

Harriet Connor Brown

The author of this issue of *The Palimpsest* was born in Burlington in 1872. As a child Harriet Connor sat on "Bob" Burdette's lap, shook hands with U. S. Grant, and heard such great Iowans as William Salter, Augustus C. Dodge, and George Wallace Jones. She received her early education at Burlington, and graduated from Cornell University in 1894, winning prizes in literature and oratory as well as the Phi Beta Kappa key. On graduating from Cornell she was awarded a one-year scholarship to the Willard School in Berlin by the Association of Collegiate Alumnae — the predecessor of the American Association of University Women.

After teaching one year in Burlington High School, Harriet Connor began her journalistic career by covering the Republican National Convention at Saint Louis in 1896. As a free lance writer for the *Burlington Gazette* she heard William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech at the Democratic National Convention at Chicago. In the fall of 1896 she went to New York City and began contributing to the *Sun*, the *Press*, and the *Tribune*. She also wrote articles for Theodore Dreiser's magazine — *Every Month*.

In the spring of 1897 she married Herbert Brown and spent the next two years with him in Mexico. Returning to the United States, Mrs. Brown reported the Republican Convention of 1900, the assassination of McKinley, and wrote for General Leonard Wood his "Report on the Mineral Resources of Cuba" published by the War Department. For thirty years beginning in 1903, the Browns lived in Washington, D. C.

Although she wrote on many subjects and about many great events, Harriet Connor Brown achieved her greatest fame when she won the *Atlantic Monthly* award in 1929 for *Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years 1827-1927*, which has become a standard reference work for students of Midwestern pioneer life. Using the local scene for her first book, she saw it become a best seller. Perhaps the only woman to achieve fame by immortalizing her mother-in-law, Harriet Connor Brown has just completed a companion volume to *Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years* which deals with the railroad-building generation as she remembers it in girlhood days when Iowa was a gateway to the Far West. "A Daughter of Hawkeyeland" gives a hint of the background for this new book.

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN