey in 1868 and they immediately settled on the farm which has since been her home and in which she took so much pride. It was not much but prairie then, and they built themselves a little shack and went to work to make a home. Every building, every tree, everything that adorns the old home farm is an expression of their united efforts. John Conmey was promoted to the life beyond in 1913; but his faithful wife never mourned him as dead. She was still happy in the assurance of his presence, though she could not see him. The later years of her life were happy, and generally, free from care. Her cheerful and happy presence made her welcome wherever she went, and her happiness was infectious. In early life she became interested in Spiritualism; a close study convinced her of its truth and value, and she adopted the then new philosophy which is now accepted, after rigid test, by many of the world's great leaders in scientific and religious thought. Her tastes were simple, always interested in the important happenings of the times, yet she was content to do her own part well, in her home and community. Her motto, oft repeated, was "The work that is best is the work that is nearest."

She leaves in this life, two sons: Fred of this place, and Roy of Sergeant's Bluff; one sister and three brothers: Sarah J., Merrill and Marshall of this place, and Murray, of Norman, Oklahoma; besides other relatives and many friends.

The funeral was held from her late residence, conducted by Dr. Geo. B. Warne, of Chicago. The music, under the direction of Rev. E. Cornell Wilson, was impressive and appropriate. The floral offerings from

neighbors and friends were beautiful, the designs and their arrangement pretty, and the room was filled with their delicate fragrance. The casket was conveyed to the cemetery on the hill by her loving friends and her body tenderly laid to rest beside that of her late husband.

TO OUR FRIENDS:—Your kindly sympathy expressed by the gifts of beautiful flowers, words of comfort and acts of substantial assistance, has been a real comfort to us in our time of trouble. We thank you.

Fred Conmey and Family,
Roy Conmey and Family,

(born 25 July 1835)

THE WYOMING JOURNAL

JOHN K. CONMEY.

John Kane, son of James and Sarah Kane County, was born in Lockport, New York, July 25th, 1835. He removed with his parents in early childhood, to Sullivan county, Pennsylvania, where his father opened up a farm in the virgin forest of that state. John early learned to wield the ax, and did his full share of the hard work incident to clearing the farm of the heavy timber, and the roots and stones which covered the scanty soil. The typical log school house with punchon seats, backless and deskless, housed the children of the pioneers for four winter months each year. John supplemented these early educational advantages with diligent study at home every spare moment. He arose at 4:00 o'clock each morning during the winter months and by the light of the fire on the hearth read and studied until chorn time. He carried a book in his pocket while laboring in the field and kept his mind busy with problems while his hands guided the plow. Later he attended the teacher's institute, a normal school lasting six weeks each year, and taught school winters. In May, 1863, he went to Iowa, accompanied by his sister, Margaret, now Mrs. William A. Spangh, of Anamosa, Iowa. Mr. Conmey worked at farming summers and taught school winters, except two, which he spent in the lumber regions of northern Minnesota. In March, 1868, he was married to Miss Ann Mary Kimball, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Abner Kimball, of Wyoming, Iowa. Mr. and Mrs. Conmey located on their farm in South Madison immediately following their marriage, where they lived uninterruptedly until their happy union was temporarily broken by death.

Two sons were born to them: Fred W., late of South Dakota but now on the home farm, to which he came two years ago to relieve his father of

its cares, and Dr. Roy M., of Sergeant's Bluff, Iowa, Fred's faithful care of his father day and night for nearly five months, and Roy's immediate response to every summons, show their appreciation of their father's toil and sacrifice for them.

Mr. Conmey in his life proved the truth of the proverb, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly." The writer has yet to meet the man, woman or child who did not like John Conmey. Every acquaintance was a friend, every neighbor speaks his praise. He was honest and open as the day in business transactions. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" was exemplified in his dealings with his fellowmen. He loved to discuss subjects with his friends and neighbors on science, politics, religion or any other theme that might be suggested of like import. He never lost interest in any vital matter. Even through his last illness he listened with eagerness to the reading of the daily papers and other publications, and kept in touch to the last, with all the matters that are making history.

