

CYRUS BUSSEY'S BOYHOOD

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH¹

I was born in Hubbard, Trumbull County, Ohio, on October 5, 1833, the son of Amos Bussey, born in same county in 1806, the grandson of Edward Bussey, born in Maryland in 1782, the great grandson of Edward Bussey, who served as second lieutenant and first lieutenant in the Revolutionary War, and the great great grandson of Edward Bussey, of Harford County, Maryland, who died in 1787, leaving nine children, one Major Bennett Bussey, a distinguished officer in the Revolutionary War. My great grandmother was Ruth Colgate, of Harford County, Maryland, a daughter of Benj. Colgate and his wife, Charity Wheeler, a descendant of Major John Wheeler, who was a member of the Council of Maryland under Lord Baltimore in 1660. My grandmother was Nancy Smith, a daughter of Rev. Amos Smith, who moved from Maryland to Monongehela County, Virginia. Amos Smith had five daughters, and seven sons. All his sons served in the War of 1812.

My great grandfather, Edward Bussey, died in the Revolutionary War. His widow, Ruth Colgate Bussey, moved with her four children to Monongehela County, Virginia, and thence to Trumbull County, Ohio.

George Bussey had come to Virginia in 1635. He came with the Bennetts to Maryland in 1650 and settled on the Patuxent River in Calvert County where, as early as 1654, he paid taxes on about 1000 acres of land. He died in 1668, leaving a will, naming three sons, George, Hezekiah, and Paul. George died in 1693 leaving a will naming six children, George, Edward, James, Henry, Ann, and Mary. Ed-

¹ This manuscript was presented to the State Historical Society by Mr. Cyrus B. Hillis, of Des Moines, Iowa.

ward Bussey, son of George (2) married Martha Evans on August 10, 1701. These are the ancestors of Edward Bussey of Harford County, who died in 1787.

My mother's name was Hannah Tylee, daughter of Samuel Tylee, who moved from Middletown, Connecticut, and was the first settler in Hubbard Township, Trumbull County, Ohio, in 1801. Her grandfather was Samuel Tylee, who married Hannah Emmons (a sister of the Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Emmons, a celebrated divine), at East Haddam, Connecticut, in 1760. Her great grandfather was Thomas Tylee of Essex, Connecticut. Hannah Emmons was a daughter of Samuel Emmons and his wife, Ruth Cone, of East Haddam. An ancestor of Samuel Emmons was Thomas Emmons who came to Newport, Rhode Island, in 1638, and later settled in Boston, joining the old South Church in 1648. My grandmother on my mother's side was Annie Sanford, whose mother was Annie Hubbard, of Middletown, Connecticut.

I was my father's third child. On the sixth of October, 1833, the day after I was born, he was licensed to exhort, in the Methodist Church at Youngstown, by the Reverend David Mack, preacher in charge. On the 18th day of July, 1835, he was licensed to preach, at the same church, by the Reverend Wilber B. Mack, presiding elder. He remained a local preacher and was again licensed to preach on July 15, 1836, by the Reverend Ira Eddy, presiding elder, and the following year, 1837, he was admitted to the Erie Conference. That Conference being full, he was transferred to the Indiana Conference, and appointed to the Greensburg Circuit, being then thirty-one years of age.

I was just four years old when my father moved his family to Beavertown, Pennsylvania, and thence by steamboat down the Ohio River to Aurora, Indiana, and from there by wagons to Greensburg. I remember the trip distinctly

and also many incidents in my life of four years in Ohio. My father's circuit covered a large territory and kept him travelling most of the time. In 1839 he was appointed to the Paris Circuit in Jennings County, where he remained two years. Then one year at Rising Sun, two at Manchester, and two at Vevay. In 1846 he was stationed at Columbus, at which time I was thirteen years old.

It would be difficult for the reader of the present day to understand the condition of Indiana and other western States at that time. The country was sparsely settled, the towns and villages small, the people poor. There were very few churches or schoolhouses, with no public school system, and the private schools, affording but one term of three months in a year, gave little opportunity to acquire an education. My father's family increased, and he was so poorly supported that he was not able to send his children to better schools away from home. He travelled a circuit which required him to preach seven to ten times each week. To meet these appointments he must travel on horseback nearly every day, in all kinds of weather, and accept such hospitality as the country afforded.

