

SCHOOL DAYS IN COIN, IOWA, 1880-1885 — CATHERINE WIGGINS PORTER

Edited by Kenneth W. Porter

My father, James W Wiggins, had never fully recovered from typhoid fever contracted while serving in the Civil War, and after a severe illness which came upon him one threshing season¹ he was no longer able to do the work necessary on a farm. My two brothers, only eleven and thirteen,² were too young to do more than assist him, nor was it in my parents' program that any of their children should be brought up without all the school privileges available. They had no thought of taking their sons out of school to work if it could be avoided. My mother was particularly determined on education for her offspring, a serious disappointment in her own girlhood contributing to her feelings on the subject. Her mother had had a brother living in Greenville, Mercer County, Pennsylvania, who was educating his own two daughters at an academy. He offered to have "Catherine," my mother, go to the "academy" with his two daughters and thus pay for a horse he had purchased from his brother-in-law, her father. How Mother longed to go! — but "Think we'll let her go and eat up the horse, do they?" was her parents' comment on the proposition. Consequently my mother and father decided to sell the farm, implements, and stock, reserving only our team Sam and Fan, two cows, Reddy and Elrick, and a few hogs and chickens, and move to the little nearby town of Coin, in the same county.³ I have no recollection of how much the cows and hogs brought, save that my own Whiteface sold for twenty dollars in gold.

Coin had a population of six or eight hundred. The main street ran east and west; our house was the last one at the west end of the street, on the north side. After heavy rains farmers could scarcely drive their wagons

¹ The illness is described in Kenneth W. Porter (ed.), "A Little Girl on an Iowa Farm, 1873-1880 — Catherine Wiggins Porter," *IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY*, 51:155 (April, 1953). Apparently it was a "stroke" of some kind.

² David Lincoln Wiggins (1867-1945), of Hoxie, Kansas, and San Diego, California; and Samuel Telford Wiggins (1869-1953), of Selden, Kansas, and Douglas, Arizona.

³ In Page County in southwestern Iowa; Coin is in the south central part.

through the streets, for they would sink into the mud nearly up to the axles. The stores were all frame buildings, usually of one story although sometimes of two. Nearly all, save for the drugstores and those which sold hardware and implements, were general stores with groceries on one side and dry goods on the other. There were no window displays to speak of and everything was open to flies save perhaps for some such makeshift as a piece of mosquito bar over merchandise which particularly needed protection — no cellophane in those days! Barrels of crackers and gingersnaps, and of white and brown sugar, stood about open and without covers. There were, however, showcases with mixed candy. There were no refrigerators, and butcher shops were almost the only places with "coolers," as they were called — large boxes with ice in a compartment above. On the dry goods side were boots, shoes, and dress goods on open shelves. There were no ready-made dresses, but there were men's suits, and coats for both men and women. The drugstores usually had a display of four or more large globes of variously colored water in the windows. Patent medicines were a big seller; the drugstores used to buy Warner's Safe Cure in \$100 and Pierce's in \$50 lots, and sell them at six bottles for \$5.00. There were no soda fountains. The drugstores had showcases with towers at each end, which, after the newer-style cases came into use, were called "monkey cages."

There were two drugstores, and several combination dry goods and grocery stores; one of the latter was the Prince & Reed store. Mr. Prince, one of the owners, was a Negro — a fact which now seems to me rather remarkable for the time, although I then thought little of it. There was a bank, a saloon, and the usual other business concerns. Coin was on the Wabash Railroad, and shortly after our arrival the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy was also built through the town. I am told that at this point in its construction the contractor ran out of money, whereupon the men went on strike and threatened to hang him, but I knew nothing of this at the time. Despite all difficulties the road was eventually built, and many a pair of "scissors" did I make by laying pins in the form of an X on the track for the engine to run over.

My brothers had their first "store suits" shortly after moving to town, and each of us had a photograph (tintype) made in a tent at Shenandoah,⁴ to which we had gone to attend a fair. Occasionally we get these pictures out and have a good laugh over them. I was, and looked, frightened to

⁴ In western Page County, on the Fremont County line, northwest of Coin.

death, and it was only after a big cry and much persuasion that I would face the camera.

While our new house was being built we lived with one of my father's second cousins, Andy Wiggins, whose house stood in a row of several which were nearly, or quite, alike, and "thereby hangs a tale." My timidity had not been left behind when I came to the little town and was increased by the strangeness of the surroundings, strange buildings, strange faces — everything strange — so it was with genuine suffering that I made my way to school that first day. The one-room schoolhouse was crowded, everyone seemed to be looking at me, and as the hours passed I became more and more distressed, until, when the first recess came, I ran to the hall, snatched my wraps, and set out running in the direction of home. Seeing what I thought was the right house I dashed up to the door, turned the knob, and literally fell into the house. Looking up, what was my horror to see strange faces and to hear strange voices — jabbering, jabbering I knew not what! I sprang to my feet and away I flew, this time — O joy! — to reach home and to see my mother's face, and friends. I later found that the people upon whom I had called so informally were a fine family of very kindly Swedes.

For several weeks the family problem was how to get me back into school; neither coaxing, nor shaming, nor bribing could move me, for along with my timidity I had a sizable streak of stubbornness. I would hide my clothes, hide the comb, anything to delay until I would be tardy, and after nine o'clock I would be safe for at least a half-day. Finally one day my mother had for dinner some infrequent dish of which I was very fond — oddly, I cannot remember at all what it was — and in an unguarded moment I said, "If you'll have *this* for dinner every day I'll go to school!" "Done!" said Mother, and I was caught, but I wouldn't break my word, so back to school I went, and in a little while began to enjoy it very much, even though my original intangible fear was always somewhere present to a greater or lesser degree.

Our house, a frame building which began going up a very few days after we reached Coin, was of one-and-a-half stories and cost about a thousand dollars. My father helped with its construction, since he could handle ordinary carpenter's tools quite skillfully. In front, on the south, was a small covered porch which we called a "portico," with railings on the east and west. The front door opened on a small hall with a staircase leading

directly to the second floor where there were two rooms of equal size. At first there were only two rooms downstairs also — a sitting room on the west and a kitchen on the east — but later a rather large lean-to was built on the north, providing space for a bedroom and kitchen and a roomy pantry which during the winter contained among other provisions a barrel of cured meats, beef, and pork. After these additions the room formerly used as a kitchen became the sitting room or dining room and the sitting room became the place to entertain callers or visitors — the *parlor*, if you please.

The furnishings of the house were rather scant and inexpensive, but there were always carpets on the floor. We had the same tables as on the farm — a "drop leg" from Pennsylvania and one made by Father — perhaps half a dozen dining room chairs, a rocker, a sort of day bed which could be opened to full size, two cupboards, a four-hole cookstove, a hard coal base-burner heating-stove — and at that it was hard to keep things from freezing in below-zero Iowa weather — and, most impressive of all, "dressed up" beds. Those were the days of "pillow shams." After the bed was "made," and the bolster and small pillows were in place, these pillow shams were placed in front of them. They were flat pieces about $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet square, edged with lace and with some figure (ours was a dove) worked on them either by chain-stitch or very small braid sewed on by machine. Mother's shams completely covered the square pillows and had tucks around the edge of the square and also ruffles which were tucked. They were pretty, and it does me good to remember them.

