

# Warren County Genealogical Society

Indianola, Iowa

Volume 30, Number 6

November-December 2003

## Thanksgiving for Two

Close to the fire-place, deep and wide  
Father and mother sat, side by side.  
Talking of days that used to be,  
The dear old home and children three.  
"Im awful sorry they can't be here,  
For it's always lonely this time 'o year.  
It's many a day since last I knew  
Of gettin' Thanksgivin' dinner for two.

"Johnn has wrote he's busy now,  
And Susie is allus' sick, somehow,  
Jimmy says baby is rather small  
To think o' comin' this year at all.  
But I been think' we'd play the game  
And pretend they was comin' just the same.  
We'll make our plans the same old way  
If there's only two, Thanksgivin' day."

In the morning the pies were made,  
On the pantry shelf by their side were laid  
Doughnuts rich, and frosted cake  
And all good things that mother could make.  
Even the turkey was not amis;  
There's never too much on a day like this.  
"I'll set the table and have it through,  
But it's awful lonesome just for two."

Just as she laid the first plate out,  
From the yard there came a laugh and shout,  
Of joyous greeting, and children three  
To even Jim with baby, Lee.  
Each one trying to do his share  
Of telling of how they happened there.  
"We couldn't resist, for we thot of you  
And just how lonely 'twould be for two."

Mrs. Effie Crawford

## Calendar:

- Mon., Nov 10 Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
Mon, Nov 17 REGULAR MEETING, 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Marieta's Genealogy Room  
Program: Organizing your Genealogy
- Sat, Dec 20 IGS Volunteer Day  
This is our day to assist at the IGS Library.  
We will be there from 8:45 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
- Tue, Jan 13 Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
Mon, Jan 19 REGULAR MEETING, 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Trinity U. P. Church  
Program: Burial Customs & Symbols by Lorna Grow
- Tue, Feb 13 Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Indianola Public Library  
Mon, Feb 16 REGULAR MEETING, 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Trinity U. P. Church  
Program: Vital Records by Marieta Grissom

## NEW MEETING LOCATION for 2004:

WCGS regular meetings are held at the Trinity United Presbyterian Church (Fellowship Room, at 200 South Howard, Indianola—enter on the east side of the building) on the third Monday of the month (September through May, except no meeting in December). Special meetings may be planned for the summer.

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## Marieta's rambling comments:

**IGS Annual Conference in October.** Many of you know I have come into the world of technology, especially internet genealogy, kicking and screaming. I have a lot of trouble embracing this arena for several reasons. Documentation, authenticity, accuracy, reliability, durability, and preservation are all words that come to mind. I question how well documented information is on some of the internet sites. I question the accuracy and reliability of the sources, if documentation exists. I question how long the technology will be readable—anyone remember 16 mm films, or 5 ¼ inch diskettes? Soon 3 ½ inch diskettes and VHS films will be out of date. Who wants to spend their lives transferring information from one media to another, just to keep up with the technological advances? I still think nothing is going to last longer than good, old paper! And I like having negatives for my pictures! Therefore, I only attended the IGS Annual Conference in October because I felt I should attend, not because I wanted to attend to learn about technology. Besides, I have lots of friends who attend the conferences and it is always good to see them.

I will have to say that I did learn a few things, but I'm still not embracing everything I learned. I will also have to admit that I felt I should support the IGS prize drawings—after all, in the past I have won a few things, even if it has been a door prize that I'll never use—and the money is going to a good cause—the new IGS building. This time we went through the entire door prize drawings and I didn't win even one little thing. When it came time for the bigger drawings, I didn't win the 3<sup>rd</sup> place drawing (a case of paper—won by our own WCGS Vice President, Ruth Hall), I didn't win the 2<sup>nd</sup> place drawing (a digital camera—I wouldn't have had a computer that would have worked with it anyway), so I was hugely shocked when I won the top prize—a laptop computer! Suddenly, my weekend at the conference seemed totally worthwhile! At home, our five-year old desktop computer was very slow and on its last legs. I couldn't believe it—just what every genealogist would love to have!

In the days that followed, I spent some money at the Best Buy near my workplace. Since I am a power user of a computer, I needed a "real" keyboard, and a "real" mouse. I also purchased a new printer and a wireless internet card. While I haven't taken it on any research trips, I've been putting it to real good use! Essentially, I have been using it like a desktop. I've loaded all my favorite software on it. We can access Ancestry.com with enough speed that we can now download census records in a reasonable amount of time. And, I have finally started using a genealogy software, The Master Genealogist. I'll let you know about how I like it sometime in the future.

For now, suffice it for me to say, I love using my new com-

puter while working on all these newsletters that I've been behind on.

Hope you enjoy the newsletter!

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## Family Heirlooms

Westward Into Nebraska, Greater Omaha Gen Soc,  
Vol. 20, No. 8, 1996

Was that grandfather Smith or grandfather Wilson's pocket watch my mother gave me? An excellent suggestion for remembering important things about special possessions is the following: Photograph the item and write on the photo everything you know about it. Who did it belong to? Was it a gift to them? How did you get it? Many times, the items itself may be of little intrinsic value, but the story you preserve about it becomes an invaluable link to an earlier generation.

### Officers 2003:

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Obituaries	Dorothy Stearns
County Fair Superintendents	Marieta Grissom Virginia Nelson

Newsletter published six times per year. Membership dues \$10.00 per individual or family (no distinction)

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story

### Article on Early History of Warren County Written by the Late William Porter Nutting To Be Published

*[These memories were written by William Porter Nutting and originally published in the Iowa Journal of History and Politics, then as installments in The Indianola Record, in 1941. William Porter Nutting was a Warren county pioneer and he describes the trip of his family to the west and early life in this county.]*

First installment, *The Indianola Record*, Friday, May 23, 1941, page 8, col 5-6

William Porter Nutting was born in Leverett, Massachusetts, on August 4, 1847, and died in Milo, Iowa, on April 16, 1933. When he was six years old his father and step-mother, David Hervey and Mary M. Nutting, brought him and his brother Frank to Cincinnati, Ohio. A year later they moved on to Lexington, Missouri, and the following year came to Warren County, Iowa, in a covered wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen.

William attended Simpson College at Indianola in the original building known as the "Blue Bird" and then spent several years teaching in the schools of Warren County. On July 9, 1873, he married Catherine McLennan of Lacona and of this marriage were born eight children—Herbert W., Ansel E., Nellie A., D. Ray, John G., Myrtle M., Mary L., and another son who died in infancy.

#### Locate at Milo

In 1875 the Nuttings located on a farm south of Milo where they lived until 1915 when they retired from the farm and moved to Milo.

Mr. Nutting united with the Presbyterian church at Indianola in early manhood and later was a member of the United Presbyterian church and the Presbyterian church of Milo, where he served as elder and taught a Sunday school class for almost fifty years. After the Presbyterian church disbanded he became a member of the Methodist Episcopal church at Milo.

The following reminiscence was written by Mr. Nutting in 1924 and the biography above was submitted for publication by his daughter, Mary L. Nutting.