On August 1st, one day following his 74th birthday, he was stricken with paralysis; he recovered sufficiently to be around the house a little and enjoy the companionship of his family, but in the early days of December his health again began to decline and his earthly life came to a peaceful end on the 16th of the month. Mr. Conmey became interested, many years ago, in the philosophy of spirit return and after much study, investigation and research gained a knowledge of the truth as expressed in Modern Spiritualism.

The funeral service was conducted at the home on Thursday afternoon by Rev. J. F. Ireland, pastor of the First Spiritualist Church of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the body laid to rest in the Wyoming cemetery.

16 Dec. 1913

Death of Mrs. McClean.

Mrs. McClean, beloved by all who knew her, passed away quietly and peacefully at 6:30 o'clock p. m. April 15, 1915, at her home in Prairie Creek township.

Mrs. McClean was the widow of the late Francis McClean, and was one of the pioneer settlers of Dubuque county and she endured the privations and struggles of early life. Her maiden name was Anne Kistley. She was born in county Down, Ireland, Jan. 1st, 1827; came to America in 1847, living in New York until 1848, when she came with her parents to Dubuque, Iowa. Lived there until Sept. 10, 1853, when she was united in marriage to the late Francis McClean, then they removed to Prairie Creek township, settled on a farm which was her home continuously until the time of her death. She was a generous and benevolent woman and was always noted for her charity. Although her home and family were her kingdom, she was never too busy for a loving word or a kindly service for any friend far or near, and most of all for those in need. Mrs. McClean's life was a loving unselfishness that in long years of health and in the weary years of illness alike found the highest happiness in thoughts for the comfort of others. Her death was due to infirmities of old age. In her last hours she received the final sacraments of the Catholic church of which she was a devout member, and she passed away fortified by the faith. She is survived by two sons and two daughters, John F., Michael, Mary and Lizzie; a son James, and daughter, Mrs. Katie Lennon, have preceded her to the grave. She is also survived by eleven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

The funeral which was largely attended was held Saturday morning from the home to the Sacred Heart church and thence to the Catholic cemetery. Rev. Father McDonald celebrated Requiem Mass and spoke eloquently of the deceased.

The honorary pall bearers were Hugh Davy, John McPoland, Thos. Carr and Mike Connolly, and the active pallbearers were Joseph McDermott, Dennis Lawler, J. R. McClean, O. C. Spaul, John Carr and Wm. Walsh.

22 April 1915
Cascade
Pioneer 9

GOOD CITIZEN CALLED.

Eugene Mahoney, of Butler Township, Answers Final Summons.

Garryowen mourns the death of one of its highly respected citizens in the death of Eugene Mahony who passed away Friday, April 16th, and his passing brought great sorrow, not only in the family circle, but among the entire people of the community, who knew him felt his influence for good and the high standard of character which he maintained throughout his long life in the place where he was born and where he grew to old age. He loved his home and his family and the splendid example he set as a strong, big man in the community will live long after him as the years roll into the scroll of time. He was an uncompromising Catholic among race of men who were strong pillars of the church and liberal with his purse and ready to cast his influence for upbuilding of the Christian life of the community. As another writer has said: "The death of such men as was Mr. Mahony always seems to a community as untimely no matter of the allotted years given to man have been spent, and their loss is keenly felt in a locality where they have always been active in its upbuilding and progress, but his example of true, Christian life on as unperishable monuments and tributes to a noble life."

Eugene Mahony was born at the old homestead near Garryowen, May 28, 1844. His boyhood days as was all his life were spent in farming. Forty-four years ago he was united in marriage to Miss Margaret Lynch of Garryowen, and to this union were born ten children, eight sons and two daughters, seven of whom with a loving faithful wife survive him. Henry J., who resides on the old home place; John and Eugene of Garryowen; Michael M., of Anconada, Mont.; Joseph of Dyersville, Ia.; Ambrose who is attending St. Joseph's College in Dubuque; Mary Ann, at home. Ellen passed away a number of years ago at the age of 11 years, and two sons died in childhood. Besides these, he leaves one brother, Michael, and two sisters, Collins of Washington Mills and Mrs. Margaret Deacon of Fonda, Ia.

