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THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REUNION

1898

OF THE

OLD SETTLERS

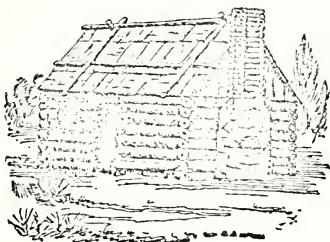
Association

OF

JOHNSON

COUNTY

Iowa



AUGUST 25, 1898.

IOWA CITIZEN PUBLISHING COMPANY, PRINTERS.

1898.

THE OLD SETTLERS.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THEIR ANNUAL REUNION AND PICNIC AUGUST 25, 1898.

No gathering of the Old Settlers of Johnson County has proved a greater success than that of Thursday, August 25th, at the Johnson county fair grounds, not alone in point of numbers, but in the strengthening of fraternal ties among those who were the founders and builders of the state. And with the pioneers were many of the second and third generation and a great number of friends and acquaintances who gathered to do honor to the pioneers. The Executive Committee had made ample arrangements in the way of seats and water, and decorations of the old cabins. There was an entire lack of the business canvassing, that is too often a conspicuous matter at such meetings and only one outside house was represented in its advertising.

Well filled lunch baskets attested that the old settlers had not lost acquaintance with the cooking art that a half century ago gave high renown to "corn pone" and prairie chicken. At this hour when old neighbors gathered about the tables, there was chat with good cheer and many were the reminiscences recalled, the old tales retold, and events rehearsed of the forties and before and even down into the fifties, when Johnson county was in the West, when there was no times save "hard times" and yet when men and women grew in moral strength and store and won from the fertile soil treasures for themselves and their children; though money was scarce and wealth unknown, the log cabin and the rude village house marked the homes of a happy people who put

duty first, who praised God for the blessings bestowed upon them and who dying left the heritage of a good name, or who living in these days receive the grateful homage of their friends.

The hour of lunch and refreshments passed, music called the pioneers and their friends from the seats and the tables clustered under the apple trees to the seats facing the platform. Rev. Charles S. Brown of the Baptist church, offered the invocation, after which L. S. Swafford, president of the day, presented Messrs. Gil. R. Irish and Matt Cavanagh, who with himself constituted the committee on correspondence, and read letters from Johnson county pioneers who have removed elsewhere and who still recall with gratitude and affection the old life and old friends. These letters were from Richard H. Sylvester, of Washington, D. C., son of the former editor of the STATE PRESS; Andrew Beermaker, of San Jose, Cal., for many years prominent in business here; W. P. Cassidy, of Muscatine; Mrs. James M. Wright, of Aledo, Ills.; H. G. Little, Grinnell; A. J. Casaday, Albia; R. R. Spencer, Seattle, Wash., some years ago cashier of the Johnson County Savings Bank; Prof. Thos. M. Irish, long identified with the public schools of Dubuque; M. K. Lewis, of Albany, Oregon, and Mrs. W. H. Woods of Sutherland, Iowa.

One of these writers, Mr. Casaday, had arranged to be present, and spoke pleasantly on life in early times in Johnson county. There were many present who nearly forty years ago were his pupils in the second ward school, and in dear old Oak Grove just east of town, where big girls and boys as well as little ones owned his painstaking care. Mr. Casaday was one of the adventurous spirits who in 1862 voyaged overland to the then new Oregon, and carries with him to this day an unpleasant reminder in the shape of a bullet from an Indian's gun that leaves him with a perceptibly halting gait. It was in this attack upon a wagon train that Andrew Hunter was killed.

The senior pioneer on the grounds was Mr. James Walker, of the Valley, who came here in 1837, and though now in his eighty-fourth year, is a man of vigor and health, who this summer worked on his farm and made "a full hand."

One loved and honored pioneer's absence was noted, that of Mrs. Sarah A. Myers, who was detained at her home by sickness, and many were the expressions of sympathy and hope for her presence at the next meeting.

Mr. E. M. Adams, of Cedar, was the oldest of the pioneers on the ground, 87 years, and is one of the oldest residents of the county.