His salary averaged about \$300 a year, rarely as much as \$400, and with this he must feed and clothe his family, and feed a horse. A considerable part of the salary was paid in the trade and barter of the country. I have known my father to spend every idle day for a whole year, in the hardest kind of manual labor in the work of erecting a church, wearing out his clothes, but receiving no compensation. He was a successful minister, and always left his charges greatly increased in membership. He was a fluent speaker, and during his ministry of over thirty years never wrote a sermon.

In the winter of 1846, I attended school three months at Columbus, Indiana, my studies being reading, writing,

arithmetic, and geography. I went half through Ray's *Arithmetic*. I never studied grammar. By the spring of 1847, I had finished my education in school, and entered a store just being established, as a clerk. The building had stood all winter unoccupied and without windows or doors. The rain had beaten in, making the floor wet. Doors and windows had just been put in but the locks had not been put on the doors. I was required to sleep in the store as the doors could be barred from the inside. Goods were piled on the counters to the ceiling, so that it was necessary for me to make a bed on the floor. The next morning I awoke with a heavy cold and a severe attack of tonsillitis, which confined me to my bed for three weeks, and left me subject to many attacks during more than half my life. Indeed, I never recovered fully from the effects of that first severe cold. Up to that time I enjoyed perfect health.

In October, 1847, my father was again appointed to the Paris Circuit, and moved by the Madison Railroad to Dupont, Indiana, where he was the guest of David A. Fish overnight, going the next day by wagons to Paris. Mr. Fish had a large store at Dupont, where he did an extensive business. I had not been in town ten minutes before I was behind the counter putting goods in order, and waiting on customers who thronged the store. Mr. Fish was quick to take notice of my actions and asked me if I would not like to remain with him, and accept a permanent clerkship in his store. I was only too glad to accept and my father at once gave his consent. I was just fourteen years old and very small for my age.

I found a most delightful home in the family of Mr. Fish, whose wife was Alice Jane Hill, a daughter of Milton Hill, of Paris, a woman of beauty and goodness, who made me feel as much at home as in my mother's house. The business of the firm was extensive. In addition to keeping all

kinds of goods, the firm packed pork, and worked a large number of men in the manufacture of barrels, tierces, and hogsheads. The purchase of material, its receipt, the shipment of cooperage goods, and weighing of hogs gave considerable labor, in every department of which, in addition to my duties in the store, I was, from time to time engaged.

When I was not yet fifteen years old my father wanted me to go to Ohio, to attend to some business for him at Hubbard, Trumbull County, and bring home several hundred dollars, which was due my mother from the estate of her father, Samuel Tylee, who died in 1845. Mr. Fish gave his consent, and I left for Madison on the 1st of April, 1848, where I took a steamboat for Cincinnati, and there changed to a boat for Beavertown, Pennsylvania, at which place I engaged passage with a gentleman driving a two horse spring wagon for Youngstown, Ohio. We started at one o'clock, but found the roads so bad that after being stuck in the mud most of the afternoon, we arrived at a tavern five miles from Beavertown at dark, where we stayed over night, and where I found an empty four horse wagon going to Youngstown. The driver said I could ride with him.

I was dressed in a suit of fine broadcloth clothes with silver buttons made to order by a tailor, expressly for my visit to the place of my birth, where I was to see my Grandfather Bussey and many other relatives. I had never before worn such fine clothes, and was no doubt proud of my appearance. I sat on a board laid across the wagon bed with the driver, a rough countryman whom I soon noticed looking at my fine clothes. The roads were very muddy and the country rolling, up and down hill. The driver soon determined to have some fun at my expense, and took delight in running his horses down the long muddy hills, when the wheels would throw the mud all over me. It was useless to protest. When I arrived at the hotel in Youngs-

town, I was a sight to behold. When I wrote my name on the register, the proprietor recognized it and proved to be a relative. He had a boy just my size, who brought me a suit which I put on, and sent mine to a tailor, who returned it the next afternoon, cleaned, pressed, and as good as new. The next day I visited Hubbard, where several of my mother's brothers and sisters lived, and the next went three miles to the home of my Grandfather Edward Bussey, on a beautiful farm, where I found a large family of girls, and one son unmarried. They were making maple sugar which interested me very much.