The funeral services were held on Tuesday forenoon at St. Patrick's church, in which Revs. P. J. Coffey, pastor, E. Blattery of Waterloo, and Rev. Wolf of Maquoketa, participated in a Solemn Requiem High Mass.

DEATH OF W. J. VEACH.

William J. Veach died April 14th at 12:50 o'clock at Waterloo, after suffering twelve days with pneumonia. Deceased was at his home 206 Manson St. when overtaken by death and was surrounded by loving friends and relatives. He had been in the employ of the Waterloo & Cedar Falls Union Mill company before he was taken sick. He formerly worked as a motor man for the Waterloo, Cedar Falls & N. railway on the local lines, and had a host of friends among the street car employes.

Mr. Veach was born on the old homestead near Epworth, Nov. 1, 1866. Moved to Daugherty, Iowa, in 1895. April 19, 1898 he was married to Miss Mary Toner. Resided there until 1907, when he removed to Waterloo and entered the employ of the W. O. F. & N. electric company, Mr. Veach is survived by his wife and three children, Charles, Rose and Willie, aged 9, 8 and 6 years respectively; also by his step mother, two brothers Joseph of Pleasant Grove, Charles of Eckleson, North Dakota, and two sisters, Miss Bessie of Pleasant Grove, and Mrs. Wm. Lawler of Farley.

The remains were brought to Farley over the I. O. R. R. Saturday and were met by old friends and neighbors. On Sunday the funeral was held at Pleasant Grove, Rev. Father McNamara officiating.

The pall bearers were Edw. Horsfield, James Horsfield, Michael McDermott, Dennis Lawler, John McDermott and Thomas Kelch.

2 April 1909
Both Cascade Pioneer

John N. Spahn passed away at his home in Dubuque at 3 a. m., Wednesday, May 24th, aged 54 years, 6 months, and 6 days. The funeral will take place Friday at 9 a. m. to the Holy Ghost church and the burial will be made in Mt. Calvary. Mr. Spahn was born in Hessen, Darmstadt, Germany, in 1856, and came to this country with his parents when six months old, coming direct to Dubuque. He was a stone mason by trade and highly esteemed by all who knew him. He is survived by three children: Helen, Caspar and Nicholas; also one sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Schon. His wife preceded him to the grave about three years ago.

25 May 1911

16 May 1889 - Anamosa Bulletin

DEATH OF PHILIP REITZ. — This occurred Saturday afternoon at three o'clock at the residence of Mr. F. G. Lehmann. Mr. Reitz was sixty years old and died of consumption, which disease has already carried off three out of five of his children. On Monday the remains were taken to Wyoming, near which place his family reside on a farm, and the interment took place the same day.

Mr. Reitz came from Germany in 1852, and entered the employ of Mr. G. H. Ford, the proprietor of the Wapsipicon House, in this place, in the following year, if we mistake not. He was a faithful, honest, industrious man, and has spent most of his years, we believe, in this county. For several years past he had been breaking down with consumption and a few months ago took a trip to California for his health, but with no material benefit. He was a brother of Mr. John Althen's first wife and of Mrs. G. F. Lehmann. Peace to his ashes.

DEATH OF LITTLE GIRL.

Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Kurt, of Cascade township, mourn the death of their daughter, Leona Isabel Kurt, who died Thursday, August 18th. She was ill for two weeks and her death was due to acute infection of the bowels.

She was born July 23, 1917, and her death is a deep bereavement to her loving parents and the family.

The funeral took place on Saturday, August 20th, at St. Mary's church and was conducted by Rev. J. B. Albers.

Heinie Engel, wrestling champion and baseball manager, was in town yesterday advertising the Bernard-Cascade ball game, which takes place on the Cascade ball diamond next Sunday, August 28th. Heinie says he is going to win this time, which means that it is going to be a battle from the first ball thrown until the last man is out.

25 Aug 1921

Cascade Pioneer

JONES COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 174
ANAMOSA, IA 52205

NON-PROFIT
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