The committee on necrology, through its chairman, Mr. Euclid Sanders, reported that the following members of the association had died since the last meeting. So far as the committee could ascertain the ages of the deceased are appended:

Joshua Ady	70
Dr. T. S. Mahan	82
Mrs. Ezra Hamilton	55
D. Corlett	64
Mrs. Rose Tanner	68
Charlotte J. McGrew	70
J. G. Starkey	82
Mrs. David Borts	63
Herman Lorenz	77
J. W. S. Horne	49
Wm. Berger	84
R. L. Dunlap	74
Dr. Elizabeth Hess	52
Hon. E. Clark	82
Joe A. Edwards	53
Michael Borts	80
Jacob N. Seydel	70
Robert Lyon	74
Casper Dunkel	88
Mrs. Josephine Miller	60
Capt. A. J. Fickey	77
J. B. Letovsky, Sr.	77
Samuel Lawrence	—
Dr. M. B. Cochran	—
John McComas	47

Mrs. Jared Ham.....	—
James Dawson.....	—
Albert Shiland.....	—
Adam Kline.....	—
Michael Cline.....	—
George Wical.....	78
Mrs. Carson Wray.....	—
Mrs. John W. Jayne.....	—
Julius G. Brown.....	84
Isaac Koser.....	73
James McLaughlin.....	49
Mrs. Lucinda R. Rians.....	87
Francis Groves.....	76
Mrs. J. M. Hoffman.....	55
Val Lentz.....	82
D. A. Pratt.....	—
Alden Fletcher.....	—
Harvey Hall.....	—
David Hoover.....	78
Mrs. J. L. Theobald.....	59
Mrs. Mary Smith.....	—
A. L. Clark.....	—
M. Freeman.....	—
Henry Alt.....	84
Mrs. Emma Pepler.....	—
Mrs. N. H. Tulloss.....	—
Esther L. Mendenhall.....	—

The meeting of the Association for the election of officers was held in front of the old log cabin and resulted as follows:

President and Treasurer—HENRY J. WIENEKE.

First Vice-President—COL. JOHN R. HEATH.

Second Vice-President—SAM P. FRY.

Secretary—GEORGE T. BORLAND.

Assistant Secretary—JAS. T. ROBINSON.

Executive Committee—G. R. IRISH, JOHN A. STEVENSON, R. HEVERN, EUCLID SANDERS, CHAS. PRATT.

The following list of members present includes in the main only those who were reported as present by the secretary on payment of the annual dues. There are probably some omissions:

E. M. Adams	Philo Colony	Timothy Fairchild
M. Adams	Matt. Cavanagh	W. B. Fackler
J. L. Adams	Win. Cochran	John Fountain
J. M. Adams	T. C. Carson	Peter Flynn
J. E. Adams	W. D. Cannon	G. W. Fleming
O. M. Adams	C. M. Calkin	Thos. Fountain
P. A. Alderman	Cal. Curtis	Chas. Gaymon
W. Albright	Ed. Crowley	Thos. Graham
L. A. Allen	J. G. Crow	Adam Gill
Ira J. Alder	Ed. Crain	Frank Greer
W. Andrews	F. J. Cochran	Isaac Graham
E. Anderson	Austin Cole	Harry Gaymon
O. A. Byington	Ira Curtis	Mrs. John Goody
W. J. Brown	Mrs. C. Cox	John Greulich
A. W. Beuter	Mrs. M. J. Cline	Enoch Hope
Edward Balluff	J. N. Clark	and wife
Mrs. J. Berry	A. T. Calkins	Miss Anna Hope
A. Beach	and wife	Lemuel Hunter
W. F. Buck	M. G. Cozine	and wife
E. R. Barnes	Strawder Devault	Geo. Hummer
J. A. Burke	Bryan Dennis	and wife
Geo. T. Borland	and wife	John R. Heath
Alonzo Brown	M. A. Drake	J. K. Hemphill
A. W. Bradley	B. Dalton	S. J. Hess
Adam Borschell	Mrs. E. Dennis	Geo Hunter
E. F. Brockway	F. N. English	and wife
Henry Bird	J. H. Easley	Matt. Howell
Ed. Breese	H. S. Fairall	Elias Howell
Tom Brennan	S. H. Fairall	and wife
Chas. Baker	W. E. C. Foster	Geo. R. Hall
and wife	S. P. Fry	Mrs. R. Hutchinson
Mrs. F. W. Barnes	J. M. Files	J. U. Hoffman
Mrs. Isaac Bowen	Isaac Furbish	Ramsay Hevern