At the end of my visit of three weeks, I received from Jekial Clingan, the money I went for, which I put in a safe place in my clothing, and had it sewed in, and prepared to leave for home. I heard the remark made by some of my relatives that my father was a very foolish man to send so small a boy on so long a journey, after so much money, and predicting that I would never reach home with it. I do not remember a time when my father did not have implicit confidence in my ability to do successfully anything I undertook, and I know that he did not have any anxiety about my safe return. I went to the home of my Uncle Jesse Bussey and stayed all night, and the next morning, my cousin, Smith Bussey, took me to Sharon, Pennsylvania, where I found a canal boat loaded with cheese, going to Beavertown. Although it was a freight boat, without accommodations for passengers, I was taken on board. I had to eat the rough fare provided for the men who ran the boat, but I enjoyed the trip. At New Castle I bought some cakes at a bakery and got through to Beaver all right, and was soon on board a boat for Cincinnati.

I arrived at home in good health and without accident, and was soon at work in the store. Mr. Fish was the postmaster, and kept the post office in the store where I slept. One of my duties was to make up and change the mail. An

express train left Madison at 3 A. M. and passed through Dupont without stopping at 4 A. M. I had to stand on the platform and hold the mail bag, so that the agent could catch it on his arm. In winter this was long before daylight. When the shutters were put up and the windows all closed I was in total darkness, even in daylight. I had no one to wake me, and no alarm clocks existed at that time. Yet I never failed to deliver the mail during two years I had this duty to perform. I remained up, built a fire, and read some useful book until after daylight. During this time I read Rollins's *Ancient History*, Plutarch's *Lives*, many of Scott's novels, Humboldt's *Cosmos*, and other useful books.

Madison, Indiana, was the terminus on the Ohio River of the only railroad in the State and was a large wholesale market where goods were bought as needed to keep up the stock. I kept a memorandum of goods needed, and after I had been with Mr. Fish a year was occasionally sent to Madison to buy goods in a small way to replenish the stock. In this way I made the acquaintance of the wholesale merchants who seemed to be pleased with my business activity. Several of them told me that when I wanted to go into business on my account they would sell me all the goods I wanted on the usual credit. When I was sixteen years old I reluctantly severed my relations with Mr. Fish, bought about \$4000.00 worth of goods and commenced business in Scott County. Had a post office established called Camargo, and was appointed postmaster.

For nearly a year I did a prosperous business, but needing assistance in its management, I decided to take a partner, and move to Wooster, in the same county. Thomas Logan owned a good farm, horses and wagons and seemed capable of being of service to me in looking after much outside business. I took him into the firm as a partner. I soon found I had made a mistake, and tried to buy Mr.

Logan's interest, but he would not sell. He made a proposition to buy my interest, he to assume all liabilities of the firm, close out the business, and pay me one half the net profits. I accepted and turned the business over to him. I left immediately for Dupont to remain with Mr. Fish in the store until the business was settled before beginning again.

Arriving at Mr. Fish's home just at supper time I found the family all glad to see me. I did not ask Mr. Fish if he wanted a clerk but saw in his manner that he was glad I had returned. As soon as supper was over I went to the store and went to work, and remained several months without having any conversation with Mr. Fish about my position. Mr. Logan lost no time in converting the assets of the firm into money, and without paying one dollar of the debts which I owed, left the country, and hid himself somewhere in the far west. My creditors called upon me to pay my indebtedness. I had nothing to pay with. After spending months in a fruitless effort to find Logan, I made a proposition to my creditors, that if they would furnish me another stock of goods, I would commence business again, take no partner, pay each one pro rata as fast as I could realize on the goods sold, and continue the business until I paid all I owed. This they agreed to do, and I moved to Henryville, Clark County, a small town on the Jeffersonville and Indianapolis Railroad, then being constructed. I built a store house and was soon ready for business.