We had no cellar under the house, but a fine cave to the north. Just east of the cave was the well — of the old oaken bucket type, similar to the one on the farm. There were no shade trees when we arrived, but the two pines set in the front yard shortly after grew into quite large trees during the five years we remained. Board walks ran in all directions: to the street from the front door on the south; to the barn on the north; and to the property of an aunt, Margaret McCollum, my mother's sister, on the east. Of course there was a small garden with sweet corn, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, etc. The barn was of wide boards, stripped with batting, one-and-a-half stories high, four stalls below and a haymow above. The pigpen to the east of the barn was partly floored, as Father took pride in allowing his pigs the privilege of cleanliness.

The first schoolhouse we attended was of two rooms, a large one for

assembly and a small one for recitations. During the first winter there were three or four "big bad boys" who made life very unpleasant for the teacher. One afternoon matters came to a climax, and the teacher gave permission for all who wished to leave the room. While it was not definitely so announced, we knew there was going to be a fight between the teacher and three of these boys. I don't recall whether the teacher encountered them one at a time or *en masse*, but I do remember that at one time they got the teacher on the floor, and although eventually he was victorious, when the hand bell was rung to call us back into the schoolhouse the teacher was very white and certainly puffing hard.

It was, I think, in 1882 that a new schoolhouse was built, a wonderful improvement on anything I had ever seen. It was of two stories, two rooms on the first floor and two above. What a thrill to go "upstairs" to school! Blackboards — only they were green — entirely around the room, good white chalk — for very special purposes chalk of various colors — everything very fine indeed. Tablets and lead pencils had not come into use (neither had tests); everyone used a slate and slate pencil. Most slates had plain wooden frames, but some pupils boasted frames whose edges were covered with heavy red flannel and bound with round shoestrings which passed through eyelets in the frame. Some particularly fortunate ones had double slates which opened and closed like a book. Some of us cleaned our slates with small rags or sponges moistened with water from a little bottle which we kept on our desks; others used the moistening agent employed by bootblacks since time began. I think we were germproof. A covered inkwell was on each desk, conveniently situated for coloring the hair of the girl in front.

While reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling were perhaps stressed, other subjects were also taught pretty thoroughly. Reading was my favorite study and then came grammar. I was in what probably might have been called the third and fourth grade, since I was using a *New American Third and Fourth Reader*, and one's reader placed one in other subjects as well (the same reader was used for two years). My other books were Ray's *Third Part Arithmetic*, Monteith's *Primary Geography*, the *New American Speller*, and a Spencerian copybook (easy copies). I am not sure what primary grammar was used, but I could never forget the "sausage-link" diagramming I so delighted to do, explaining the diagram and naming the parts of speech in the sentence, and in each and every case telling "why."

There was a statement on the first page of the grammar to the effect that there was a natural and an artificial language: the natural language had consisted of signs and grunts which, after ages had elapsed, eventually developed into an artificial language such as that which we now used. I had heretofore thought that Adam and Eve had used the same language as we, and certainly never thought that our language had developed in any such way; consequently this explanation was a revelation to me. I now wonder how such an idea got into a schoolbook of that time.

Spelling classes were both oral and written. Not only were the words to be spelled correctly, but also divided into syllables, and often we were required to write or give orally the diacritical markings. For written work we, of course, used our slates. In oral classes we were stood in a line, toes on a mark drawn on the floor, and kept there until by a failure to recite properly we lost our position in the line. At the end of each class the pupil who by virtue of superior recitation was at the head of the line received a "head mark," and each week the list of those getting marks, and the number, was read out.

Each reading lesson included a list of words not only to spell and mark as to their pronunciation but also to define. We became rather adept in using and naming the diacritical marks.

About twenty minutes per day were devoted to penmanship. The Spencerian system was distinguished by a certain slant and was much more difficult than the Barnes system which came into use several years later.

Geography consisted largely of map study — the locating of lakes, rivers, bays, isthmuses, straits, etc., and also defining these terms. During these recitations we stood in line, as in spelling. The capitals of the states were memorized and recited orally and individually, written, or repeated in concert, thus:

Maine, Augusta, on the Kennebeck River;
New Hampshire, Concord, on the Merrimac River;
Vermont, Montpelier, on the Onion River;
Massachusetts, Boston, on the Boston Harbor;
Rhode Island, Providence, on Providence Bay;
Newport, on Narragansett Bay;
Connecticut, Hartford, on the Connecticut River;⁵ . . .

⁵ For similar geographical chants, see Flo V. Menninger, *Days of My Life: Memories of a Kansas Mother and Teacher* (New York, 1939), 123; Paul G. Brewster,

and so on, through the capitals of all the states and territories. Not much attention was given to the products of the various countries, and as far as the manners and customs of the people were concerned — they seemed remote as Mars. Sometimes we would have contests. Two pupils would choose up sides and then the teacher would give one from each side a pointer and name the place to be located, the slower pupil then being seated and the winner remaining until he in turn was defeated. Often there would be an obvious tie, and then other opportunities were given until one contestant definitely lost. I liked this very much and, if I may say so, was pretty good at it. Parents often visited the schools in those days, and my father once happened in when we were studying South America. I was asked to locate Tierra del Fuego, and to my shame and disgrace was unable to do so; but I have known where it is ever since that afternoon.

Arithmetic was my bane then, and until I began teaching, truly

Multiplication was a vexation,
Division was as bad,
The Rule of Three perplexed me,
And fractions drove me mad.⁶

I had little notion of what it was all about, and my great concern and aim was to "get the answer," which was always given at the end of a problem.

I was always glad when the time came for the class in reading. Sometimes we stood in line for this class, but more often we occupied the recitation benches and the "reader" took his place in front. The members of the class made the corrections, if any, on the performance, and we were meticulous in our criticisms of such errors as mispronouncing a word, hesitation, using the falling for the rising inflection, and *vice versa*, monotone, etc. We had never heard of a rhetorical pause, and in correct reading the voice *always* fell at a period, colon, or semicolon, and *never* at a comma or question mark. Volunteers who thought they could improve on the previous reader were sometimes called for, and someone was usually ready for performance sometimes resulting in chest expansion, sometimes in deflation. It was in this class that I pushed fear into the background and almost

"More Indiana Ballads and Songs," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 5:188 (September, 1941).

⁶ James Orchard Halliwell, *The Nursery Rhymes of England* (London, 1842), 135. Percy Tracts, Vol. IV. Same as in text except for substitution of "practice" for "fractions."

mounted up on wings. There were a number of dialogues, the parts in which, as assigned by the teacher, we would read with all the expression of which we were capable. Though more than fifty years have elapsed,⁷ I can still recall many selections. There was "The Discovery of America," which began:

First Speaker. "What is this wild story you have heard, sir?
Columbus' return, the east discovery [sic] by sailing west-
wardly? Impossible!"

Second Speaker. "It is even so, Don Gomez. A courier has just
arrived at the palace with the news."

Then there was a dialogue about a boy who was lazy about getting up in the morning. Four of the lines are:

Boy. "When Jack Frost is on the case
Bed is such a pleasant place."

Mother. "If you would not be a dunce,
Brave the cold and rise at once."

Other selections were not in dialogue form. The speech of Patrick Henry, from "It is natural for man to indulge in illusions of hope" to "as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" never lost its zest. "'Will you walk into my parlor?' said the spider to the fly,"⁸ was in a reader used by one or both of my brothers.

A page of my reader I particularly remember was one with a picture of a man standing beside a large white horse, looking at a rainbow, and below the picture, the lines:

My heart leaps up when I behold
The rainbow in the sky.
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die.⁹

Another well-remembered reading lesson was "On the Loss of the Royal George."¹⁰

Toll for the brave! The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave, fast by their native shore!

⁷ This was written in the late 1930's.

⁸ From "The Spider and the Fly," by Mary Howitt.

⁹ From "My Heart Leaps Up," by William Wordsworth.

¹⁰ By William Cowper.

Eight hundred of the brave whose courage well was tried
 Had made the vessel heel, and laid her on her side.
 A land-breeze shook the shrouds, and she was overset.
 Down went the *Royal George* with all her crew complete.
 Toll for the brave! Brave Kempenfelt is gone!
 His last sea-fight is fought! His work of glory done!
 It was not in the battle; no tempest gave the shock;
 She sprang no fatal leak; she ran upon no rock.
 His sword was in his sheath; his fingers held the pen,
 When Kempenfelt went down with twice four hundred men.
 Weight the vessel up, once dreaded by our foes!
 And mingle with our cup the tears that England owes.
 Her timbers yet are sound and she may float again,
 Full charged with England's thunder, and plow the distant main.
 But Kempenfelt is gone, his victories are o'er,
 And he and his eight hundred shall plow the waves no more.

I regarded this as an exceedingly sad poem and felt very sorry indeed for Kempenfelt, though I hadn't the slightest knowledge concerning the incident on which the poem was founded.

There were also pages of "exercises" in reading, on which we practised many times.

At midnight in his guarded tent
 The Turk lay dreaming of the hour
 When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,
 Should tremble at his power.¹¹

If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, and a foreign
 troop were landed on my shore, I never would lay down *my* arms.
 Never, never, NEVER!¹²

Break, break, break, on thy cold gray stones, O sea!
 And I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise
 in me.¹³

And there was mounting in hot haste; the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed;
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;

¹¹ From "Marco Bozzaris," by Fitz-Greene Halleck.

¹² From a speech by William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, Nov. 18, 1777.

¹³ From "Break, Break, Break," by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips "The foe! They come! They
come!"¹⁴

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its beauty on the desert air.¹⁵

There was never any hint as to the origin of these selections. How much more they might have meant to us!¹⁶

There was a morning and evening roll call. In the first we responded by repeating a verse (it might be from the Bible), or giving a maxim or motto, as they were called. Popular ones were: "Lost, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever." "We should always do right for the love of right, and not for hope of reward." "Our best friends are those who tell us of our faults and teach us how to correct them." Following the roll call there was sometimes singing, as also after dinner or even after recesses, to help us get in the mood for study. The first one I can recall was:¹⁷

There came to my window one morning in spring
A sweet little robin, she came there to sing,
And the tune which she sang was prettier far,
Than ever was heard on the flute or guitar. . . .
Then she raised her light wings and went soaring away
And was never seen more till the break of the day.

Another, hardly worth mentioning:

¹⁴ From "Childe Harold," Canto III, by Charles Gordon, Lord Byron.

¹⁵ From "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," by Thomas Gray.

¹⁶ No attempt has been made to check these quotations against the originals; they have been presented as the author remembered them. The editor remembers another selection, which Mrs. Porter would frequently repeat and which seems to belong with those quoted above — "Lochiel's Warning," by Thomas Campbell, which begins "Lochiel, Lochiel, beware of the day / When the Lowlands shall meet thee in battle array!" After completing this manuscript the author remembered another fragment, probably from a school reader of this period, in which a rabbit cautions her young ones to be carefull: "Or else the curious old grey cat / Will scratch your peepers out."

¹⁷ Vance Randolph, *Ozark Folksongs* (Columbia, Mo., 1950), 4:411, ascribes the authorship of this song to George J. Webb, on the authority of *The New First Music Reader* (Boston, 1889), 102.

Come and go along with me,
 Have a game of ball,
 Anna, Laura, Zebedee,
 Harry, John, and all.
 Tra la la la, tra la la la, tra la la la la la la la la,
 Tra la la la, tra la la la, tra la la la la la la.

Jingle jing, I hear the ring,
 Hurry now to school.
 Do not wait or you'll be late,
 Don't forget the rule.

Another Coin school-song was sung to the tune, "Johnny's So Long at the Fair":¹⁸

Dear, dear, what can the matter be?
 Oh dear, what can the matter be?
 Dear, dear, what can the matter be?
 Parents won't visit the school!

Now if they'd come in they'd find all in their places
 With neatly combed hair and clean hands and clean faces,
 With all that is good, and none that disgraces.
 Now why won't they visit our school?

Still another was:

Dirty little faces, loving little hearts,
 Eyes brimfull of mischief, skilled in all its arts.
 "That's a precious darling." "What are you about?"
 Half-a-dozen asking, "Please, may I go out?"¹⁹

In the evenings we responded by giving the number of times we had whispered or otherwise misbehaved during the day, or, if guiltless of any wrongdoing, by answering "Perfect." Suffice it to say, there were many incorrect responses given; also, that sometimes we were "tattle-tales."

My two brothers were in the most advanced room and had good teachers. One I often heard mentioned was a Mr. Dodge. They were much more apt in their studies than I, who had really to apply myself in order to learn. They had morning roll call as did we, and I remember their laughing

¹⁸ A tune imported from England in colonial times. Sigmund Spaeth, *A History of Popular Music in America* (New York, 1948), 31-2.

¹⁹ Apparently a parody on John Godfrey Saxe's railroad poem, "Riding on the Rail." The editor remembers the concluding line of one stanza, perhaps the last, as "Bless me this is pleasant, teaching public school!"

about three boys, who knew their names would be called consecutively, collaborating on their roll call. The agreement was that the first should answer, "Jesus wept," the second, "Moses crept," and the third, "Aaron went a-fishin'." The plan was carried out according to schedule. Once when the teacher was experiencing marital trouble and, indeed, was getting a divorce, my younger brother Sam answered roll call with "It is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman in a wide house." (Proverbs 21:9.) I know very little of the methods employed in that room except that my brothers liked the work and that in the spring of 1885 they had completed all that was offered.

Three days of school stand out in my memory. One was when some sort of electrical machine was brought to the school, the electricity turned on, and anyone who wished could take hold of the "handles" or "knobs" and see how much current he or she could take. When my turn came I couldn't let go as soon as I wished, but the man in charge turned off the current before any harm resulted. Then one day Blind Boone²⁰ came and played marvelously on the school organ. One selection, his own composition, represented a storm which had recently occurred at Blanchard, Iowa.²¹ Several years later I heard him play the same selection on a piano at Lenora, Kansas.