Mrs. T. Hohenschuh	Jacob Metzger	D. F. Rosenkranz
Emma Harvat	and wife	W. J. Rowland
O. M. Holton	Philip Miller	J. F. Ruhe
D. H. Hastings	L. W. Miller	D. Rummelhart
and wife	John J. Miller	Thos. Rogers
Katie Hohenschuh	Jas. McKray	Jos. Riggs
Jas. Hart	and wife	Phil. E. Shaver
Miss F. Hepburn	J. W. Morford	Mrs. C. Shillato
Winfield Hughes	Mrs. E. K. Morse	Jesse K. Strawbridge
G. R. Irish	J. S. Mahana	J. G. Stover
and wife	John McCollister	O. Startzman
Mrs. C. W. Irish	Jas. McCollister	and wife
Dr. Leora Johnson	A. H. Mueller	M. A. Seydel
John E. Jayne	and wife	J. T. Struble
and wife	W. H. Miller	Wm. Sweet
John Jacobs	Thos. Metcalf	E. Sanders
D. A. Jones	Geo. W. Nelson	and wife
W. A. Kettlewell	Wm. Nellson	Geo. Schlenk
G. W. Koontz	U. Niffenegger	L. S. Swafford
and wife	W. N. Orr	and wife
M. J. Kirkpatrick	Benj. Owen	J. W. Schell
Mrs. Kirkpatrick	Al. Ohl	J. B. Schofield
Jacob Kramer	and wife	C. J. Sweet
R. A. Keene	Mrs. L. Parsons	J. A. Stevenson
Garrett Lancaster	Mrs. M. C. Parsons	Horace Sanders
E. W. Lucas	W. E. Pratt	S. A. Swisher
and wife	Chas. Pratt	C. A. Switzer
J. F. Larue	Wm. Pratt	J. M. Seydel
J. J. Lee	and wife	Mrs. S. Shepherd
Isaac B. Lee	F. A. Parrott	Robt. Speers
Jos. Lodge	Geo. Peppell	Fred Snyder
E. B. Moore	W. I. Pratt	John Springer
C. G. Moore	Jerry Plum	John Summerhays
Geo. Magruder	Peter Rohret	A. B. Teneyck
R. A. McChesney	J. T. Robinson	and wife
Mrs. S. H. McCrory	F. X. Rittenmeyer	Ezra Thompson
James McKray, Jr.	J. J. Roessler	J. H. Thompson
and wife	Mrs. J. J. Roessler	Thos. Tarbox

W. P. Teneyck	H. Wieneke	David Walker
Hiram Tous	and wife	J. L. Waldron
Mrs. S. Tippenhauer	S. Weldy	J. C. Wilson
J. P. Vonstein	Henry Walker, Jr.	D. J. Wilson
Dr. J. P. Vonstein	Henry Walker, Sr.	and wife
F. B. Volkringer	Jos. Walker	James Walker
Mrs. J. R. Van Fleet	Mrs. Edna Wilson	Mrs. R. Williams
J. J. Weeber	Isaac Weeber	Samuel Yarborough
Emory Westcott	M. L. Webster	Noah Yoder

Among the visitors from abroad were Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Swafford, and Mr. and Mrs. Balser Hormel, of West Liberty.

G. R. Irish, Iowa City.

Dear Sir:—Your kind invitation to attend the Old Settlers meeting of Johnson county is just received. Let me say to the old settlers, if it were possible for me to be with them on that day I would surely be there. If there is a day in the year that I wish myself back in Iowa, it is the reunion day of the old settlers of Johnson county. However I should miss many familiar faces that I met so often in the almost forty years I lived there.

If there is a spot in this great and glorious country which I would prefer to this city and valley it would be Iowa City.

Let me say to the old settlers again that we live in the most beautiful valley in California and our climate is considered the best in the United States. We have no extreme weather and no hard storms of any kind. We have a Hawkeye Club in this county of about four hundred members—all former residents of Iowa. We meet twice a year—once in December, when we have a literary entertainment and banquet, and again in June when we have a picnic.

With kind wishes to all,

Yours very truly,

ANDREW BEERMAKER.

San Jose, California, August 8, 1898.

DUBUQUE, IOWA, August 22, 1898.

G. R. Irish, Iowa City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—I regret that it is impossible for me to accept your invitation to participate in the annual reunion of the Old Settlers Association of Johnson County.

I am deeply interested in all that goes to perpetuate the memory of that rapidly diminishing band who have pioneered the civilization of our country.

I am proud of glorious Iowa, my native state, and justly proud of the men who laid the foundation of her greatness.

All honor to those sturdy pioneers who blazed the path of civilization from the Atlantic to the Mississippi.

That heroic band who, with rifle and ax, faced the perils of forest and flood—the dangers of the untracked wilderness, and the vengeful enmity of its savage denizens.

Onward and ever westward these fearless men advanced, like a slender wave from north to south through this great land, presaging the full tide soon to follow.

Checked, and often beaten back by the fury of savage foes, they were never daunted, but with high courage and firm purpose renewed their onward march.

Many fell by the way and were laid to rest with Nature's wide-spread canopy for their mausoleum, and the song of the summer breeze or the fierce howl of the winter's blast their perpetual dirge.

But no obstacle could long hold in check men of the high courage possessed by the true pioneers, and finally this resistless wave of westward progress reached and crossed the mighty Father of Waters, and marked its final sweep along the beautiful streams and sunlit prairies of our own loved state.

Here and along these lines were planted the homes of the last of the pioneers.

Here these men, ever mindful of the duties and obligations of freemen, laid deep and well the civic foundations of our great sisterhood of western commonwealths, destined to dominate the nation in all those elements that constitute material and political growth.

Let us, who stand so nearly related to those strong men, so endeavor that the lesson of their courage, steadfastness, and sterling honesty shall be deeply impressed upon the young generation just entering the arena of civic activity to the end that the domination of the empire of the West shall stand for all that constitutes true and national greatness.

Let us hope that in God's good providence, truth, justice and fidelity shall prevail throughout the land.

Respectfully,

T. M. IRISH.

ALBANY, OREGON, August 12, 1898.

*M. Cavanagh, Secretary Old Settlers Association,
Iowa City, Iowa.*

My Dear Sir:—I am happy to acknowledge the receipt of your kind invitation to attend your annual picnic to come off the 25th inst. and I assure you it would afford me much pleasure to do so, but my affairs are such at this time that I regret to say I cannot be with you.

The festivities of the occasion—the “feast of reason and flow of soul” that old Johnson county’s worthy *sons* and *sires*, *maids* and *matrons* know full well how to render, I would enjoy very much indeed. But prior engagements and business affairs preclude my doing so. You have my thanks for courtesies extended and I am happy to know I am remembered by my old-time friends.

When I take a retrospect of the past, I find that the brightest and most interesting part of my life are reminiscences gleaned from the days I spent in and about Iowa City and Johnson county.

I came to the state in 1844—barefooted and I might say an orphan boy. I had just \$10.00 in my pocket that I had earned in Illinois by splitting rails, like unto the illustrious Lincoln.

To this sum by strict economy and industry I added little by little, for times were hard and a dollar looked to be about the size of the full moon, until I amassed the large sum (as it seemed to me) of \$50.00. I worked for Judge Cavanagh a few

months at \$8.00 a month, and even yet I can hear him calling Gamaliel to break loose from the strong arms of Morpheus and build a fire. Well I took the hint and got up too, for I thought he meant me all the time.

He finally paid me and the amount I added to my exchequer, swelling it very perceptibly. I went to Dubuque with Fred Hempstead and John Cochran and I entered forty acres of land five miles from Iowa City on the Dubuque road.

Just think of it *80 rods square* of the earth's surface and down to its very centre all belonged to me individually and bought with money earned by the sweat of the brow. Truly I may say that I felt far richer and happier in possession of that forty acre tract, than I ever have since, when I could count my acres by the thousand.

I have found this to be true, that true happiness is not measured by the length of one's purse. A few years later I married Cornith Parks and we commenced upon life's duties in earnest. Years brought changes, families increased that must be schooled. We were isolated from school house. Julius Hill and myself finally got a little district set off and built Summit school by a meagre subscription, we heading the list with \$50.00 each, and when my two eldest started down the hill to school I was immensely happy.