My brother Harvey, four years my senior, who had graduated from the Medical College at Indianapolis and later from the Cincinnati Medical College, also located there to practice his profession. His office was in a room adjoining the store which he and I used as a bedroom. I applied to have a post office established and was appointed postmaster. I was also railroad agent. I found considerable time at night and in the morning before business became active for reading. As I had access to a good medical library, I

commenced the study of medicine. I began with Wilson's *Anatomy*, and went through a complete course, reading all the leading textbooks twice, and making elaborate notes, receiving instructions almost every day from my brother, and one or two other doctors of the town with whom I was on friendly terms. I was a diligent student, was up at 4 o'clock in the morning, and studied until breakfast time. During the day I carried my book with me, and every moment when not occupied in the store I was reading.

My father was an early riser. All my life I had to get up long before daylight in winter and eat breakfast at six. This habit has followed me all my life. I have always been ready for breakfast at seven or eight o'clock when in ordinary health, regardless of the hour at which I retired. I was so absorbed in my medical studies that I had no time for miscellaneous reading. When my brother was absent I would prescribe, extract teeth, or perform minor surgical operations for those calling at the office for medical attention. I spent three years in the study of medicine but never attended a medical college, preferring the business in which I was engaged. The medical knowledge thus acquired has been of great service to me all my life.

In February, 1852, when I was eighteen years old, I took letters of recommendation from Mr. Fish to several wholesale houses in Philadelphia, and went there to buy goods. The trip by steamboat from Louisville to Cincinnati and thence by railroad to Pittsburgh *via* Cleveland was a hard one. The weather was very cold. The cars were frequently delayed for hours either off the track or waiting to meet trains that were delayed. At Pittsburgh I stayed all night at the Monongehela House, and left the next morning on the Pennsylvania Railroad for Philadelphia. Thirty miles out, the road not being completed, we took a stagecoach for eleven miles, where we took cars again and reached the foot of the mountains at 4 P. M. and at 10 P. M. had crossed

over by stationary engines, and proceeded on my journey without further detention, changed cars at Hollidaysburgh, and again at Dillersville, arriving at Philadelphia at 11 o'clock, A. M.

I had made the acquaintance of a gentleman on the train who informed me he was going to stop at the Girard House just opened and asked me to go with him. I was assigned a room, and after a hasty toilet looked about and read a card of rules on the door, at the bottom it said "terms \$2.00 per day", and I almost fainted. I had never paid more than \$1.00 per day, and was not now going to submit to such extravagant rates. I ate my dinner, paid my bill, took my valise, and walked out to find a cheaper hotel. After walking several squares I came to the Van Buren House, terms one dollar a day. I registered my name, left my valise, and went to call on some of the merchants to whom I had letters, among them Julian Mason and Co. and Atwood & Co., where I found a Mr. Sparhawk, a member of the firm, who told me the Van Buren House was not a suitable hotel for me to stop at. He said he lived at the Franklin House on Chestnut Street, advised me to stop there, and invited me to take supper with him. Fearing that this was another two dollar a day house, I sought an opportunity to inquire the terms, which were \$1.50 per day. I again wrote my name on the hotel register feeling that I was about to indulge in a piece of extravagance which was not justified. This incident shows the moderate prices prevailing for hotel accommodations at that time, and notwithstanding the fact that I was handling considerable sums of money, that I practiced the strictest economy in all my personal expenses. I bought a nice stock of goods, and after ten days spent in seeing all that was interesting in the city I returned home.

At the election of 1854 I cast my first vote, it being for

the Honorable Wm. H. English, the Democratic candidate for Congress. In June of that year I went to Rockford, Jackson County, on business, and was introduced to Miss Ellen Kiser, daughter of Dr. Wm. P. Kiser, with whom I spent a pleasant evening. It proved to be a case of love at first sight. Other visits followed and a pleasant correspondence led to our engagement on the 29th of October, followed by our marriage on the 15th of May, 1855. I had made enough if converted into money to pay all I owed, and I decided to sell my business and move to Iowa. L. B. Gurnsey, whose father was a prosperous farmer near town, had been for some time a clerk in my store, and knew what the business was worth. I said to the father that if he would assume all my liabilities, and give me \$75.00 to pay the expenses of myself and wife to Iowa, that I would turn over to him everything I had. He accepted, and is now — 1905 — after 50 years, still in business in the house I built.

I was then at the age when young men usually graduated from college and commenced their business or professional career. I had no college education, and was without money, but I had more than ten years experience which no college student could ever acquire after graduating, as such experience can only be had by commencing as a boy, at the bottom round of the ladder, learning every detail, and doing work that a man would not do. This experience was worth more to me than a large sum of money. I did not have a moment's anxiety about the future. I was most happily married, and was confident of my ability to care for my family.

Iowa as a young and growing State was at this time attracting attention. I had had correspondence with a friend who recommended Bloomfield in Davis County as a good place to establish a store. I determined to go there, and on the 27th day of July started on the journey *via* Louisville,

and thence by boat to St. Louis, where we arrived on the last day of the month.

Although I was a stranger to every one in St. Louis, the wholesale market in which Iowa merchants usually bought their goods, I started out to buy a stock of goods on credit, since I had no money. I called on Samuel McCartney & Co., the largest wholesale grocery house in the city, and told Mr. McCartney I wanted to buy \$1000 worth of goods on the usual time. He asked me where I was doing business. I replied that I was going to Bloomfield, Iowa, to establish a business. He said he did not want to sell any goods to go to Bloomfield, that every merchant from that town who had bought goods of him had failed. I said, "Mr. McCartney the time will come when you will be glad to sell me all the goods I want to buy", and left him.

A little farther down the street I found a new store, filled to the ceiling with groceries, the floor unsoiled. The firm was Bast, Wiley & Bast. I explained my plans to Mr. George Wiley, who took my order for \$1017 worth of groceries. I then asked Mr. Wiley to introduce me to a good boot and shoe house. He took me to Dickson, Orr & Co. saying he had just sold me a nice bill of groceries. Mr. Dickson took my order for boots and shoes, and introduced me to Martin & Co., who sold me clothing, and then to David Pierce, of whom I bought hats and caps and he to Chauncey I. Filley for Queensware, and to other firms, the goods all being consigned to Alexandria, Missouri, five miles below Keokuk, that being the nearest point from which to haul the goods to Bloomfield. When I got on board the boat with my wife, I figured up and found myself in debt to the amount of \$7200.00.

We reached Keokuk on the 2nd day of August, and left next morning in the stage for Bloomfield. Cholera had broken out in St. Louis several days before and was spread-

ing along the river. Before we were five miles from Keokuk, I was attacked by cholera symptoms, but I had supplied myself with cholera remedies, and I was able to control the disease, lying down on the stage seat all day. We arrived at Keosauqua at 10 P. M. and on the next day, Saturday, August 4th, at 4 P. M., we reached Bloomfield. The public square was filled with people listening to a Democratic speech by Harvey Dunlavy. The election was held on Monday, and resulted in the defeat of the whole Democratic ticket, Hon. Samuel A. Moore being elected county judge by 700 majority. It was under these circumstances that I announced myself a Democrat. The Reverend M. Miller whom I had known in Indiana when I lived in Dupont had moved to Bloomfield a few months earlier and had rented the elegant home of Judge H. W. Briggs whose wife had recently died, the judge and their children remaining as boarders in the house. Mr. and Mrs. Miller kindly took us in, giving us a large front room on the second floor.

Two days after our arrival at Bloomfield, Mr. Carson, a prominent merchant who had just returned from St. Louis, died of the cholera. The disease spread through the town. Many of the most prominent people died and business was paralyzed. I secured a store on the southwest corner of the public square, by purchasing a few hundred dollars worth of goods the owner had on hand. It was more than a month after my arrival before I received my goods. I borrowed \$200.00 from John B. Glenn, a druggist, to pay the freight on my goods at Alexandria, and paid for hauling them to Bloomfield in goods, as I had only two dollars and fifty cents of the \$75.00 with which I started for Iowa left on my arrival.

When I opened my store on the 10th of September I had increased my indebtedness to over \$8000.00 but soon had a fair trade. I understood the value of a good credit and as

soon as I had in hand \$50 or \$100 sent it to some one I owed and continued to remit until all my creditors had been paid something on account. I had no difficulty in buying on orders all the goods I needed to keep up my stock.

The winter of 1855-1856 was the severest and coldest in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant. The thermometer was often 25 degrees below zero, with heavy snow, which lay on the ground all winter. I got up at 6 o'clock, got to my store nearly half a mile from the house at 7 o'clock, built a wood fire in the stove, and when the room got warm enough swept it out. My wife was perfectly happy and contented, and spent a part of almost every day with me in the store. She was always bright and cheerful and made my home a paradise. In February, 1856, after I had been in business five months, I took account of stock, and found I had made seventeen hundred dollars. This gave me great satisfaction.