Writing in autograph albums was famous in those days. A memorable day for me was when General O. O. Howard,²² who had lost an arm in the Civil War, gave me his autograph, which I still have. He wrote only his name and title: Gen O O Howard, Brig Gen U S A. Most autographs, however, were accompanied by rather silly verses such as:

Remember me when far far off
Where the woodchucks die of the whooping cough.
When you are old and cannot see
Put on your specs and think of me.²³

²⁰ A famous Negro musician.

²¹ In southern Page County, on the Missouri border.

²² The famous "Christian general," Indian fighter, negotiator of a treaty with the Apache chief Cochise, and a founder of Howard University in Washington, D. C., for Negroes, of which he was president, 1869-1874. From 1880 to 1882 he was superintendent of West Point and at the time of this visit was commander of the Department of the Platte. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 9:279-81, is a rather critical sketch by an historian with strong Southern views.

²³ Carl Sandburg, *Always the Young Strangers* (New York, 1952), 123, mentions this inscription as popular in Galesburg, Illinois, during his schooldays, probably about 1890.

When rocks and hills divide us
And You no more I see,
Just take a pen and paper
And write a line to me.

Roses are red, violets are blue,
Sugar is sweet and so are you.

Occasionally a solemn verse would appear: "Guard well thy thoughts; our thoughts are heard in heaven."

When I am dead and in my grave
And weeping willows o'er me wave
Your friend who used to be.

Literary society met every two weeks on Friday evening. The programs were scarcely "literary" on all occasions, but the whole community attended and had a good time. Children from all the rooms took some part each night and this, of course, brought out many parents. Friday after recess was devoted to preparing for our literary performances of the evening; or, if no meeting was scheduled for that day, we had spelling and ciphering matches. The teacher appointed two captains who chose up sides, and we spelled down or ciphered down. Occasionally the test was the speed with which we could write the multiplication table correctly, both forwards and backwards. "Professor" Dodge used a strange but effective method of preparing his pupils for their parts in the literary program. He insisted that they should be memory-perfect, no matter what the distraction, so while they were drilling for their performances the other pupils might throw paper wads, chalk, and erasers, talk aloud — anything to annoy. If the pupil could survive this ordeal he was pronounced competent.

On the literary society program there were dialogues, declamations, musical numbers both vocal and instrumental. There were no "readings"; selections were memorized and there was usually a "prompter." Gestures were the infallible sign of a good speaker. One girl made a specialty of delivering "Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight,"²⁴ with many gesticulations. Two or three days before "literary" met she broke her arm and, of course, could not participate, much to the more or less secret amusement of some of her unappreciative schoolmates. Sometimes parents would also take part, and it was thus that I first heard "The Song of All Songs," sung by Elias

²⁴ By Rosa Hartwick Thorpe (1850-1939).

Coleman, whose wife, Sarah Jane Brown, was my mother's cousin. The idea behind this song was to string together as many as possible of the titles of songs popular about this time.²⁵

Mr. Coleman also sang "We Are Coming, Father Abraham, Three Hundred Thousand Strong,"²⁶ and another Civil War song:

I threw down me shovel,
Shook hands with me spade,
And off here I go
Like a dashing young blade.
A soldier from the army
He asked me to enlist.
Says I, "Me good fellow,
"Gimme a hold on yer fist!"
La, la, ding doda ah!²⁷

Another song, probably sung at the literary society, was, "Nellie Was a Lady."²⁸ I can recall from these literary society programs only one number sung by a quartette: "Come Where the Lilies Bloom,"²⁹ the chorus of which began "Come where the lilies bloom so fair."

The games played at the Coin school were the usual ones: blackman, baseball, crack-the-whip, etc. We smaller girls often skipped the rope and played "keeping house," "button, button," London Bridge, and drop the handkerchief. We played only two games which I had not known at country school. One of these was "Old Witch." I can recall little of how it

²⁵ Spaeth, *History of Popular Music*, 120, styles this song, one of Stephen Foster's latest and poorest, published in 1863, "one of those hodge-podge potpourris of titles . . . of which only a few would now be recognized even by name." Information about other popular songs, unless other sources are specified, are also from Spaeth. The lines remembered by the author will not be included as the words and music can be found in full in Sigmund Spaeth, *Read 'Em and Weep* (Garden City, New York, 1926), 48.

²⁶ Music, 1862, by Stephen Foster; words by James Sloan Gibbons. For text, see George Cary Eggleston, *American War Ballads and Lyrics, 1725-1865* (New York, 1889), 160; Angie Beebe, *An Original Collection of War Poems and War Songs of the American Civil War, 1860-1865* (Red Wing, Minn., 1903), 22-3.

²⁷ "The True Paddy's Song," John A. and Alan Lomax, *Our Singing Country* (New York, 1941), 200-201. See also Randolph, *Ozark Folksongs*, 3:240-41 (no music).

²⁸ One of Stephen Foster's earliest, published in 1849. For words and music, see *Minstrel Songs* (Firth, Pond & Co., 1851; Mrs. S. C. Foster and Marion Foster Welch, 1879), 172-3 — and probably many other collections.

²⁹ Not listed in the index to Spaeth, *History of Popular Music*. James Norman Hall, *My Island Home* (Boston, 1952), 16, mentions this as a favorite quartette number in Colfax, Iowa, about 1902-1904.

was played except that there was a mother and her children and an old witch who stole the children one by one as the mother was called into the house by someone calling, "Mother, mother, the pot's boiling over!" but why the mother was out of doors and how she got her children back I cannot recall.³⁰ The other game, supposed to be played by both boys and girls, though sometimes by girls alone, was "The Trizzle-ma-Tree" or "Rovers Arriving."³¹ Several girls joined hands and stood in a line. The same number of "Rovers" joined hands and stood about twenty feet away, facing the girls. As the Rovers started toward the line of girls, the latter sang:

Here come (number) Rovers arriving, arriving, arriving,
Here come (number) Rovers arriving
To dance the Trizzle-ma-tree.

When the Rovers had arrived, the girls again sang:

Oh won't you take one, sir,
One of us, sir, one of us, sir,
Oh won't you take one of us, sir,
To dance the Trizzle-ma-tree?

To which the Rovers, as previously agreed, sang either:

Oh yes, we'll take one of you, dears,
One of you, dears, one of you, dears,
Oh yes, we'll take one of you, dears,
To dance the Trizzle-ma-tree.

Or:

You're all too black and greasy,
You're all too black and greasy,

³⁰ Subsequent to the completion of the manuscript the author remembered that this game began with the repetition of the lines: "Chickeny Chickeny craney crow, / Went to the wall to wash her toe, / And when she got back one of her chickens was gone." For the most complete discussion of how to play "Chickeny chickeny craney crow," see William Wells Newell, "Game of the Child-Stealing Witch," *Journal of American Folklore*, 3:139-48, esp. 139-40 (April-June, 1890). For other references, see W. H. Babcock, "Song-Games and Myth-Dramas at Washington," *Lippincott's*, March, 1886, pp. 255-6; Dorothy Scarborough, *On the Trail of Negro Folk-Songs* (Cambridge, 1925), 138-9; Mellinger E. Henry, "Nursery Rhymes and Game-Songs from Georgia," *Journal of American Folklore*, 47:335 (October-December, 1934).

³¹ Babcock, "Song-Games and Myth-Dramas," 244-5, describes a game resembling the "Trizzle-ma-tree" ("Sir Ransom Tansom tiddy bo-teek"). "Here comes Three Dukes a-riding" seems to be essentially the same game.

You're all too black and greasy
To dance the Trizzle-ma-tree.

The Rovers continued arriving and retiring till all the girls had been chosen.

The great winter sport, whether at school or near home, was sleigh riding on small sleds. Father made each of us children one, strongly built, well-braced, runners shod with hoop-iron. More than once I failed to go home for dinner and put in the noon hour sleigh riding down the long hill near the schoolhouse. My brothers reported to my mother that I was a tomboy and rode on my sled "belly-busting," all of which was true — but it was so much fun!

A "Christian"³² preacher lived next door to us in my aunt's house and had two boys with whom I loved to play. Indeed I much preferred to play with boys, for girls generally had to be so ladylike and were always playing with dolls. I seemed to have no maternal instincts. Indeed, I was something of a cannibal, for I sometimes used the wax off my doll for chewing-gum. But these Leek boys — the preacher's sons — were real pals. We would steal matches and heavy brown wrapping-paper and go out into the corn patch where we would make and smoke cigars of dry corn silks wrapped in this brown paper. As a smoke they could scarcely be said "to satisfy" but did give us the gratification of doing something unusual. We would also steal salt and cucumbers, peel the cucumbers with a knife or bite off the rind, dip them in salt, and eat heartily. They were supposed to make us ill but never did.

Perhaps because of my unsocial attitude toward other girls, I can remember having attended only one party up to the time I was sixteen years old. The exception was a birthday dinner (or supper) at the home of Cora Watkins, whose father was station agent at the Wabash depot. The guests were half a dozen youngsters of about her own age — all girls.

During these five years in Coin we learned a good many more songs, though singing was not so much a family affair as when we were on the farm. Still, when any of us children were around the house a tune was usually in the air. Besides the songs picked up in school and at literary society, many more were learned from Father's G.A.R. songbook, which he acquired when he became a member of the Grand Army of the Republic shortly after coming to town — although before joining the order he had

³² Disciples of Christ.

first to overcome his wife's opposition. Mother was a rock-ribbed United Presbyterian, and the church barred from membership any member of an oath-bound secret society or lodge. Mother personally thought such organizations wrong. But Father, though himself a United Presbyterian, was a more liberal type of person. He had come from a dancing, singing family, and could see nothing wrong in belonging to such an organization as the G.A.R., whose oath, it seemed to him, wasn't very important or bad. The G.A.R. had a strong organization and wanted Father to join, so he, being nothing loathe, finally persuaded Mother, though with misgivings, to yield her consent. After going with Father to the "family meetings" of the order she soon withdrew all objections and was quite content in her husband's membership. The church made more strenuous resistance, but the G.A.R. was too strong for it, so the church finally gave way and said nothing further, this proving to be the entering wedge for all secret organizations.³³

Many of the Civil War songs were quite melancholy, such as "We're Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground,"³⁴ "Just Before the Battle, Mother," and "Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The Boys are Marching!"³⁵ Of another melancholy Union song I remember only a fragment:

And when worn out with wounds and toil
We sink beneath the southern soil
And with no hope or friends to cheer
Each drooping, dying volunteer. . . .³⁶

Other songs were more cheerful, such as "The Battle Cry of Freedom,"³⁷ "Babylon Has Fallen,"³⁸ "Kingdom Coming" or "The Year of Jubilo,"³⁹

³³ Although the author has included complete or partial texts of most of the following songs, particularly those from the G. A. R. songbook, I give only the titles except in the case of songs which are not well known, are particularly interesting, or are very short.

³⁴ By Walter Kittredge, written 1862, published 1864. Beebe, *Original Collection*, 83.

³⁵ By George F. Root, 1863 and 1864, *ibid.*, 33, 79; Eggleston, *American War Ballads*, 277.

³⁶ The editor has been unable to find anything more about this song. Information will be gratefully received.

³⁷ By George F. Root, 1863, Beebe, *Original Collection*, 55; Eggleston, *American War Ballads*, 273.

³⁸ By the Abolitionist song-writer Henry Clay Work, 1863, honoring the Negro troops in the Union army. Beebe, *Original Collection*, 64; *Minstrel Songs*, 164-5.

³⁹ Another song by Henry Clay Work, 1862, celebrating the Negro slaves who were loyal to the Union. Sigmund Spaeth, *Weep Some More, My Lady* (Garden

"Marching Through Georgia"⁴⁰ and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again."⁴¹

Of several other songs I remember only fragments:

*The Monitor and the Merrimac*⁴²

Fought seven hours with the big Merrimac,
The old Monitor went bobbing around
And drove her about 'till she ran her aground.

Then hoist up the flag and long may it wave,
Over the Union, the home of the brave!
Hoist up the flag and long may it wave,
Over the Union, the home of the brave!

*The Girl I Left Behind Me*⁴³

And when I'm fighting for my flag
And smoke and dust do blind me
I'll not forget to give a thought
To the girl I left behind me.

It was, I believe, to this tune that we sang another song of which I remember only a single line: "I'm lonesome since I crossed the plains."⁴⁴

*The Little Octoroon*⁴⁵

Near the old plantation at the close of day
Stood the weary mother and her child,

City, N. Y., 1927), 115; *Minstrel Songs*, 180-81; Louis Albert Banks, *Immortal Songs of Camp and Field* (Cleveland, 1899), 137-45; Eggleston, *American War Ballads*, 200.

⁴⁰ By Henry Clay Work, 1865. Banks, *Immortal Songs*, 137-45; Beebe, *Original Collection*, 20-21; Eggleston, *American War Ballads*, 270.

⁴¹ Words and music by Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, 1863. For text, see Charles O'Brien Kennedy and David Jordan, *American Ballads, Naughty, Ribald and Classic* (New York, 1952), 180-81.

⁴² The editor has been unable to find other words to the song or anything else about it; it may be the "Grand March, *Monitor*," by E. Mack (1862), which was written in commemoration of the battle. See Spaeth, *History of Popular Music*, 154.

⁴³ The tune of this popular military march is the English "Brighton Camp," which dates back at least to 1770.

⁴⁴ Obviously closely akin to "California Story," quoted from the *Oregon Spectator*, July 14, 1854, in the manuscript collection, *Oregon Songs and Ballads*, compiled by the late Randall V. Mills of the English department of the University of Oregon. It consists of four stanzas, of which the first is: "I'm lonesome since I crossed the plains / And fleeting are my joys: / Since all that's near and dear to me / I left in Illinois."

⁴⁵ The author actually remembered of this little-known song only its general theme — an episode of Sherman's march to the sea, the last two lines of the chorus, and that it was sung to the tune usually associated with "Ring the bells of Heaven,

List'ning to the sounds along the valley's way,
While their hearts with hope were throbbing wild.

Glory, glory! How the free-men sang!
Glory, glory! How the old woods rang!
'Twas the loyal army sweeping to the sea,
Flinging out the banner of the free!

Fly, my precious darling, to the Union camp,
I will keep the hounds and hunters here.
Go right through the forest though 'tis dark and damp,
God will keep you, dear one, never fear.

Chorus:

Where the blazing camp-fires gleamed amid the wood,
And the boys were halting for the night,
In her wondrous beauty Little Rosa stood
Trembling and alone before their sight.

Chorus:

Then the brave old gunner took her in his arms,
Thinking of his own dear ones at home,
And through all the marches and the rude alarms
Safely brought the Little Octoroon.

Chorus:

Other songs emphasized the more amusing side of military life, such as "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines,"⁴⁶ and "The Army Bean."⁴⁷

Other songs sung in Coin were unconnected with the G.A.R. meetings or the G.A.R. songbook. A popular one was:

"There is joy today" but, because of its rarity and interest, I have included the complete text, through the courtesy of Mrs. Rae Korson, reference librarian, Folklore Section, Music Division, Library of Congress. The words and music are by George F. Root, author and composer of numerous better-known Civil War songs, and it was published by Root & Cady, Chicago, 1866. The first two stanzas are also included in Emelyn Elizabeth Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills of New York* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1937), 221; the third stanza and the chorus in Dailey Paskman and Sigmund Spaeth, *Gentlemen, Be Seated* (New York, 1928), 74.

⁴⁶ Words by William Horace Lingard, music by T. Maclagan, introduced into the United States from England in 1868 by the former. Edward Arthur Dolf, *Sound Off!* (New York, 1929), 27-9; B. A. Botkin, *The American Play-Party Song* (University Studies, XXXVII, Nos. 1-4, Lincoln, Nebr., 1937), 154-9; Kennedy and Jordan, *American Ballads*, 223-4.

⁴⁷ Dolf, *Sound Off!*, 318-19, from *Acme Haversack*, 1889; *Old War Songs* (Salt Lake City, n.d.), 7.

*Little Sam*⁴⁸

I'se a rovin' little darky, all the way from Alabam'
 Where I used to hoe the cotton and the cane,
 An' de white folks dey will miss me when they shout for Little Sam
 'Cause I'se never goin' to live with 'em again.
 Oh I left 'em in de night when de moon was shinin' bright
 When I struck out for to find a happy land,
 An' I left my only brother and my dear old aged mother
 For I run away to be a contraband.

Hi, oh, hi! Jes' listen till I tell you who I am!
 I'se a rovin' little darky all the way from Alabam'
 An' I'se free as anybody an' dey calls me Little Sam.

I'se round among the white folks now doin' for 'em all I can
 And they keep me busy workin' all the day,
 And when I does my duty well they pays me like a man,
 An' I'se gonna put my money all away;
 Oh I saves up every cent, 'ceptin' what I'se gonna spend
 For I'se gonna travel down to Alabam'
 For to see my only brother and my dear old aged mother,
 For I ran away to be a contraband.

Two Negro minstrel songs, sung by everyone, were "Golden Slippers"⁴⁹ and "Jordan Am a Hard Road to Trabble."⁵⁰

A "temperance song," heard in school and literary society, was "King Bibbler's Army." A favorite song of my brother David — he may have learned it in his division of school — was "Song of a Thousand Years."⁵¹

⁴⁸ Words and music by the famous Will S. (William Shakespeare) Hays, published by J. L. Peters, New York, 1867. The complete text includes a "middle" stanza. The concluding line, above, should be: "Who will gib a welcome home to 'Little Sam.'" Lucy Harvie Baldwin, *Grandmother's Songs* (privately printed for George J. Baldwin, 1926), includes a complete but rather corrupt text. The above information is by courtesy of Mrs. Rae Korson of the Library of Congress.

⁴⁹ By James A. Bland (1854-1911), best known as the author and composer of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," one of the few Negroes who wrote Negro songs. The complete text can be found in J. Rosamond Johnson, *Rolling Along in Song* (New York, 1937), 154-7; *Minstrel Songs*, 195-7; Scarborough, *Negro Folk-Songs*, 172.

⁵⁰ Written and composed in 1853 by Dan Emmett, best known as the author of "Dixie." *Minstrel Songs*.

⁵¹ Both by Henry Clay Work, the latter written to encourage the Union forces when Lee invaded Virginia in 1863. Banks, *Immortal Songs*, 137-45; *Old War Songs*, 23.

A song which was popular with my brother David and other boys of his age was:

Hush, little baby, don't you cry!
 You'll be an angel bye-and-bye.
 When coffee's high and sugar's low,
 I'll put sugar in my coffee-o!⁵²

A scrap from a song which was a favorite of my brother Sam:⁵³

I took my girl to the restaurant. . . .
 She said she wasn't hungry,
 But this is what she ate:
 A dozen raw, a plate of slaw,
 A chicken and a roast. . . .

Checkers and Authors were the favorite evening games. In Authors the brothers often "ganged up" on me, and when this happened I hadn't a chance. On one such occasion I threw down my cards and rushed from the room, stopping in the doorway only long enough to pronounce what seemed to me a fearful curse: "Dog-gone every last one of you!"

We took three weeklies: *The Coin Eagle*, a local newspaper; *The United Presbyterian*, a religious journal; and *The National Tribune*, a G.A.R. publication. We children were growing up now, and Mother didn't need to read to us as she had on the farm, but she did read aloud from the *Tribune* the "doings" of Si Klegg, a fictitious character who wrote letters home to his sweetheart. One began: "I seat myself and take my pen in hand to tell you that I am well except the dog-on blisters on my feet and I hope you are enjoying the same great blessing." On one occasion he was left to do the cooking and decided to have rice. Not knowing its expansive qualities he nearly filled the kettle, and there was a picture showing the piles of cooked rice which he had deposited on his comrades' blankets, and his look of consternation as the rice continued to boil over.⁵⁴ The *Tribune* also recorded many soldiers' experiences in battle, prison, and camp. And oh dear, oh

⁵² A song of this title, "paying tribute to the eternal fascination of child life," by Morris H. Rosenfeld, appeared in 1884. Spaeth, *History of Popular Music*, 231. This description, however, hardly seems to apply to the scrap quoted.

⁵³ The editor has found no other reference to this satire on feminine gastronomic extravagance.

⁵⁴ H. T. Webster, *American Literature*, Nov., 1939, advances the theory that Wilbur F. Hinman's *Corporal Si Klegg and His 'Pard'*, written in 1887, strongly influenced Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*.

dear, what a terrible man that paper pictured Grover (Veto) Cleveland to be!⁵⁵ Mother also read to us from the life of James A. Garfield,⁵⁶ one of the books for which my brother Lincoln canvassed. I particularly recall Garfield's experiences on the towpath and his speech on the occasion of President Lincoln's death, with the conclusion: "God reigns, and the government at Washington still lives!"

While living on the "forty" Christmas had received little attention — perhaps a stick of barber-pole candy or horehound in our stocking — but when we moved to Coin we found a different atmosphere. The big event was the community Christmas tree. A pine or cedar tree, as large as could be gotten into the Methodist church, was placed solidly on the platform and lavishly decorated with popped corn, tufts of cotton, and many small lighted candles. After a program, Santa Claus appeared and "treated" the children. The next event, and the high point of the evening, was the distribution of the presents, as it was here that everyone brought the gifts for friends and relatives. As many as possible were hung upon the tree and the rest piled around its base. As Santa took each gift from the tree he called the name of both receiver and giver and the presents were carried to the owner by Santa's helpers. This system, of course, gave opportunity for all sorts of jokes, both proper and crude — wrong name of donor; unofficial designation for donee; dolls, toys, etc., to newlyweds. On one occasion a sizable cylindrical box was presented to a rather snobbish citizen. "Oh," said he, much pleased, "a silk hat!" But when he opened the package, as all good sports were expected to do, behold, a utensil designed especially for the bedroom!

Political campaigns in those days were carried on with many speeches, both in and out of doors, torchlight processions, singing, the fife and drum. The campaign of 1884 is the first I remember. The Democratic candidates were Grover Cleveland and Thomas A. Hendricks; the Republicans nominated James G. Blaine, the "Plumed Knight," and John A. Logan, a Civil War hero. The Prohibitionist standard-bearer was John P. St. John.⁵⁷ I

⁵⁵ Grover Cleveland, elected in 1884 as the first Democratic president since before the Civil War, "made a determined effort to weed out laxness and fraud in the granting of pensions." He vetoed 233 "special" pension bills. Arthur Meier Schlesinger, *Political and Social Growth of the United States, 1852-1933* (New York, 1935), 181.

⁵⁶ William Ralston Balch, *The Life and Public Career of Gen. James A. Garfield* (Philadelphia, 1880).

⁵⁷ John P. St. John (1833-1916), governor of Kansas, 1879-1883, led in the suc-

remember the Republican torchlight processions and a few words of one of their songs: "It's Blaine and Logan, hold the fort!" My mother was strongly Prohibitionist, so she and Father, a few nights before the election, went to Blanchard where the Reverend William Johnston, a fine talker and a thoroughly good man, spoke for the Prohibitionists. Every time he mentioned James G. Blaine the Republicans would break into cheers and drown the speaker out. Before this my father had been a Republican,⁵⁸ but, believing in free speech, he was so thoroughly disgusted that when election day came he voted for John P. St. John. My mother thought so much of Mr. Johnston's views that she pinned a newspaper clipping, in which they were expressed, to the fly-leaf of the family Bible.

The two churches in Coin were the United Presbyterian, to which my parents belonged, and the Methodist. The United Presbyterians moved along in the even tenor of their ways, holding Sabbath School and church and Wednesday evening prayer meetings each week and observing Communion at stated times. We children continued on Sabbath afternoons to study the catechism and to memorize Bible verses. The latter was rather easy for me and as a prize I received a book, "Always Happy," from my teacher, a Mrs. Love. The United Presbyterian preachers during my stay in Coin were R. M. Sherrard and John Pattison, both very kindly gentlemen. Mr. Pattison came over one day and wanted me to unite with the

cessful fight to add to the state constitution in 1880 an amendment prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes — the first such constitutional amendment in history. In 1884 as Prohibition candidate for the presidency he is credited with having been a principal factor in the election of Cleveland, since he polled so many Prohibition votes in upstate New York from normally Republican electors that the state went to the Democratic candidate. See *Dictionary of American Biography*, 16:303-304.

⁵⁸ James W Wiggins, whatever his political views may once have been, was probably not as good a Republican at this time as his daughter assumed. His younger son, S. T. Wiggins, who was four years older than his sister, informed me in 1945 — and confirmed the statement in 1953 in a conversation with his older daughter, Mrs. Fred L. Thomas (letter to the editor, May 25, 1953) — that in 1880 his father voted for General James B. Weaver of Iowa, the Greenback candidate for the presidency — a logical enough choice for a poor Iowa farmer and Union veteran. In 1892 as Populist candidate General Weaver received a popular vote of over a million and 22 votes in the electoral college — a record for a "third party" candidate up to that time and, with the exception of Theodore Roosevelt on the Progressive ticket in 1912, up to the present time as well. Mrs. Wiggins, obviously a woman of strongly independent political views, is classed by her son as "a Prohibitionist and Populist," presumably meaning that, although she could not vote in the presidential elections, she threw her influence to one or another of these parties, according to circumstances.

church, but I had learned to sing hymns by hearing others sing them, especially at revival meetings, and had become so attached to hymn singing that I didn't want to promise to give it up. My parents thought I was too young to join the church, so didn't urge me.

Things were more lively at the Methodist church, especially when the revival season was on. United Presbyterians often attended these meetings but took no part in the singing, since they believed that the use in worship of man-made songs was wrong. This prohibition did not, however, apply to singing hymns outside of church and not in worship. Even my strict mother was fond of such uninspired religious songs as "Oh for a Closer Walk with God!"⁵⁹ "When I Can Read My Title Clear to Mansions in the Skies,"⁶⁰ "The Home of the Soul,"⁶¹ and another of which one stanza goes:

The wondering world enquires to know
Why I should love my Jesus so,
What are his charms say they above
The object of immortal love.⁶²

There was always plenty of excitement at the revivals — much singing, loud praying, emotional sermons, and personal testimonies from many. There was nothing peculiar about the sermons, as both the ministers during our stay had good sense. The Rev. Mr. Lymer was a very retiring, quiet young man; and Dr. Wickersham, who became a rather noted preacher and appeared on Chautauqua programs, although he liked some excitement was not carried away by it. Western Kansas, rather than Iowa, was the region to furnish queer things in religion. The Methodist church always had its "Amen Corner" where six to a dozen old men would sit and, individually or in chorus, shout "Amen!" whenever the preacher would make some telling statement or a brother or sister would give an outstanding testimony. The usual run of a testimony was, "I've been a Christian now for (a certain number of) years. Pray for me that I may ever be faithful." Then would follow fervent "Amens" from members of the congregation and es-

⁵⁹ By William Cowper, published 1772. John Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology* (London, 1908), 1625, col. ii; 1626, col. i; 1680, col. ii.

⁶⁰ By Isaac Watts, published 1707, *ibid.*, 1269, cols. i-ii.

⁶¹ By Ellen Gates, nee Huntington, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, *ibid.*, 1565, col. i.

⁶² Not found in Julian, although he lists a hymn, "The Wondering Nations Have Beheld," by Anna Steele (1716-1778). *Ibid.*, 1089, cols. i-ii; 1090, col. i. The lines quoted certainly smack of eighteenth century evangelism.

pecially from the Corner. Occasionally some one would give a minute or two of exhortation in connection with his testimony. During the testimony period it was quite customary for someone to start a familiar song and all would join in. "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"⁶³ was a favorite in the Amen Corner, and was often "started" by Mr. McMichael, a very fine, devout old gentleman.

During one revival a mother became so much concerned over one of her sons that her mind became unbalanced. She would sit quietly enough during the sermon, but shortly after the testimonies and singing began she would become excited and hard to manage. She would rush forward to the minister and, in an attempt to display her gratitude for his endeavors on her son's behalf and to plead for their continuance, would try to embrace him. Her demonstrations became so embarrassing that Dr. Wickersham asked a couple of the men to see that she was restrained. On one occasion, however, she nearly got away from them, whereupon the minister cried out in alarm: "Hold her, boys, hold her!"

Shortly after we moved to Coin, Father got the job of running a meat wagon for the local butcher, Andy Miller. What might be described as a very large box with a door was placed upon the rear of our spring wagon and in this was kept ice and the meat, which Father about three times a week would sell to butcher shops in nearby towns and to country customers along the way. The ice was provided without aid of man by the many freezing days and nights of an Iowa winter. When the ice on creek or river was frozen as deep as desired, it was sawed into convenient pieces, put into a sort of cellar, well lined with straw, and an abundance of straw heaped over it. Father helped do the butchering, and as often as he wished might bring home as much liver as he desired without charge. Once in a while I was allowed to go with him on his trips, but not often, for he was up and away very early in the morning. Mother would prepare a lunch for us of pie or cookies, bread and butter, and cheese; sometimes we had thick sweet crackers, rather a luxury. Always we could have the most delicious bologna, made by Mr. Miller. I don't recall that Father and I did much talking as we jogged along behind old Sam and Fan; I think we didn't need to talk. Sometimes we did sing.

The prices of foodstuffs were much less than now. Milk was five cents

⁶³ By Robert Robinson, an English Nonconformist; first published in 1758 or 1759. *Ibid.*, 252, cols. i-ii; 969, cols. i-ii; 970, col. i.

per quart; butter, fifteen or twenty cents a pound; good beefsteak, fifteen cents per pound; liver — nothing. But if prices were low, so were wages, and we had to resort to various devices in order to make both ends meet. For a time Father and the boys were janitors of the United Presbyterian church. My older brother continued his activities as a book salesman and on Garfield's assassination added *The Life of James A. Garfield to Grant Around the World*.⁶⁴ Mother continued to weave many yards of carpet for customers bringing their own rags, also for her own use and to sell. It was a proud day when she brought home from Shenandoah, where she had been selling carpet to the furniture store, a brand new dresser and a Brussels rug to put in front of it. She also "boarded" and "roomed" a teacher throughout most school years. One was a rather whiny primary teacher. Another was a Mr. Andrews, who taught my room and once brought my dinner to me when I had elected to stay at school and slide down hill. He also taught us a song of which I recall only:

Oh my Susan Jane, she met me at the door,
And she said I'd better not come for to see her any more.
Her hair is long and curly and her neck is like a crane,
And I'm going for to leave you — Good-bye, my Susan Jane.⁶⁵

A Mr. Blakely who worked in a blacksmith shop was at our house part of the time and roomed with my brothers; he was a crotchety sort of person and they were more than a little in awe of him. My younger brother was quite a snorer, and one night Mr. Blakely was tried beyond his patience. He arose and shook the offender very roughly indeed, remarking with emphasis: "Now you lie awake while I snore awhile!" Unfortunately the disturber wasn't roused enough to know that he had been shaken and no sooner had Mr. Blakely returned to his bed than the snoring began again. The older brother lay wide awake, hugely enjoying the whole procedure but not daring to laugh or make a move.

My brothers could always make money. Shortly after we left the forty my older brother had come into possession of a little colt of old Fan's which developed into a beautiful iron-gray horse and was sold for \$150. This amount was invested in a small house, bought by my father and this brother,

⁶⁴ *General Grant Abroad: A Complete Account of His Famous Trip Around the World* (Chicago, 1879).

⁶⁵ By Will S. Hays, 1871. *Minstrel Songs*, 18-20. See also Randolph, *Ozark Folk-songs*, 3:184-5.

which was a source of monthly income. This same brother worked for farmers round about during the summers, and the younger brother helped one summer in a grocery store run by a Mr. Taylor, at a wage of \$3.00 per week.

My own business speculations were varied and fantastic. I despised sewing carpet rags even at five cents a pound, but wanted an organ so badly that I decided to earn one at the carpet-rag sewing business. However, after sewing four or five pounds, I gave up the venture, solving the organ problem for the time by informing Mother that "it would be so much nicer just to take the money and buy one." My older brother bought a strip of our lot a few feet wide from Father and developed quite a fine strawberry bed from which he realized several dollars. So, like Urias [Darius] Green with his flying machine,⁶⁶ I thought that if my brother could make money from a strawberry patch, so could I. The purchase price, however, was the catch. My brother solved the problem so far as he was concerned by proposing that I wash his work socks at two pairs for a nickel, and thus pay out. How he must have been laughing up his sleeve at his little ninny of a sister! I soon tired of the laundry business and took my pay to date in candy. Again taking my cue from this brother, who had done considerable peddling of such articles as needles, pin cushions, scissors, lead pencils, little velvet picture frames, and Royal Glue which was "guaranteed to mend everything solid as rock, hard as adamant," I embarked on my last financial venture. I borrowed his outfit and had sold a few articles when I stopped at a home where the lady of the house gave me such a tongue lashing for my unladylike conduct in going about as a peddler that I went home quite crestfallen.

My soul abhorred patchwork and dish washing, much to the disgust of my aunt, who made her home with us when she was not teaching, and my grandmother, who came out from Pennsylvania and visited with us a year. I haven't a doubt that I was lazy, but somehow work was presented as something to be avoided if possible, and I think it could as well have been made somewhat attractive. I didn't get on well with either my aunt or my grandmother, but one day, when I must have been on my good behavior, my grandmother gave me a very pretty translucent mug; and then one day

⁶⁶ "Darius Green and His Flying Machine," by John Townsend Trowbridge (1827-1916), a popular poetic recitation noted for its lines, "The birds can fly / And why can't I?"

when I was naughty she took it away from me and never gave it back. Mother would talk to me, and I would promise to try to do better, but I was forever sinning and repenting and didn't make much progress. Father didn't sympathise with their management of me and on one occasion when I had fled to the barn, which was my refuge in trouble, and was sitting on the manger feeling very sorry for myself, my younger brother followed me and said, "Father says you'd do a lot better if you weren't scolded so much." This did me a world of good, but nothing save my own laziness was to blame the morning I hid the dirty dishes well back in the dark closet under the stairway. When Mother was ready to get dinner neither pots, pans, nor plates were to be found, and when I saw her coming up the walk toward the barn, where I was with Father, I knew I was in for trouble. She had a small switch in hand and I started for the house before she reached me, but took time for a glance at Father, who smiled *at* me, not *on* me, as I well knew, and that hurt worse than any switch. I washed the dishes and never repeated *that* trick.

In the spring of 1885 my brothers had finished all the work offered in the Coin school. The older brother decided he wanted to be a druggist and got a job with Loy & Berryhill at \$10 per month, boarding himself. The younger wanted to be a farmer. Iowa land was far above our purse, but Father's health was much improved, farming methods somewhat easier, and the younger brother past fifteen and quite able to work, so it was decided that Father and brother should make a trip to Kansas, and, if they liked the country, we would move there. They came back quite "enthused." Father had taken two claims, a homestead and a tree-claim, and the prospect of owning 320 acres was indeed alluring — so much so that the older brother almost decided to make the move with us, but his employers offered to raise his wages and he remained in Coin. After much discussing, planning, packing of articles both to take with us in the covered wagon and to ship by railroad, we were finally ready; on the afternoon of June 11, 1885, old Sam and Fan were hitched to the "prairie schooner" and we were off to seek our fortune in the Sunflower State.