My feelings were those of thousands of parents, for we are all made from the same clay and have the same impulses and aspirations.

In the year '61 I sold my farm to Bob Denton and had to law him to get my pay, beating him three times out of four and twice in the supreme court. But life is too short to be spent in rehearsing the wrong doings of others, and I freely forgive him for what I considered a c—ed mean act at the time. But Bob is a pretty good fellow after all.

There are many incidents of those days crowding the memory but can speak of a few only. I will relate a little joke, (although at my own expense) that I have thus far concealed and have myself laughed about many times to think how verdant I was, but you know most of us have our weaknesses. Here is the joke—I had the honor to be elected

assessor of Graham township, and the law required that I as such officer return the assessment roll to the county judge. Well being a matter of fact man I supposed that each paper had to be *rolled* up instead of being *folded* to fill the requirements of the law in returning an *assessment roll*. So I rolled each paper *singly* and in the aggregate it made quite a large bundle. Well I managed some way to get them to town and threw them at the feet of T. H. Lee who was county judge at the time, and he smole one of those modest bland smiles that ever adorned his serene countenance as he beheld the Graham township *assessment roll*. This is the first time I have ever told it and would not now if I was not so far away. I will mention a rather strange co-incidence that occurred at the (then) new court house in your city. I had removed from Johnson to Poweshiek county some two years before but having business at Iowa City, had occasion to go to the court house and as I entered one of the spacious offices I saw two men sitting at a desk writing busily and without noticing my approach, when one of them spoke my name in full, *Miles K. Lewis*, I answered, *I am here*. They were transcribing the record and had just come to a transfer made by me. Of course explanations followed. There are many incidents we all remember of those days, some with pleasure and some perhaps with chagrin. But stern old Fate has moved us all around upon the checker board of life as he saw fit, scattering us hither and thither. Some having shuffled off this mortal coil while others are permitted to plod their weary way along while the shadows lengthen. As regards myself old Fate has shoved me upon the western verge of the continent. I purpose making the final "round up" here in this lovely valley and when it shall become my turn to cross the river, I have given instructions to have my remains cremated, which I believe to be the most consistent way to dispose of the dead. At this time, however, the Old Man has touched me lightly. My nerves are steady, my sight good, my teeth sound, there is no silver upon my locks and I don't wear a cane.

Am engaged quite extensively in horticulture. Have a fine young apple orchard of about 1000 trees that have just come in-

to bearing with all the small fruits in abundance. Was born in the state of New York, have lived all the way out to this coast country and consider this the grandest and best of all. I purpose attending the Omaha Exposition during next month and exhibit an improved farm gate, *a world beater*.

I hope I may meet many of you there and renew our acquaintance of the long time ago.

Hoping you may have a good time at your picnic with much good cheer all round. I am

Very respectfully yours,

MILES K. LEWIS.

SUTHERLAND, IOWA, August 22, 1898.

M. Cavanagh, and Members of the Old Settlers Association of Johnson County, Iowa.

Dear Friends, Old Friends, Friends of the days so long gone by:—We hardly know how to express in words, the pleasure and gratification we felt upon receiving the invitation to meet with you in your annual picnic on the 25th inst. It would give Mr. Woods and myself great pleasure to be able to be with you on that occasion, but as it is impossible for us to bridge the distance, except in thought, we can only comply with the second request and send you a word of greeting.

Mr. Woods or Huse as many of you know, came with his family to Johnson county in 1839—a boy of eight years, and grew to manhood there. I, his wife, have no claim upon you as an old settler, although I reached Iowa City a wife a few months before the railroad reached there in January, 1856. But many beautiful memories cluster about the lovely city in which so many of you have spent your lives. Johnson county is rich in its traditions; rich in its illustrious men, and noble great-hearted women, and we two, Huse and I, would love to take each one of you by the hand, you who have survived the storm and stress of life, and who are living in the past and dreaming of the future—after the fashion of those who have passed the summit of life and are quietly moving down the westward slope.

We thank you from our hearts for remembering us, and

wishing you a happy reunion and many returns of the day
for all. We are

Very sincerely yours,

ROMA W. WOODS.

W. HUSE WOODS.

P. S. We extend a hearty invitation to one and all to visit
us at our home in Sutherland.

HUSE WOODS AND WIFE.

MUSCATINE, IOWA, August 19, 1898.

*L. S. Swafford, G. R. Irish, M. Cavanagh,
Iowa City, Iowa,*

Gentlemen:—We thank you very much for your kind
invitation to attend the annual picnic of the Old Settlers and
regret not being able to attend. We hope you will have a
very enjoyable time and meet many times to come.

Yours sincerely,

WM. CASSIDY AND WIFE.

ALBIA, IOWA, August 9, 1898.

Lewis S. Swafford, G. R. Irish, M. Cavanagh, Committee.

Your kind invitation to me and my wife to join you and
the Old Settlers of Johnson County, Iowa, August 25th,
most gratefully received and for which we tender our sincere
thanks. We know of nothing now to prevent our being
present.

Yours respectfully,

A. J. CASADAY.

ALEDO, ILLINOIS, August 15, 1898.

*To the Committee of Johnson County Old Settlers Picnic,
Greeting.*

Gentlemen:—Your very kind invitation to my husband and
myself to attend your coming reunion is received, and we
regret exceedingly that circumstances are such that it will be
impossible to accept your courtesy at this time. Especially
do I regret this as it is a great self-denial to be unable to visit
the city.

To me Iowa City is hallowed ground, it being my birth-
place when the city was in its infancy, as I was one of the

very first children born in the city. As I glance backward to my childhood I note many changes, and improvements, and no greater change has been wrought in any part of the city or county than found on your beautiful fair ground.

I can remember the time that instead of these smooth sweeping fields, and these buildings, this place was a howling wilderness, the wolves coming to my father's door (now the Banburry place) to eat the bones and whatever they could find, and "hoot owls" made night hideous. My early education is closely associated with the old building known as the Mechanic's Academy. My father carrying me to and from school. In these days very few houses were to be found between our place and the Academy. Of them there was Luther Frost, the Mac Arthur or Dr. Lowe house, Henry Lathrop's, Dr. Murray's house, Dr. Reynolds, two little bits of frame houses, one the widow Steele's, one the widow Henry's, and one other house in particular, an old story and a half house called the old "Mormon house" from the fact that at one time a family of Mormons had occupied the house.

In those days only subscription schools existed and very few of them, where today, as monuments of improvements stand your numerous and commodious ward school buildings, and other buildings for educational purposes.

With the moving into the city of the railroad, the old stage coach moved out. With the moving out of the state capitol to Des Moines, the state schools moved in. At one time the State University, the State Historical rooms, the state institution for both the blind and the deaf and dumb, were all located in the city. As my earliest educational association was with the Mechanic's Academy so my closing days of school life in Iowa City are closely associated with the old stone University building. I would like to speak of all my teachers from Miss Willson, Mr. Hill, Cole and Ritts, Dr. Reynolds, among the first ones I had, up to the halls of the University, where Professors Stone, Humplrys, Welton, Wells and Judge Parvin, respectively, gave me instruction in history, mathematics, philosophy, literature and theory and practice.

The people like the places have changed, and as old houses are moved out or torn down, so the people have moved out or passed away. Some of the first families I can remember are (Uncle) John Lenderman, John Powell, Esquire Hampton, Dr. Ballard, Anson Hart, John Parrott, Matthew Teneyck, Dr. Bowen, Joe Stover. These are only a few, with the names also of your committee that I call to memory.

Now when I visit the city I see beautiful dwellings adorning College Hill where in the early forties the red men by the hundreds used to camp. Now the banks of Ralston creek are walled up and iron bridges span the chasm. Then the back water from the Mississippi river used to overflow the streets as far up the creek as Washington street, so you could not cross the street on foot. Then the principal streets were Clinton, Dubuque, City Avenue and Washington. Then the Iowa river was navigable by as large steamboats as the "Uncle Toby" which made at least two trips (perhaps three) to the city, and to my childish mind it was as much of a curiosity, to see the house on the water, as it would now be to see the much talked-of air ships sailing through the space above our heads.

I had the pleasure of meeting with you two years ago and met many of the old settlers that I had not seen for a quarter of a century, and enjoyed the day to the fullest extent. Since that time two more of the old settlers,—Ezekiel Clark and Cousin Joshua Ady,—have crossed over the river from the other side of which no one ever returns, but are numbered with others already there to watch for, and wait to greet those who will soon follow.

Some of those who will meet with you at this reunion may be called to the other side before another year, but to those who have obeyed the injunction "Be ye also ready" the call will have no terrors.

It was the names of your committee that led to these reminiscences of my childhood, especially that of Louis S. Swafford, *my dear old Uncle*.

I thank you in behalf of my husband and myself for your remembrance and remain

Very sincerely yours,

VIRGINIA E. HANBY WRIGHT.

WASHINGTON, August 6th, 1898.

L. S. Swafford, G. R. Irish and M. Cavanagh, Committee of Old Settlers Picnic, Iowa City, Iowa.

Gentlemen:—Your communication of the 1st instant, inviting my good mother and myself to attend the Old Settlers picnic of Johnson county, Iowa, has just been received, and it carries me back to the place of my birth and to my boyhood days, where I was one of the forty-three grandchildren of the late Dr. W. W. Woods, a pioneer of the state.

I am pleased to note that the many years which have intervened have in no way diminished the regard for my family name, and I thank you in behalf of my mother and for myself for the evidence of remembrance and esteem contained in your communication.

Owing to my mother's impaired health, and to the assumption of new duties just at this time by myself, it is not within my reach to accept of your invitation.

I trust that the day is not far distant when I may visit your locality and endeavor in a way to renew my acquaintance with those who knew my family in years gone by.

Thanking you and wishing those who may have the pleasure of participating in your annual reunion a pleasant time, believe me with best wishes,

Very truly,

RICHARD SYLVESTER.

SEATTLE, WASH., August 3rd, 1898.

M. Cavanagh, Iowa City, Iowa.

My Dear Mr. Cavanagh:—Your very kind invitation, extended on behalf of the Old Settlers of Johnson county, to Mrs. Spencer and the writer to be present at their annual picnic on the 25th day of August, received, and read with very pleasant surprise. To be remembered in this way by my old friends in Iowa City is very gratifying to me, and nothing would please me better than to be able to accept the invitation. The distance, however, forbids.

Wishing you a very pleasant and happy meeting and many recurring ones, I remain, with kind regards and best wishes,

Yours,

R. R. SPENCER.

GRINNELL, IOWA, August 20, 1898.

M. Cavanagh, Esq., Iowa City, Iowa.

Dear Sir:—Your favor of the 16th is at hand. It would give me great pleasure to accept your invitation to be present at the Old Settlers Association of Johnson County, on the 25th of the present month, but a previous engagement to attend a like meeting on the same day at my home in Henry county, Illinois, will prevent. I was there when the county was organized on the 19th day of June, 1837. Of all who voted on that day to organize the county none but myself are left to tell the story.

The meeting is to be held near Colona, where the county was organized. I have engaged to give a talk on the incidents of that very day. At your request I send the manuscript account of my first visit to Iowa City, in 1841 or 1842 and the account of the wolf hunt I attended there. You can read it at your meeting if you think best. I will ask you to return it as I have promised it to another party.

Very truly yours.

HENRY G. LITTLE.

AN IOWA WOLF HUNT.

BY HENRY G. LITTLE. GRINNELL, IOWA.

My pioneer experience belongs rather to Illinois than to Iowa, for I came to that state in 1835 and finally established my name near what is now the prosperous city of Kewanee, some fifty miles east of the present city of Muscatine. But in the fall of 1841 or 1842 I made a trip into what was then the Territory of Iowa.

Ever since my settlement in Henry county, Ill., I had noted during the summer season a constant stream of emigrants passing westward, all bound, as they said, for the "Black Hawk Purchase" in Iowa Territory, and aiming for "The Yellow Banks" as the most convenient point for crossing the Mississippi. Of course a town soon sprang up at the river crossing. It called itself Bloomington, but we know it now as the beautiful little city of Muscatine. About 1839 Iowa City became the capital of the territory, and the town was

struck with what we call in this day "a boom." It grew much faster than the surrounding country was developed, so that supplies for the population had to be brought from towns along the river or more distant still.

In some way the information came to us, nearly a hundred miles away, that the people in Iowa City were almost destitute of flour. As it happened I had a quantity of surplus wheat which I had made into flour, and it seemed to me wise to undertake to dispose of it in Iowa City. This is to explain my share in the wolf hunt about which I am going to tell you.

My journey was long and tedious and somewhat adventurous, as you may imagine remembering that it was made in a heavily-loaded wagon, over the wretched roads of those days in the West. But it was quite to my taste then, when I was young and my strength "was as the strength of ten." Even the fact that few of the streams were bridged and many of them must be forded, did not daunt me. I had no companion but my favorite dog, Hero, who varied the monotony of the long days by making things lively for the wild game along the road. Hero had good blood in him, for he was half greyhound, keen of eye and swift of foot. Many a wild chase he gave the fleet-footed deer; but all were unsuccessful for his speed was not a match for that of those graceful, untamed creatures.

I crossed the river at Bloomington and in due time reached the thriving Iowa capitol. I did not find the people starving, but they wanted my flour, and I soon disposed of it at a good profit. Finding several old acquaintances and much to interest me about the lively little town I spent several days there. A few miles out Col. Wm. H. Henderson had settled with his fine family of seven splendid boys. I had known him well in Illinois and much enjoyed meeting him again in the Iowa wilderness. I have followed the history of his family to the present day. Six of those stalwart sons are still living. Among them were four lawyers, one judge, one Congressman, one preacher and one good business man. The Hon. John W. Henderson, of Cedar Rapids, is one of the number. I have

scarcely known a family in the west with so much and such varied talent.

Another old friend I found by the name of Johnson, who was doing a large business in brick-making. The "boom" was on and buildings were going up as rapidly as materials could be provided.

But the great excitement of the hour was caused by the depredations of wolves about the neighborhood. Public meetings were being held, which I found it interesting to attend, and the people were stirred to energetic action by the harrowing tales told by settlers from near and far of destructive raids by the prowling "varmint." Pigs, sheep and poultry had been carried off, and the farmers saw their substance melt away till the provision for their families during the approaching winter seemed endangered. A grand wolf hunt by all the able-bodied men and boys in a wide region of country was resolved upon. Officers were chosen, rules and regulations adopted, and plans fully settled for turning the tables upon the gray terrors, and a day appointed.

A stand was built upon a high point of land a few miles east of town, near the Muscatine road. Here were stationed, rifles in hand, the best sharpshooters to be found in the country.

The rest of the citizens of town and country were distributed in the circle around the stand with a radius of perhaps five miles.

Some were on horseback, some on foot, all were instructed to close in at a steady pace toward the stand, keeping sharp watch that no guilty animal should escape, and driving before them, inexorable as fate, the scores or hundreds of the gray rascals with which imagination had peopled the prairie, to the fearful slaughter which awaited them at the grand round-up. To avoid accidents no one was permitted to bear fire-arms except the rifle-men in the center. All the rest were armed with ferocious looking clubs. I timed my tart homeward to take in the great event, driving slowly that I might reach the stand in time to witness the grand massacre. I could see the men on horseback at intervals with boys

watching the spaces between as all slowly drew nearer together. At last the men on the stand came in sight in waiting attitudes, guns in readiness, as the circle grew smaller. I was a short distance outside the ring, my dog trotting beside me, suddenly Hero gave a start and shot off like lightning through the grass. I saw that he had caught sight of a wolf which had slipped between the hunters partly hidden by the grass. Lashing my horses to the top of their speed I followed, Hero overtook the wolf, at one snap seized him in his teeth and whirled him over on his back. Then at the sight of the savage teeth and wicked eyes he seemed too frightened to hold on, and dropped the wolf who was off again like a shot. Again and again Hero seized and threw him only to drop him as before. One of the horsemen now came to the dog's help and despatched the beast with his club. It was a large vicious-looking prairie wolf. The man threw the carcass into my wagon and we went up to the stand. The wolf hunters crowded around to gaze upon the enemy as he was held up by his long gray tail. It was the sole trophy of that great, historic hunt. Not another wolf was seen that day, and my good Illinois dog, Hero, was, after all, the hero of the day. All pressed forward to make his acquaintance, and I was offered a large sum for the dog, but would not part with him.

Although more than half a century has passed since these events took place and I now have the weight of more than eighty-five years, yet few scenes of my long life are more fresh and vivid to my memory than those of the Iowa City wolf hunt on my first visit to the state which was many years later to become my home.