\*\*\*\*\*

I was born in a little house in the town of Leverett in northern Massachusetts, not far from the Connecticut river and west from Boston. My mother died when I was about three and one-half years old, and my brother, Frank, one and one-

half years old. My earliest recollections begin at that time. I remember seeing her carried along the road to the cemetery, which was not more than a quarter of a mile, I should judge, from where we lived.

#### Ran Away from Home

Our little home was not more than three hundred yards from Grandfather Porter Nutting's house. I remember running away to grandfather's house, for there I was sure to get a good dinner, for my grandfather petted me a great deal. Also, my grandmother (who was a step-grandmother) indulged me for she had never had any children of her own. I remember one day she was going to have an extra dinner, chicken pie, but she scorched it, and was greatly put out about it.

The town of Leverett at that time was made up mostly of Nuttings, Pitts, and Fields and these families were nearly all related. When my wife and I were back there in 1904, the Fields were the only ones left. There were still two families of them. From Carrie Field we learned where my mother's grave was in the cemetery and from the other family we obtained an oil painting of mother. We were also shown the house of Aunt Polly Moore, father's sister, into whose home Frank and I were taken when our mother died. When I was about five or six, we spent some time with Aunt Ann Childs, another of father's sisters.

#### Lived in Old House

After father married Mary M. Pitts we lived in the same house we had before, the one from which I used to run away to Grandfather Nutting's. On this trip we saw grandfather's house and I could remember something about it. It was a very old house, they said about 200 years old, and near it was a large butternut tree, three or four feet across the stump, which I also remembered. We ate our dinner near this tree, at least fifty years from the time I had seen it as a boy. I also remember eating huckleberries and blueberries from the hills, and Anna Temple went out with us to gather some when we were back.

Leverett and Brimfield were both settled about 1650 by two families of Nuttings who came from England. Leverett had at one time been a manufacturing town; when we were there we stood on the foot bridge across the stream which ran right through the town and counted seven big rock dams where at one time had been different kinds of mills. When the railroad was built, it missed the town and these mills had been taken away.

#### Father Iron Moulder

Father's trade was iron-moulding and he continued this

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

work even after we moved west. When we left Leverett he went to work in Greenfield, a town near the Connecticut river. We visited this town two or three times with Augustus Temple when we were back. The thing that I remember in connection with this town was a sleigh ride on a very cold night from Greenfield to Leverett, to visit Grandfather Pitts. Frank and I were covered up with a buffalo robe in the bottom of the sleigh. I also remember living in Orange, another place where father worked at his trade, and when we were back we were shown the house where I had lived. I also remember being in Springfield one Fourth of July and seeing the fireworks at night. The thing I remember about living in Northampton was seeing an animal show there. In it was a man, driving around the ring with two ostriches hitched to a chariot. This was the last place we lived before coming west. We didn't get to visit this town when we were back. It is said to be a very fine city—now the home of Calvin Coolidge.

### Lost His Fortune

How did father happen to come west? (Sometimes I think things do not happen but are wrought out.) He went into a company with a man by the name of McDoo, in the iron business, and I think the other man was an iron moulder as well as himself. This was along about 1852 or 1853 and times were very hard. Business was at a standstill and they could not sell their products such as car wheels, stove castings, etc., after making them. So their firm broke up, at least father lost about all he had. He then made up his mind he would go west to make another start. So everything we had was packed up ready for the move.

### Second Installment, *The Indianola Tribune*, July 2, 1941, page 6, col 3-5

Father had saved a little to move with. There were not many railroads then, as railroading was just in its infancy. We started for Cincinnati, Ohio. I remember crossing Lake Erie from Buffalo, N.Y., to Cleveland, Ohio, by boat after night and meeting another boat all lighted up, which had a brass band playing. As they played out in the water, it sounded most beautiful. We then took the cars to Cincinnati where we rented a little house just out of the suburbs of the city. This place was called Industry but it was not rightly named by any means. Father worked up in the city at his trade, about 12 miles from where we were and came home each Saturday night.

Industry had three modes of traffic. It was only about two hundred yards from the Ohio river and many steamboats were going by daily. Then between the town and the river was a canal with the canal boats plying to the city. The third mode was the railroad.

### Moves to Iowa

Our house stood on a little bluff and at the back faced the canal. Just opposite our house and across the canal was a saloon. By going out in the back yard we could see about all that was going on in the saloon. I saw so much that I never wanted to see a saloon afterward. Rainy days and Sundays were the worst. One could see men and women so drunk they would lock arms and try to walk through the mud, then all would fall and wallow in the mud like so many pigs. Some would climb up on the roof of a canal boat and roll off into the muddy water.

But we did not live in Industry very long, for father could not get steady work in the city. They would lay him off part of each week and times were so hard that manufacturing was at a standstill. So we moved about half way into the city and took part of a house with another family whom father had known in the East. Their name was King and it was a very beautiful place, right on the bank of the river, with all kinds of fruit trees about it. It was while we were living there that father came to look at Iowa land. I never knew why he came to Iowa instead of stopping off in Illinois unless it was because land was cheaper in Iowa. That was about the year 1854 and he rode by stage, I think, from Burlington to Des Moines as there were no railroads then in Iowa. He bought or rather entered 160 acres costing \$1.50 to \$2.00 per acre.

### Travel by Boat

He then went back to St. Louis, Mo., where he heard that he could get work in the foundry. But he did not work long until they laid him off part time, as they had in Cincinnati. Then he moved on to Lexington, Mo., where he heard he could get steady work. While in Lexington he sent word for us to box up our goods and come there. Travel then was largely by boat. We packed up and started from Cincinnati by boat down the Ohio River to the Mississippi and thence to St. Louis. There we changed boats for Lexington as there was a smaller boat on the Missouri river. We were fourteen days going from Cincinnati to Lexington.

A boat on the river is a very nice thing to ride on if you are not in a hurry. The dining room on the boat we were on was very nice—everything you could think of on the table even to nuts and candy. What made us so long? Well, a river boat did not go very fast in those days. We were traveling in mid summer, the river was very low, and the boat had to travel in the main channel. Then in large rivers there were what were called sawyers—that is, large trees that had caved off the bank and lodged in the channel. When the water got low they played up and down in

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

the current and the pilot had to be very careful not to let the boat strike them as it would make a hole in the boat. Sometimes the boats would go so slowly they hardly moved to miss the see-sawing monsters in the water. There were also sand bars, not deep enough down in the water to let the boat pass over and it would get stuck. Then the deck hands, mostly negroes, would get down in the water with their jack-screws and lift the boat. The pilot would then try to pull off and you would think the boat was coming to pieces.

We landed in Lexington late in the summer of 1854. I did not pass a very pleasant winter as I had gotten what the doctor called river flux, and I did not get over it until the next spring and hardly then for it affected me at times after we came to Iowa. The doctor would not let me drink cold water unless it was medicated. I never wanted anything so bad as a good drink of cold untreated water.

### Kansas Slave Election

The summer of 1855 was exciting in Lexington. It was a town where they owned plenty of slaves and mules. There was an auction block on which the slaves were sold just like horses and cattle. Then there was to be an election as to whether Kansas was to become a free state or a slave state. It had been a Territory before this (five years before the Civil war). But the excitement in Lexington was almost to the war pitch then. I do not think voters had to be but a few days in the state to become voters there, and each side was seeing which could get the most voters into Kansas before the election.

The Abolitionists, as those against slavery were called, hardly dared let their sentiments be known for many of the slave owners in Lexington carried revolvers and some knives and it was not safe to say anything against slavery. The North was sending boat loads of men up the river and the slave-owners threatened to shoot them if they landed in Lexington. But some did stop and gave out the word they were ready for them. Then the slave-owners would disappear. There was a story about how they tried to prevent the Northern men from landing in Kansas. They had a cow tied on the Kansas side of the river, and when the Northern men came up the river they would ask them what the animal was, and if they said "cow" they would let them across, thinking they would vote for Kansas to become a slave state. But if they said "caow" they would try to prevent them from entering the Territory, knowing they were from the New England states and were sure to vote for Kansas to become a free state.

### War Sentiment Grows

It was a fact that in those days you could almost invariably

tell what part of the United States one was from by the brogue. For instance, I happened to be standing by father one day after we had been in Iowa three or four years when E. J. Ingersoll, later president of the Hawkeye Insurance company of Des Moines, asked father if he were not a New England man. Father asked him what made him think so. "Well," he said, "when you say 'what', the sound goes a good deal like this slough, the farther it goes the broader it gets."

When father saw that the slavery question was getting to the war pitch in Missouri, he made up his mind to come to his Iowa land. How to get there was the question. There were no railroads. No river. So he walked across the prairie. I do not think he hired a horse, as he did not want to be bothered with a horse. There were very few fields. Just a track across the prairie. He came across to take another look at the land and the neighborhood. While here he bought a team of not very large oxen and a large wagon from one of the neighbors by the name of Graham, who lived south of the bridge on Otter creek due west of Milo, Ia. That was the last of July, 1855.

### Family Leaves for Iowa

Our departure from Lexington was about the first of August. When father got back with the ox team, we loaded everything we could on that one wagon and covered it with a sheet. There were chairs and carpets tied on top for there was no room inside. It was rather a top heavy load. It was the middle of the afternoon of a hot day in August when we were loaded ready to start. Since Lexington is right on the bank of the river we drove on the ferry boat with our team and also a cow and calf we had been keeping in town. Those were days before bridges, and streams were crossed by fording or by ferry boat. When we drove off the boat the cow and calf took a bee line up the river beach. The river was low, as the season was dry, and had dropped its main channel. This left a beach of about 75 or 100 yards in width from the main bank to the channel.

When the cow and calf ran away, father drove the team up to the main bank and gave mother the ox whip which had a stock seven or eight feet long and a lash about 10 feet long. This was used with both hands and the team was driven without lines. He told mother to watch the team while he went after the cow and calf. While he was gone a man came from the boat, which was still standing where we landed, and came up to where mother was watching the team. She barely knew him, but knew what kind of a character he was—an old drunken sot. Mother told him not to come any closer or she would take the butt end of the whip stock to him. But he stood there until father came back with the cow and calf. Father asked him what he wanted.

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

The man swore it was none of his business and at the same time drew out his bowie knife from his hip pocket and slashed it back and forth just missing father's throat.

Father kept backing away from him until he could put his hand behind him on the wagon and passed it along until he got hold of the ax he knew he had placed in the wagon to split wood with when we camped. He pulled it out quickly and, raising it over the old renegade, told him if he did not put that knife up immediately there would be one less Missourian. He put it up very quickly. Father then told him to run to the boat and he ran. The boat crew shouted and waved their hands in the air to see the old scamp run.

### On Open Prairie

We moved on and put some distance between us and the river before night. We camped out on the open prairie. We would take the two yoke of oxen off from the wagon but not unyoke them and turn them loose on the prairie grass. There was not room in the wagon so we would lift up the tongue of the wagon, put a forked stick under the end, throw a carpet over the tongue and another on the ground. That was our tent. It was my first experience camping. But all did not go so well the first night. Father had bought a bell and had put it on one of the oxen when he turned them loose on the prairie that night. Mother told him she was afraid they would get away from us but father replied that if they started to move away he would hear the bell. But he was so tired from his trip from Iowa and loading up that he slept very soundly, and no one heard the bell.

### Third Installment, *The Indianola Record*, September 19, 1941, page 6, col 4-8

Sure enough when we wakened the next morning there were no team within sight or hearing. Father started hunting right away but after two or three hours came back without them, ate his breakfast and started out again, this time going to every herd of cattle he could see. But in the middle of the afternoon he again came back, ate a bite, then went up to the nearest house to hire a horse to hunt them. The man said he had no horse for hire, but would lend him one to use until he found his oxen.

### Stake Out Oxen

But while he was gone with the horse and while we were trying to keep in the shade of the wagon on that hot August afternoon, a man came along on horseback and asked mother if we had lost our team. Mother told him we had. He said he had seen a team 10 or 12 miles away going north on the Iowa road. When father came back about sundown we told him. He started right out for them with the

borrowed horse and found them not far from where the man had seen them. But before he got back with them and started again part of the next day was gone. After that experience father staked out the oxen at night by tying ropes to them.

Our next experience was with the horses and cattle running loose on the prairie. After night they would come nosing around the white-covered wagon and cause trouble with our staked-out oxen. Father would get up and run them off, but they would come right back. I remember one night he told mother to get him a sheet. He put it over his shoulders and ran among them flapping it with his arms. Such a running and rattling of bells you never heard—for there were several bells in the herd.

### Encounter Quicksand

Often we would get stalled, as our oxen were not very large and we had such a heavy load, for all our belongings were on the one wagon. I remember that when we crossed the Grand river in Missouri, we had to ford it because there were no bridges. It was in August. The river was low, the water coming only about to the axle of the wagon. We had got almost across. The lead oxen were almost out of the water, but the wagon was settling in the quick sand and the team could pull it no farther. We were all in the wagon of course. Father had to jump out in the water, which was a little more than knee deep, and go to the house that was in sight, where he borrowed another yoke of oxen and put them in the lead, making three yoke on the wagon, which they then pulled out of the river.

Another day the team came very near upsetting our whole load of stuff. The weather was so hot and dry that the oxen would get nearly crazed for water and traveling along the dusty road made them worse and cattle can smell water long before they get to it. As we were coming to a stream skirted with timber, the oxen commenced smelling the water in the stream and left the road on the run going down through the timber with the top-heavy load swaying from side to side. But finally the long hubs on the wagon caught between two trees and stopped the runaways. None of us was in the wagon at the time. As soon as father unfastened the oxen from the wagon, they ran as fast as they could and jumped into the stream.

### Dangerous Bloodhound

One day when we were getting very thirsty ourselves we passed along by the side of a cabin with a low rail fence around it and a well that had a long sweep to it to draw the water. (A sweep is a long pile put up on a forked post with a weight on one end and the rope and well bucket at the other.) We stopped our team to ask for water. But just

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

as father was stepping over the rail fence, a bloodhound jumped from behind the house and made a rush for his throat. As the dog reared up father grabbed him by the fore legs and at the same time gave him a tremendous kick in the short ribs with his heavy cow-hide boot. The dog dropped over as though he were dead. Father had knocked the breath out of him, but the man of the cabin had come out by this time and commenced to swear and was ready to fight. So we drove on without getting a drink until we got to the next house.

Another experience happened one night as we were fixing camp. When we had spread our carpets on the prairie grass and spread some over the wagon tongue as I had described before, we heard a rattling noise. Father said it was a rattlesnake, but it was dark and we could not see him. We fastened a yoke of oxen on the wagon and moved on to another place.

### Reach Osceola

We were several days on the road and got very tired and so did the team. We had a very unhandy way of cooking our meals—just a few sticks picked up on the road to make our fire and only a skillet and one or two other vessels in which to cook. I shall never forget the last day on the road. We came from just a little this side of Osceola that day and were anxious not to have to camp any more. So we traveled until after dark to get to the cabin father had told us about, which was to be our home. We could not see what it looked like after dark as we had only a lantern as our main light and that a tin one with holes punched in it for the light of a tallow candle to come out. (And I might mention right here that when father set it down in the prairie grass one night while he was unyoking the oxen and wandered away from it, he had trouble finding it again.)

We were glad to get in our new home and not have to camp on the prairie any more. We took possession of the house and by the light of the lantern described, took our carpets and quilts inside, made our beds and lay down for the night without any supper except a bit we ate on the road.

### Sleep in Log Cabin

What did we see the next morning? A log cabin about eighteen feet square with a puncheon floor. That is, logs hewed on one side and notched on the under side to fit the cross poles. It was not tight by any means. There were cracks in it. When Brother Frank and I rolled over in the morning, Frank said, "Look down this crack. If there is not a hen's nest under the floor." It had been left there by the family who moved out (not much of a find for eggs

were not worth more than five or six cents a dozen).

The walls of this house were made out of all kinds of logs—oak, hickory, linn (linden), buckeye, etc. The surface of some of those soft wood logs looked like a menagerie for all kinds of pictures had been made on them with charcoal by those who had lived there before.

### Ridge Pole Roof

The roof was made of ridge poles laid across and then covered with clapboards. These clapboards were split out of oak logs about three-fourths of an inch thick and nearly three feet long and sometimes held in place by poles, but generally nailed with square nails about number ten. These boards would warp and twist with the rain and snow and when the blizzards came in the winter, the snow would sift through the cracks and come down through the loft right on our heads. The loft was made of loose boards laid on hewed poles at the top of the square. Frank and I would go up and sweep the snow into buckets and hand them down to father through the scuttle hole or else it would melt and come down all over the house.

All cabins had a fireplace. Ours was made of stone part way up and then of notched logs and sods from the prairie on the inside. Sometimes the smoke would go up the chimney and sometimes come down, depending on the wind. There was just one door in that house and two small windows, a log or two cut out. All cracks in between the logs were filled with mud for lime was hard to get, but some people did make lime from the lime rock.

### Fire Threatens Home

Father did not like the looks of our chimney, nor did he think it was safe enough to pass through our first winter. So he took the ox team to the timber, dug out rocks, and made a new one. I remember one afternoon while we were digging we saw dense smoke coming from the southwest (that was the prevailing way the wind came from). It was in the fall of the year and father said we had better go and plow out a fire land to save our house and the rails we had around a little patch of ground; that is, plow a few furrows around on each side of the strip of land 40 or 50 feet wide. Then burn out the land between. This would make it safe from the great prairie fire. This had to be done before the fire came for I have seen the fire go almost as fast as a horse could run. To see a prairie fire after night was one of the greatest of sights; the whole prairie would be a burning mass.

### Prairie Chickens Numerous

Sometimes when the prairies escaped being burnt off in the fall they would get burned over in the spring, after the

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

prairie hens had commenced laying their eggs in the prairie grass (for they would commence early in the spring). To see the prairie chickens by the hundreds, their nests burned over, and the eggs partly baked, made another great sight for me. Another fine sight was when the prairie grass would start up in the spring of the year. After the dry grass was burned off, the green grass was a solid mass interspersed with wild flowers of every kind in full bloom from June to the last of August. No artificial park or flower garden compares with it either in size or grandeur. That was before the grass and flowers were tramped out by the stock.

Farming was done on a very small scale in those days. The first year or two we had only a few acres under cultivation. The prairie was hard to plow the first time, the sod being so tough. We plowed with two yoke of oxen and a small sod plow only 13 to 14 inches wide. We had only about 25 acres the first year but hardly any weeds. Planting corn was all done by hand. First we marked out the ground crossways, if we wanted it rowed both ways. This was mostly done with a horse and single shovel plow at first, but later, when we got wiser, with a three-wheel marker and team. The marker had a seat for the driver to ride on and side markers to drive by. The planting was done with a horse and single shovel plow. One man to make the furrow, one boy to drop the corn, another man with a one-horse plow to cover the corn. This was the way we planted for eight or nine years, or until the last year of the Civil war, when we bought a two-horse corn planter similar to that in use today. We bought almost the first one in the neighborhood. There was no rope or wire to the first planters. A boy or man sat on it and dropped by hand and must hit the marks crossways.

### Build Rail Fences

The first years we were in Iowa all fencing had to be done with rails; not much fencing was done with boards until up into the 1870s. We went to the timber and split the rails and made a worm fence, as it was called. There was just enough worm or crook in it so the fence would stand, then stakes were set at each panel slanting against the fence which was generally six rails high with a block under each corner. Two heavy rails were put into the stakes that had been set, making the fence eight rails high and about 16 rails to the rod besides the four takes making 20 with them. It was quite a job to fence 40 acres that way.

The fields had all to be hog tight, cattle strong and horse high, for all kinds of stock were running on the prairie. I well remember our first field of about 40 acres. Father would make enough rails through the winter so we could add 10 or 15 rods on each end and move one side out to

meet the new ends. I do not know how many times that side had to be moved each spring until we had 80 or 100 acres fenced. We nearly always had a little patch of spring wheat and sometimes it would get up high enough for the stock to eat before we would get the fence moved. Then we would have to herd the stock off while the fence was being moved. Someone had to be on guard on the Sabbath and every day until the field was enclosed.

### Fourth & Final Installment, *The Indianola Tribune*, November 12, 1941, page 3, col 4-8

One Sabbath day father said he would watch the field that day, and he said to mother that he did not see as it would be any worse to make fence on the Sabbath day than to watch the cattle off the wheat. But mother said, "David, don't you do it." But he went to making fence, and as he needed more rails from the timber where they were made and as the field was only about half a mile away he yoked up the two yoke of oxen, fastened them to the wagon, and drove to the timber where he had been driving each day.

But as he went along the timber road, the oxen did not go just right and the back hub of the wagon hit a tree and broke the hounds out of the wagon. When he drove home with his broken wagon, mother said, "Well, did I not tell you so?" that was enough work on the Sabbath day unless it was a work of necessity.

### Haying Slow Job

Haying was another slow job in those days. There were no mowing machines and all the hay we had must be cut with the scythe on the prairie, for the prairie grass was the only thing to make hay of. We not only had to make enough for feed, but our stables and sheds were banked up and covered with slough grass hay. This had to be hauled in soon after it was made or the cattle would come along and scatter the shocks all over the ground. What small grain we raised had to be cut by hand with a cradle. Perhaps you never saw one. This was the way farming was carried on until the commencement of the Civil war in 1861. Then men and boys were taken in the army (for boys were enlisted as young as 14 years of age, according to statistics 14,000 were taken at that age). Since many of these men were taken from the farms, some means had to be invented to take the place for men if the farmers were to raise enough for the army and the folks at home. The first invention I remember was the corn planter I have described. The next was the mowing machine and reaper. We bought the first planter the last year of the war and also the first mower. The mower was a little four-foot Buckeye, the first in the neighborhood. It was a great re-



## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

lief to throw down the scythe. Our mower was in much demand.

### Mows for Neighbors

We not only used it ourselves but the neighbors would come along and beg us to mow for them and they would pay us for it. So that mower was kept busy all through the haying season which lasted several weeks in the prairie grass. The next improvement was the self-binder. I should have said the first grain machine. We had to bind by hand the bunches of grain as it dropped them behind it, and this was the hardest work I ever tried to do.

You may ask how long we lived in the log cabin. Nine years or until the last year of the war when father was drafted into the army. He had been wanting to volunteer and talked about volunteering in every company that was going from Warren county, but mother would say, "Now David, you are not going and leave us in this old log cabin. Suppose you should never come back?"

### Enters the Army

Then he would give it up for the time being. But he would say, "There will be a draft of men to go to the army perhaps and I would have choice of company and regiment." Sure enough the draft did come in the fall of 1864 and father was one of the men drafted and he was delighted to think he was going to have a hand in putting down the rebellion and to demonstrate his patriotism. As soon as he received notice of his being drafted he went right to Des Moines to see the Adjutant General (who was the father of Dr. Baker of Indianola who died two or three years ago) and said to him, "You have notified me to appear within 30 days. I have not waited the 30 days to appear, but have come to ask for another 30 days."

He then went on to explain what kind of house the family was living in and that he thought he could build a good deal better one in the 60 days. General Baker, appreciating his patriotism, told him to report in 60 days. He came right home and commenced hauling logs to the saw mill and engaged carpenters to build a new house and within the 60 days had a house made of all native lumber, oak roof, floors, siding, lining and all. It is still standing, the first building south of the square-topped house where Sister Sadie lived and where father and mother both passed their last years.

### Tells of Schools

When we came to Iowa in 1855 the schools were hardly in running order. There were few buildings and very few teachers. As my step-mother was a graduate of Amherst

college, Mass., she would give Brother Frank and me daily lessons, for there was no school for us to go to. For two winters the neighbor boys would come to our house and she would give them lessons at night. Afterwards she taught a subscription school. Our first schoolhouse was built in 1858, a small one, weather-boarded up and down like a barn with wide boards and lined with linn timber. One of my first teachers was Cynthia Bundy Barnes, who now lives in Indianola. Sometimes we would have only three months of school in the year. Afterwards there was six months of school, but we did not have a very good chance for schooling.

When the Civil war days came, it made it more difficult, for many boys went into the army before their school days were over and those left at home had too much work to do. A few who had the privilege of attending the school (after the war was over) at Indianola in a building we called the Blue Bird (because it was made of brick and painted blue) got a little better education.

### Attends Blue Bird

It was a blessing to the county for it was more like an academy. You could enter any grade on up to the highest study. The principal of the Blue Bird, while I attended, was O. H. Baker, who afterwards was sent from the United States as minister to Australia. Rev. S. M. Vernon was another principal while I attended. That was before there was any railroad in the town. This was in 1866, my first year.

### Build Courthouse

The next year, 1867, the courthouse was commenced. That was 21 years after the county was organized and three years after the town of Indianola was incorporated. I well remember a great many of the students who attended when I did—John Henderson, William Berry, Charley Bane, Brenton Dudley, Ben Noble, Talbot Brothers and a host of others.

My first ballot was cast for Ulysses S. Grant for president of the United States. That was in the year 1868. The same year I was elected township clerk, an office I did not want but some of the old men induced me to take it. At the very next election the township board challenged ever so many voters and I had to make them testify by the up-lifted hand to all the questions the law prescribed; how old they were, how long in the county, etc. (If you will pardon my telling so much about myself).

### Early Churches

My next venture was the same year I became a voter. I contracted to teach a term of school and then kept teaching

## Bits and pieces about ... The William Porter Nutting Story, *continued*

parts of five years. I was 21 years on the old homestead in central Otter township.

My wife and I took up our abode one mile and a half south of Milo in 1875. There was no Milo then. No railroad. No church. We attended church at Lacona the first five years. Then a part of the membership of the Lacona church who were north of Lacona toward where Milo is, withdrew from the Lacona church and organized a little band of 17 members in what was then called Goode's Chapel.

### Builds New Church

The next year we built our church building, the first one in Milo. At that organization meeting I was elected one of the elders of the church. That was in the summer of 1880. Also I was elected teacher of the boys' class—boys whose ages ran from 15 to 18. Those positions I held for 10 years or until we reorganized in the year 1890, changing from the United Presbyterian to the Presbyterian. I was again elected an elder along with W. C. Wilson, Walter Waugh, Harmon Shrader, James Gilbert and James Amsherry. I was also elected teacher of the Bible class, which positions I have held up to the present—1924—making 44 years as elder in the church and the same length of time as teacher, and 33 years as teacher of the Bible class. There are those in the class today who were charter members of the church.

William Porter Nutting

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## Research Hints:

Make lists of who was living in what area and when. Then when you are searching for a particular family in a census, marriage record microfilm, etc., you can dovetail and look for everyone that you think might possibly be there, instead of just one name. It will save time and having to backtrack for others there at the same time. If you write it down the first time, you shouldn't have to look at that resource a second time, unless you find out later that somebody else was there.

Keep notes from the same geographic location together, even if they apply to different families. If your notebook or file folder is clearly labeled as to where the material is from, it will be less confusing than if you mix geographic areas.

Periodically review your records for holes that you couldn't fill in several years ago. Check to see if the records are now available.

## Research Helps: Trails Through Southern Iowa

From Madison County Genealogical Society Fourth Quarter 2003 Newsletter

[Marieta's note: I'd really like to know **WHERE** they found this information!!!!]

Our pioneer ancestors were not the first to make trails through southern Iowa. In modern history, Spain controlled the area extending westward from the Mississippi, until they gave the land to France in 1800. Spain was afraid of Napoleon, and hoped to improve diplomatic relations by the gift. In 1803 the United States tried to buy New Orleans and the east bank of the Mississippi, but Napoleon, needing money to build up his armed forces, offered the entire Louisiana Territory. This agreement was signed on December 20, 1803, and the U. S. paid Napoleon \$12,000,000 and assumed \$3,000,000 of the French government's debts. This amounted to about 4 centers per acre.

The land was divided by the U. S. into the Territory of Orleans in the south and the District of Louisiana in the north. In 1812 the land which included Iowa was added to the Territory of Missouri. When Missouri became a state in 1821, Iowa was without any legal territorial government until 1834 when it became part of the Michigan Territory. In 1838 that huge territory was divided and the portion west of the Mississippi was called Iowa Territory (Iowa, most of Minnesota and the east part of North and South Dakota). The Iowa Territory could send a non-voting delegate to Congress, elect a state legislature, and it received \$20,000 from Congress as well as a section of land for public buildings and \$5,000 for a library. The first capitol of Iowa Territory was at Burlington.

During this time period, Iowa was home to many Indian tribes. The Sioux were in the north, the Pottawattamie were in the west, the Sauk were in the east, the Otoe were on the west, as were the Omaha, and the Ioway and Fox were in the center. In the north central were the Winnebago, and in the south were the Missouri tribes.

The Indians used the rivers and developed footpaths over the trampled trails of the buffalo. When Spaniards, Frenchmen, Englishmen and Americans came to the area to trade bear, deer, raccoon and muskrat furs with the Indians, their main transportation was the river. Early trading posts that grew into towns included Fort Madison, Hardfisher (Eddyville), Sioux City, Muscatine, Council Bluffs and Keokuk. A network of trails led from the rivers to these trading posts. By 1830 these trails had been used by Indians, fur traders, missionaries, explorers, discoverers, and soldiers.

## Research Helps: Trails through Southern Iowa, *continued*

Early forts, built between 1816 and 1827, were along the Nebraska border. In 1834 Fort Des Moines No. 1 was built at Montrose, 1840 Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek County, 1842 Fort Sanford at Fairfield, 1843 Fort Des Moines No. 2 at Des Moines, and in 1850 Fort Clarke (called Fort Dodge). These forts were connected by military roads, which were authorized by Congress.

*[Marieta's question: does anyone know of a map showing these military roads?]*

In March 1839 Congress appropriated \$20,000 for a military road to follow the old ridge road which connected the little mining town of Dubuque with the new territorial capitol of Burlington. This road trailed diagonally across the state, from Dubuque to Iowa city and on to the northern boundary of Missouri. Tim Fanning's log cabin at Dubuque and the Lean-Back Hall at Iowa City were popular stopping places. The road went through Dubuque, Cascade, Monticello, Anamosa, Iowa City, Crawfordsville, Mount Pleasant, and we know this trail as Highways #151 and 218.

The first settlers to cross the Mississippi came into Iowa in 1824. The Indians had given up a small parcel of land in southern Lee County. It is called the Half-Breed Tract.

On June 20, 1842, the steamboat Ripple docked at an improvised dock at Iowa City on the Iowa River. In 1842 the Maid of Iowa reached Cedar Rapids on the Cedar River, and the Agatha and Ione came to Raccoon Forks in 1843. The Agatha was 119 feet long and 19 feet wide. These steamboats brought great joy to the early settlers, and someone called their shrieking whistles "the greatest music ever heard."

The steamboats were great for north-south travel, but good east-west transportation came with the railroads. Until 1850 lead was the dominant cargo on the Mississippi. From 1850 to 1870 the steamboat liens capitalized on the passenger traffic, and from 1870 to 1890, they cashed in on the grain trade.

The Iowa and Cedar Rivers were navigated by steamboats only during the high water season, although pioneer settlers used them all the time. A steamboat called the Black Hawk made 29 round trips between Cedar Rapids and Waterloo during 1859. Council Bluffs was a very important river town until about 1867. The heyday of steamboating along the Missouri River lasted from 1846 to 1866. Council Bluffs was one of the principal outfitting places, preparing pioneers to enter the wild and wooly west!

Besides covered wagons and steamboats, pioneers used stagecoaches. After getting off the boat at Muscatine, Davenport or Burlington, the traveler could take a stage-

coach to many parts of the interior. They were the only means of public travel from east to west.

In 1836 the stagecoach entered Iowa at Dubuque. In 1837 a line left Burlington and went to St. Francisville, Missouri, where it connected with the St. Louis-Galena route. In 1838 Burlington and Davenport, Burlington and Macomb, Illinois, and Burlington and Mount Pleasant were connected. The first one to reach Fort Des Moines was known as the Stephenson No. 7, and arrived on July 1, 1849. It is interesting to note that the pioneer farmers were likely to use the covered wagons as they brought their families and possessions west, but the stages were often used by business men, teachers, preachers and professional men seeking doors of opportunity in the ever expanding Westward Movement.

Stage routes were established in all parts of Iowa, but the main line was the State Road that ran from Davenport to Council Bluffs, going through Iowa City and Fort Des Moines. Branch lines were run off to many widely scattered points. This State Road was developed over the years and is now I-80!

In 1860 lines of the Western State Company ran from Davenport to many Iowa towns and to St. Joseph, Missouri and Ft. Kearney, Nebraska. It operated altogether in seven states and was headed by Col. E. F. Hooker of Des Moines, having been started in 1855. The Des Moines stopping place was on Fifth Street. The regular fare was five to six cents per mile, but that could be drastically cut by keen competition. Sometimes free meals were given. There was a station every ten or fifteen miles where horses were changed.

The trails which followed the ridges and went around hills and swamps were good roads for the coaches, but streams were a problem. Gradually bridges were built and ferries were operated at strategic points on the major streams.

By 1852 southeastern Iowa had quite an extensive network of stage lines. There were three liens through southwestern Iowa, but all led to Council Bluffs.

In one year the Western State Company cleared \$100,000. Business fell off during the Civil War, but the companies did transport soldiers and supplies. After the war, railroads quickly overspread Iowa and this signaled the end of the stage lines, just as it brought steamboating to a halt. Remote places were served up to 1870. Coaches that had cost \$1,000 were sold for \$10 and stagecoaching was over in Iowa.

Now we will consider a few selectged roads and trails. The first one, the Oskaloosa Road, will give us a good idea how the roads were planned. Originally called "the

## Research Helps: Trails through Southern Iowa, *continued*

angling road," it was a diagonal road extending southwest from Iowa City to Wellman, 20 miles long. In February 1844, an act providing for a Territorial road became law. The road was then built to connect Sigourney, the county seat of Keokuk County, then went on to Oskaloosa, the county seat of Mahaska County. The road was being used by April 5, 1845. "The record states that the road commenced at the west door of the Capitol in Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa Territory; thence west across Iowa River, thence down said river under the bluff on the west side, thence across large bottom prairie, thence up a ridge, thence over rolling prairie across Seahorn's Creek on bridge; thence across bottom prairie across Old Man's Creek on a bridge; thence up a ridge of timber; thence through timber to William Fry's; thence across prairie to Deer Creek timber; thence across Deer Creek; thence up a ridge in prairie to County Line, as per field notes herewith returned."

Colton's Township Map of Iowa, for 1855, shows the road passing through Franklin Pierce, South English, Sigourney, Rose hill, and thence into Oskaloosa. On maps before 1857, the road missed Wassonville, which was located on the English River in northwestern Washington County. The road on Chapman's map of 1857 misses that village, too, but the map by Henn, Williams and Co., of Fairfield, for the same year, has the highway passing through Wassonville. Colton's Map of 1863 shows the road passing through Franklin Pierce, Amish, Wassonville, South English, Webster, Sigourney, Rose Hill, and into Oskaloosa. This is now Highways No. 1 and No. 92.

The Bluffs Road was an important east-west connection. In the 1860s it entered Madison County in the northeast corner of Lee Township, 8 miles from Fort Des Moines. The settlement of Kansas and Nebraska was going on during this time also, and the Bluffs Road was the main thoroughfare through Southern Iowa. This is now Highway No. 92.

In Monroe County there was an early trail from Albia to Eddyville that is now Highway No. 137.

In 1838 the Legislative Assembly established a road from Keokuk to Iowa City. It would hook up with the Military Road at Mount Pleasant, and is now Highway No. 218.

In 1840 the Legislative Assembly approved a road from Fairfield to Mount Pleasant and this became the beginning of the famed Oregon Trail. This road, to stretch from the Mississippi River to the Missouri River was to be the route for the mail to Oregon. It crossed the Mississippi at Burlington. The section from Ottumwa to Chariton was approved January 13, 1849. The trail west, flooded by immigrants made southern Iowa an important part of this

country's history. In the 1850s the Oskaloosa Times declared that the town was almost always thronged with movers' wagons and herds of cattle. This is now Highway No. 34.

One of the first recorded trips through Iowa occurred in 1822 and blazed a trail later used by immigrants. Two men, named Dixon and McKnight, entered what is now Iowa along the northern border by Lake Okoboji. They followed a southeasterly course, crossed the state and went on down to what is now Trenton, Missouri.

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### They Are Still Here

From *The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune*, October 27, 1966

Until midnight of October 11, 1845, no white man was allowed to take up or cultivate land west of a line running north and south through "the Red Rocks" on the Des Moines River in what became Marion county, Iowa. The government had bought the land from the Sax and Fox Indians with the agreement that the Indians were to be protected in the use of such land until the specified date. Dragoons were stationed along the line to assure the keeping of the agreement.

When the midnight hour arrived hundreds of land seekers, afoot, on horseback or with wagons drawn by horses or oxen, were standing at the line. Precisely at midnight a dragoon on the Red Rocks fired his musket. Other dragoons took it up and fired their pieces north and south, and the settlers began swarming into Warren and Polk counties.

A few had been permitted to enter a short time earlier, but not to break any land nor cut any wood. Amongst the latter was a William Mason. The next spring, 1846, this William Mason plowed the first furrow in what was to become Warren county on Des Moines River second bottom about a quarter mile north of where the station of Clarkson used to be located, two miles east of Carlisle on the Burlington branch railroad. This field was on the east side of the road.

William's son, James, became one of the first missionaries for better seed corn in Warren county. He would gather the young men of the community about him and tell them how to select seed corn. If one of his pupils later defected him in a corn show, he merely congratulated himself that he had been a good teacher and had done something to make his neighborhood a little better place to live.

James also kept Warren county to the forefront by his farm

## They Are Still Here, *continued*

booth at the Iowa State Fair annually. In the preparation of this booth, as in all his progressive ideas, he had the warm support and assistance of his daughter, Mrs. Ermile Hunt.

William Mason's blood is still here. Mrs. Hunt's daughter, Lucile (Mrs. Wilbur) Goodhue, lives in Carlisle on the bluff overlooking North River valley to the hills on the north side of the Des Moines River in Polk county. She and her husband are among the most ardent collectors of historic artifacts in this county. Their collection includes items from the early settlers, from the Indians, and from the prehistoric inhabitants of the county many years preceding the Indians.

William Mason came early and his descendants are still here.

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## Iowa 'Sloughs' Were Dreaded by Travelers

From *The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune*,  
8 Sept 1960, page 3, col 3

Many Iowa motorists can remember when a long drive required two sets of tire chains, when road maps were practically unheard of, and filling stations were few and far between. Spring rains made the roadways difficult because of the mud, but there was a road. The oft-used word of the pioneer travelers—"sloughs"—was being dropped from vocabularies.

There was a time, however, when Iowa sloughs ranked with mosquitoes as a principal annoyance on the prairies. One of the most famous sloughs was located in Calhoun county, where Purgatory Creek now flows under concrete bridges. In 1859 the editor of a Sioux City newspaper declared of "Purgatory Slough:"

"What a name! And oh! What a slough! We hear those exclaim who have been so unfortunate as to be caught in it. We heard one individual say that it took four yoke of oxen to pull his light buggy through this slough. The bottom of it has never yet been found, and it is thought by some that it has fallen out, leaving nothing there but black miry mud, a contest with which it is thought must at least equal the supposed torments of Purgatory—hence the name."

### Mud Was Axle-deep

The "Skunk Bottoms," an Iowa pioneer recalls, referred to the swamplands along the Skunk River which were "known and dreaded by people from Maine to California."

A party headed for the Colorado gold rush in 1859 reached the Skunk Bottoms on April 10, and "found them as bad as expected and that was bad enough." "We had to double teams for over a mile wagons down to the axletrees all the way," the traveler recorded, "raining all the while."

Fifteen years earlier, in 1844, when the 1<sup>st</sup> Dragoons of the U.S. Army crossed what is now Humboldt county, a diarist noted that the soldiers struck "a succession of the most terrible slues we encountered and crossed." Every dragoon in the expedition from Fort Des Moines was engaged in pulling the wagons through the sloughs. "In consequence," the diary-keeper noted, "but 12 miles were made though in the saddle more or less for 12 hours."

When a group of emigrants from Wisconsin passed through central Iowa on their way to California in 1863, a member of the party declared the sloughs in the Iowa River bottoms were the most troublesome. In one slough a tired horse refused to work. "I had to get out in mud and water knee deep," he noted, "but as the horse saw me get the string out to use on her, she started and pulled the whole load out."

### Drivers Ruined Crops

An incident involving a slough in Boone county had a tragic aftermath in 1872. A public road passed near a farmer's land, and travelers bypassed a slough which made the road impassable by driving over the farmer's fence and through his field. The damage to the land must have been great, for the owner finally erected a heavy rail fence to stop the trampling of his crops. But the next morning found a wagon-driver taking his team across the field past the remains of the fence. The owner became enraged in the altercation that followed and the traveler was killed.

Although sloughs posed a problem for our pioneers, few hardy travelers were deterred by the prospects of a day spent with men and animals wallowing in the mud. Modern highways and drainage methods ended the slough "menace" and also closed a muddy chapter in the history of transportation of Iowa.

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## Be a good ancestor.

Greater Omaha Gen Soc, Nov/Dec 2001

Keep a diary or journal of your own life, or record your life history. REcord more than just "it was a dark, gloomy day." Tell of historic events and your reactions to them—how they effected your life. Tell about your life style, your faith, your trials and how you overcame them. Tell of the people you came into contact with and how they may have affected your life. It doesn't have to be done at once—a few paragraphs at a time will add up over a year or two.

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## A Genealogist's Christmas Eve

1983 Gibbs Publishing Co., Napoleon, OH, Christmas Card,  
via Dubuque County Gen Soc, Dec 2003, Jan, Feb 2004

'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the hosue not a creature was stirring,  
not even my spouse.  
The dining room table with clutter was spread with pedigree charts and with letters,  
which said . . .  
"Too bad about the data for which you wrote, sank in a storm on an ill-fated boat."  
Stacks of old copies of wills and the such, were proof that my work had become much to  
much.  
Our children were nestled all snug in their beds, while visions of sugarplums danced in  
their heads.  
And I at my table was ready to drop from work on my album with photos to crop.  
Christmas was here, and of such was my lot that presents and goodies and toys I'd forgot.  
Had I not been so busy with grandparents' wills, I'd not have forgotten to shop for such  
thrills.  
While others had bought gifts that would bring Christmas cheer, I'd spent time research-  
ing those birthdates and years.  
While I was thus musing about my sad plight, a strange noise on the lawn gave me such a  
great fright.  
Away to the window I flew in a flash, tore open the drapes and I yanked up the sash.  
When what to my wondering eyes should appear, but an overstuffed sleigh and eight  
small reindeer.  
Up to the housetop the reindeer they flew, with a sleigh full of toys, and 'ole Santa Claus,  
too.  
And then in a twinkle, I heard on the roof, the prancing and pawing of thirty-two hoofs.  
The TV antenna was no match for their horns, and look at our roof with hoof-prints  
adorned.  
As I drew in my head, and bumped it on the sash, down the cold chimney fell Santa KER-  
RASH!  
"Dear" Santa had come from the roof in a wreck, and tracked soot on the carpet, (I could  
wring his short neck!)  
Spotting my face, good old Santa could see I had no Christmas spirit you'd have to agree.  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work, and filled all the stockings, (I felt like  
a jerk).  
Here was Santa, who'd brought us such gladness and joy, when I'd been too busy for  
even one toy.  
He spied my research on the table all spread "A genealogist!" he cried (My face was all  
red!)  
"Tonight I've met many like you," Santa grinned, as he pulled from his sack a large book  
he had penned.  
I gazed with amazement, the cover it read "Genealogy Lines for Which You Have Plead."  
"I know what it's like as a genealogy bug," he said, as he gave me a great Santa hug.  
While the elves make the sleighful of toys I now carry, I do some research in the North  
Pole Library!"  
"A special treat I am thus able to bring, to genealogy folks who can't find a thing,"  
"Now off you go to your bed for a rest, I'll clean up the house from this genealogy mess."  
As I climbed up the stairs full of gladness and glee, I looked back at Santa who'd brought  
much to me.  
While settling in bed, I heard Santa's clear whistle, to his team, which then rose like the  
down of a thistle.  
And I hread him exclaim as he flew out of sigh, "Family History is Fun! Merry Christ-  
mas! Good night!"

**Publications about Warren County**

	Price	Shipping	Tax (IA residents)
<b>Available from WCGS</b>			
<b>Thelma Pehrson, 306 West Salem, Indianola, IA 50125 (515-961-4409):</b>			
◆ <i>Birth Records of Warren County through 1920</i> , including delayed births, hardbound, 295 pages, indexed.	\$15.00	\$3.00	5% (IA residents)
◆ <i>Atlas of Warren County for the years 1847, 1872, 1887, 1897, 1902-1903, 1915, 1919-1924</i> , softbound, 162 pages	\$35.00	\$4.00	5% (IA residents)
NEW <i>Index for Warren County Atlas for the years 1872, 1887, 1897, 1902-1903, 1915 &amp; 1919-1924</i> - an every name index, 195 pages	\$25.00	\$4.00	
◆ <i>Cemetery and Death Records of Warren County, IA</i> , 1980 (reprint)	\$35.00		

**Available from Warren County Historical Society**  
**Thelma Pehrson, 306 West Salem, Indianola, IA 50125 (515-961-4409):**

- ◆ *Railroads of Warren County* \$ 8.95    call to verify shipping

**Available from**  
**Iowa Genealogical Society, 628 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50309-1924 (515-276-0287):**

***Warren County Marriages***

- ◆ #2654 1849-1879, 113 pages, with complete index \$18.10    call to verify price and shipping costs
- ◆ #2655 1880-1899, 115 pages, with complete index \$18.40
- NEW #2656 1900-1904, 33 pages, with complete index \$ 5.90

***Warren County Newspapers-Deaths, Probates & Obituaries***

- ◆ #1947 1857-1876, 55 pages, indexed \$ 8.60    call to verify price and shipping costs
- ◆ #1728 1877-1885, 81 pages, indexed \$13.00
- ◆ #1727 1886-1889, 72 pages, indexed \$11.50
- ◆ #1948 1890-1893, 48 pages, indexed \$ 7.70
- ◆ #1949 1894-1895, 60 pages, indexed \$ 9.60
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**Membership in Warren County Genealogical Society:**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 for membership (individual or family, no distinction)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Are you interested in helping with any of the following committees:

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| _____ Telephone | _____ Publications  | _____ Family Records |                      |

Comments:

Mail this form to Jane Godwin, Treasurer, 808 West Detroit, Indianola, Iowa 50125

## **Genealogical research sites:**

INDIANOLA PUBLIC LIBRARY, 207 North B Street, Indianola, 515-961-9418.  
Mon - Thurs 10:00 - 8:30, Fri 10:00 - 6:00, Sat 10:00 - 5:00

WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL LIBRARY, Warren County Fairgrounds, Indianola, Thurs 1:00-4:00. Contact  
Thelma Pehrson, Librarian, 515-961-4409.

MILO PUBLIC LIBRARY, 123 Main Street, Milo, 515-942-6557, Mon, Wed, Thurs 2:00 - 5:30, Tues 6:00 - 8:00, Fri  
9:00 - 11:00 & 2:00 - 5:30; Sat 9:00 - 12:00. Paula Griggs, Librarian. The Milo Library has an extensive collection of  
obituaries for cemeteries in Otter and Belmont Townships, and some obits for people who have lived in the area and are  
buried elsewhere.

IOWA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, 6000 Douglas Ave., Des Moines, 515-276-0287. HOURS: Tues, Wed, Thurs  
9:00-9:00. Sat, Mon, Fri 9:00-5:00. Closed Sunday E-mail: [igs@iowagenealogy.org](mailto:igs@iowagenealogy.org); website: [www.iowagenealogy.org](http://www.iowagenealogy.org)

STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY, 600 East Locust, Des Moines, 515-281-6200.  
Tues - Sat 9:00-4:30. Closed Sunday & Monday.

DES MOINES PUBLIC LIBRARY, 100 Locust, Des Moines, 515-283-4152. Mon, Tues, Wed 10:00-9:00, Thurs, Fri  
10:00-6:00. Sat 10:00-5:00. Closed Sunday.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS FAMILY HISTORY CENTER, 3301 Ashworth Road, West  
Des Moines, 515-225-0415. Mon, Tues, Wed, Sat 10:00-3:00. Tues, Wed, Thur evenings 6:30 -9:00. Closed Friday &  
Sunday. ALWAYS call before going—their hours often vary.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS, 1800 West Jackson Street, Knoxville. Wed/Thurs 6:30 -  
8:30 p.m.. Information & appointments outside regular hours call Dawn Fee, Director, 641-828-7142 or 641-842-2297.  
Always call ahead.

Warren County Genealogical Society  
306 West Salem  
Indianola, IA 50125