In October, 1856, my father, at my request, transferred from the Indiana to the Iowa Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was stationed at Bloomfield. Later my wife's brother, Oscar Kiser, who had been for many years in business at Rockford, Indiana, came to Bloomfield and took an interest in my business. We bought out the firm of Briggs & Sawyer, thereby securing a larger store building. We built a Park House² and a large brick smoke house and packed 2000 to 3000 hogs each winter. Later Dr. D. B. Hillis, whose wife was a sister to Mr. Kiser and my wife, was admitted to the firm. We did a larger business and were all employed.

A trivial incident sometimes turns the current of a man's whole life. In the summer of 1858, a Fourth of July celebration was arranged for West Grove, ten miles west of Bloomfield. A committee came to invite Judge Samuel A. Moore, county judge, to deliver the oration. The judge had a

² So written in the manuscript. Possibly it should be "Pork House".

prior engagement, and knew that nearly every man in town who was qualified was also engaged. He said to the committee, "ask Bussey to go". I saw them coming across the square and listened to their invitation. I told them I had never made a Fourth of July address, and did not have time to prepare one. They expressed their regret and retired. In a short time the committee returned, accompanied by Judge Moore. The Judge said, "Young man, you will have to commence this kind of business some time, and this is a good opportunity". I thought perhaps I had made a mistake in declining, and told them I would come and do my best. I had two weeks to prepare. Many of the leading men of the county were present in the large audience assembled, and spoke favorably of my address.

The next summer the Democratic county convention met to nominate candidates for the various offices to be voted for by the people. No one had spoken to me about being a candidate; nor had the thought entered my mind. I was busy in my store, and had not been near the convention or talked with a delegate. About three o'clock in the afternoon a committee came from the convention to notify me that I had been nominated for State Senator. They asked me to come to the convention and accept the nomination. I went, made a short speech, saying they would hear from me in the campaign, and hurried back to my store. I learned that the delegates from West Grove and other townships had secured my nomination. The Republicans nominated as my competitor, Judge Samuel A. Moore who had been elected county judge by seven hundred majority four years before. He was a man of large experience, had served in the Indiana legislature, was a fine speaker, and was confident of being elected.

I published appointments in every township in the county, and invited Judge Moore to meet me. We divided

the time, speaking three hours at each meeting. I proved equal to the emergency, and was elected by a majority of 305 votes. I told the Judge this would not have happened if he had not urged me to go to West Grove.

The legislature convened on the 1st day of January, 1860. I arranged to take my wife and daughter Cora, then sixteen months old, to Des Moines, to spend the winter with me. We left Bloomfield in a two horse spring wagon, when the thermometer was twelve degrees below zero, the ground covered with a heavy snow, and the wind blowing a gale from the northwest. It was impossible to avoid great suffering from the cold. My father was at this time stationed at Knoxville, Marion County. We stopped there one day to visit my father's family, whom we had not seen for a year.

The Senate was composed of twenty-one Republicans, and twenty-one Democrats. When all were present the Lieutenant Governor, a Republican, gave the casting vote. I was the youngest member of the Senate, which contained some able men, among them J. F. Wilson, later United States Senator from Iowa, Alvin Saunders, United States Senator from Nebraska, David S. Wilson, of Dubuque, John W. Rankin, of Keokuk, W. F. Coolbaugh, a leading banker of Burlington, H. G. Angle, of Cedar Rapids, and others. Party lines were closely drawn. The refusal of Governor Kirkwood to surrender Barclay Coppoc, one of the John Brown raiders into Virginia, on the requisition of Governor Wise of that State, caused a bitter discussion. I voted for every Democratic measure, and opposed every Republican measure where party lines were drawn.

The State convention to nominate delegates to the Charleston Convention assembled during this session of the legislature. I was elected an alternate delegate. On my return home early in April I found important business requiring my attention, and did not attend the Charleston

Convention, but did attend the adjourned meeting of the Convention at Baltimore, in June, 1860, and served as a delegate. I traveled en route from Cincinnati to Washington, D. C., in the car occupied by Bob Johnson of Arkansas and other southern delegates, and heard him utter the first treasonable sentiments I had ever heard. I stopped several days at Brown's Hotel in Washington, where I saw gray-haired old Virginians, carrying the pikes taken from John Brown at Harper's Ferry. I had seen the bullet marks on the bridge as I passed through that town, giving evidence of the conflict, and now I heard these Virginians say they would secede.

We met delegates from every southern State, who demanded concessions which I felt never could be accorded. Hon. Ben M. Samuels was the leader of the Iowa delegation. With him I called at the residence of Stephen A. Douglas, and spent two hours with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas. We arrived in Baltimore, Maryland, the day before the Convention assembled, and with Hon. D. O. Finch of Des Moines I was the guest of Hon. W. H. M. Pusey, of Council Bluffs, also a delegate, and a member of the Iowa Senate, at the residence of his father, where we were entertained in elegant style.

Great meetings were held every night in the square in front of Reverdy Johnson's residence, where speeches were made by William L. Yancey, and other extreme men of the South. I saw there and in the Convention many men who later became prominent officers in the Confederate Army, some of whom I confronted in various campaigns in the war. I was present in the Convention when Benj. F. Butler stamped the dust from his feet and withdrew from the hall. It was the darkest hour in the history of the nation. When the Convention adjourned and the disruption of the Democratic party was complete, I went home and took an

active part in the campaign for Mr. Douglas, telling the people that war was inevitable, as Mr. Lincoln would surely be elected.

About this time Mr. Kiser and Dr. Hillis determined to move to Keokuk and open a business house there, and I bought their interest in the business at Bloomfield. The last of February, 1861, I started for New York to purchase goods, intending to stop at Washington and see Mr. Lincoln inaugurated, but I was quite ill when I reached Pittsburgh and went through to New York without stopping, thus losing the only opportunity I ever had of seeing Mr. Lincoln. This I have always regretted. In after years when he became the most conspicuous figure in the country I would have been glad to say I had seen him as I had his signature attached to my commission as a Brigadier General. I returned home about the 25th of March, much improved in health.

I was then living in the beautiful home formerly occupied by Stiles S. Carpenter, near my store. I now had two children, a second daughter, Nellie, having been born in January, 1861. My business was prosperous, my health good, my wife in good health and perfectly happy and greatly attached to her home. I did not then think anything could induce me to leave my family, except for a brief period on business.

The news of the firing on Fort Sumter was brought to Bloomfield by receipt of the *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, which came by stage. The news spread rapidly through the town and was read to a large crowd which assembled in front of my store. I was the Senator, and was called on for a speech. We all realized that civil war had begun. There was great excitement. When I went into my house I found my wife greatly alarmed. She threw herself into my arms, and asked me to promise her that I would not leave her and

her two little children and go into the army. I assured her that I had no idea of ever becoming a soldier, that my business and my love of home would keep me out of the war.

A majority of the Democrats of the country were opposed to giving aid to suppress the rebellion. A public meeting was called by a hand bill, in which Senator Cyrus Bussey and Representatives Harvey Dunlavy and Marvin Hotchkiss were invited to "come out and show their hands". I attended the meeting and made a patriotic speech, declaring it to be the duty of every patriot to aid the President, without regard to former political party affiliations in his duty of suppressing the rebellion, declaring that "I was not only in favor of putting my hand in the treasury for this purpose, but my arm to the shoulder". Dunlavy and Hotchkiss did not speak. When the meeting closed I was surrounded by excited Democrats, who informed me that I had made a d—d fool of myself. They said, "don't you know the war was brought upon the country by the republican party now let them fight it out". I replied that if it was necessary for a man to be a traitor to his country to be a Democrat I should cease to be one.

The extra session of the legislature convened on the 15th day of May. I was a member of the Military Committee, voted with the Republicans on every question, and returned home the 3rd of June. On the 11th I was appointed by Governor Kirkwood aide de camp on his staff, with the rank of lieutenant colonel of cavalry, and was authorized to assume command of all military matters in the southeastern part of the State. All these incidents in my life outside of my legitimate business affairs were the result of my delivering a Fourth of July address at West Grove in 1858.

CYRUS BUSSEY