



Letter and reminiscences, 1839 and ca. 1912.

Call Number, Whitewater SC 41

Hollister, Uriah S., 1838-1929

[s.l.]: [s.n.], [s.d.]

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June 1839

The following letter was written by Maria C. Hollister, to her parents Alexander and Nellie Latimer, in the year 1839. Her husband was Cyrenus Hollister. She was born December 22, 1816, and died February 29, 1869. Her brothers were Ebenezer Latimer, Peter Latimer, Lorenzo Dow Latimer, and James Freer Latimer. Her sisters were Gertrude Ann (who married Lemuel Hollister) and Jane Eliza (who married H. W. Gregory). The other three brothers and sisters, Helen, Alonzo and Adelaide, died at ages of three weeks, four years and five months respectively. Jane Eliza Gregory died at the age of twenty-five without children.

The letter written by the young pioneer reveals all the optimism that was such a vital force in the forging of America. This is one of the earliest letters from Delavan that has been preserved through the years. The letter was found in a box of old papers and has been handed down through three generations to Mrs. Lowe who keeps the letter framed between two pieces of glass. The paper has turned yellow with age but the handwriting remains clear.

The Hollister homestead which is described in the letter is now known as Hollister Corners at junction of highways 89 and 14 about four miles west of Delavan.

Walworth County
June 9, 1839

Dear Father and Mother, Sisters and Brothers, it is with pleasure I take the present opportunity to inform you of my health and situation at present which I can say is good. We are at present in a small log shanty, room enough for one bed, our goods and a chance to turn around but we have plenty to eat and good appetites. William says he doesn't pretend to stop 'til it hurts.

I never have been in a place where every person looked so healthy. I can say that I haven't seen a pale face since we have been in the territory. They have the healthiest looking children I ever saw. Uriah (U. S. Hollister) is well and lively as ever and has been with the exception of a few days when he was quite unwell with a cold. He stood his journey remarkably well. He had the chicken pox, but he hardly minded it. They came out very nice, he was covered with them.

I thought I had prepared my mind for the journey but I was mistaken. After parting with all my friends the boat looked solemn as the grave. The passengers came flocking in 'til the boat was crowded full. After the passengers all came aboard I saw and heard so much to attract my attention that I hardly thought of home.

There was some German Dutch, indeed it was amusing to see them. They would boil their coffee on the box stove, three or four times a day. Then pour it into saucers and hand it around and then bread and cake in the same way. They read and sang Dutch and scolded their children in high Dutch, indeed they made considerable sport.

We had excellent company on the Canal and spent the time very agreeably. We passed through a beautiful country and through some beautiful villages. Lockport is beautiful scenery, Rochester is a beautiful city, there I saw the first equidock (aqueduct) I ever saw. Indeed I thought persons that always stayed in one place had not the least idea what business there was going on in the world.

We landed at Buffalo on Saturday morning, I was astonished to

see so many steamboats laying there. It was a great sight to me.

Buffalo is a delightful place and had a great many elegant buildings. I saw on my journey some of the most elegant churches that I ever saw. St. Paul's church in Rochester is an elegant building. I shant try to mention all that I have seen.

I think that a steamboat is the greatest curiosity I ever saw. It is a sight to see the machinery there is about it, the noise frightened me at first, it sounded like a lion rearing. We had a beautiful time on the lake, the lake was quite smooth with the exception of part of one day and night. It was enough to make part of the passengers sick. I was very sick two or three hours. It did not effect Cyrenus in the least nor the boys. I believe Uriah was a little dizzy, little Uriah happened to be asleep at the time so it did not effect him.

We landed at Milwaukee Saturday the 18th. Cyrenus got a place for me to board and they went on the same day. The least they boarded for was three dollars and a half per week. The lady I boarded with had some millinery to have done so I got into business and did work enough to pay my board. I made three shirred bonnets and did some other sewing. I stayed there two weeks and the boys stayed one week to attend the land sale. We got there just the right time. If we had been one week later it would have been a great disadvantage, one weeks expense. They just had time to go and make their claims and attend the sale.

Cyrenus felt pretty well after he got the land, he was afraid there would be opposition.

After we got the land we had no way to get there without paying four dollars per day and not have all our goods carried either. The road was so bad part of the way they wouldn't carry more than twelve hours. Mr. Keltner had a man to plow for him from the country and he offered him his oxen and wagon for 100,60 (\$160) dollars. Cyrenus offered him 100,40 (\$140) and finally he came down to 100,55 (\$155) so he took them at that and put on the whole load and we went through safe.

I never saw their match to draw, they stepped off like horses, you can't think how well I felt when I got in our own wagon and our own team. It would cost at least thirty dollars to have hired a team and then we wouldn't have any after we got there.

They found use for them the next day after we arrived at our home. William and Uriah are both with us and intend to stay til we get our house built. William went to mill last week about twenty miles. He started one day and got back the next. They are going to have a mill started about four miles from where we live.

We got winter wheat for ten shillings and spring for one dollar, corn for four shillings, and potatoes for one shilling. Pork is thirteen to ten cents a pound. Where the grist mill is building they are going to have a store this summer. There is a saw mill and they intend to have all kinds of machinery as the country needs it. There are no schools near where we are nor regular meetings (church services). They have preaching once in three or four weeks, four miles from us. I think these disadvantages will soon be done away as the population increases. Schools and meetings will increase. I think in a few years there will be transportation by railroad or canal, such a country as this cannot lay without market. Potatoes are so plenty we could buy 100 bushels for one shilling per bushel. Some farmers have five or six hundred bushels laying in their barn now between here and Fox River and only three years ago they had to pay four dollars a bushel for potatoes, twenty a barrel

for flour.

I expected to see fine country but it is much more beautiful than I had any idea of. I said the steamboat was the greatest curiosity I ever saw but this is the greatest in nature. To see great fields in nature ready to till. I thought as I was riding along I must see some beautiful village or farm house instead of that all I saw in the shape of building was here and there a log house put up, which was the only thing that reminded me of a new country.

The road from Milwaukee to Fox River was very bad which is sixteen miles, the rest of the way was the most handsome I ever saw. We started from Milwaukee the first of June and got to our journeys end the fourth about noon.

Mrs Gates, our nearest neighbor, had dinner ready and was waiting for us. We took dinner and tea there. The next morning I was ready to get our own breakfast. We have two neighbors in sight, on one each side of us. They are very clever. When we get in our own house we will have three families in three quarters of a mile. I like the looks of our farm very much as we passed by it. I thought it was as handsome as we need ask for. There is thirty acres prairie and the rest is oak openings. William has some joining ours and three lots joining Mr. Mulks. We are seven miles from Mr. Mulks. Cyrenus has got one acre broke and is going to have two more. He is going to have one acre of corn and intends planting tomorrow, the rest he is going to put into potatoes, buckwheat and some garden space. He says he never has seen anything so nice in New York state. The ground is black and mellow as an ash heap, the soil is very deep. He had it broke up for three dollars an acre and it is done very nice.

I had almost forgotten to tell you how I feasted on fresh fish at Mr. Keltner's, our boarding place, we had the nicest ones I ever saw. We had one stuffed that would weigh six or eight pounds. It was equal to a roast turkey. I wished I could send one to Mother.

When I think of mother's pale face it makes me anxious to hear from her, if I can only hear that she is gaining and that all the rest of you are well, what a comfort it will be. Sometimes when I am alone and think what a great body of water separates us and what a journey must be performed to see each other, it seems almost impossible but seems more like a dream than reality. Yet the journey was not so tedious that if we had good luck and our life and health are spared, I think I shall see you in a few years, but years seem like a great while but I must submit to it. I don't want you to give yourselves any uneasiness about me, my hardest lot is to be separated from my friends. I am very comfortably situated with one of the kindest husbands, tell grandmother I should like to have her see what a handsome farm we have got. The climate is very much as it is in New York State. We have had a great deal of rain for a week or two, if it rains hard one day it is dry enough to plow the next. It is fifty-five miles from Milwaukee to where we live. Tell father Hollister's folks that Cyrenus and William are in good spirits and indeed we all fell pretty well. Tell Mrs. Schutt that Uriah wishes sometime that she knew where he was and that he was taking comfort. Tell Charlotte that I think Uriah will succeed in getting land before he returns. I heard Gitty Ann had a new dress, I should like to see it. She must send me a little sample. Kiss Alonzo and Adelaide for me. I hope to hear they have grown finally.

The next time I write I'll direct Ebenezer, which will be after we get our new house.

Tell Jacob and Peter I think they would like to plow here. Jane Eliza you must be ready to come home with me the first time I come out. I hope all will be out before that time. Kiss Lorenzo and James for me.

I remain your affectionate daughter and sister,
Maria

Direct your letter to Homer Walworth County, Wisconsin Territory, soon as you can.

P.S. my love to all that take the pains to inquire after me. I owe Phebe Freer one shilling. I forgot to pay her, I wish you would pay her.

Alexander & Nellie Latimer
New York State
Slaterville Springs,
Old Hollister Homestead.

About 1912

REMINISCENCES BY U. S. HOLLISTER
(Uriah Hollister, Son of Maria C. and Cyrenus Hollister)

I was born on the old Hollister homestead near Slaterville, Tompkins County, New York, September 11, 1838. I do not give the above information as of any importance except to explain my privilege of writing of things that happened a long time ago.

My father and mother, Cyrenus and Maria C. Hollister, (nee Latimer) moved from New York (York State) early in the spring of 1839. The route by team to Ithaca, by canal from Ithaca to Buffalo, by wheezy old steamer Buffalo to Milwaukee to destination.

On arrival in Milwaukee my mother and I was left while father, equipped with rifle and ax, went out into the wilderness on foot to find a home. Uncle William Hollister had made the pioneer trip a year before, prospecting mainly in northern Illinois, so that father had got from him a general idea of conditions. Father had traveled several days and finally, coming out of the woods on the hill just east of the site of the old house, he was captivated by the broad expanse of Rock Prairie spread out before him and at once returned to the Land Office in Milwaukee and preempted the old homestead, located in what later was Darien Township in Walworth County, Wisconsin.

While going over the ground he found a swarm of bees hanging to a low branch of an oak tree. "Old Uncle" Arthur Stewart was an earlier comer and lived in a little pioneer log house near by. Father got from him a board, saw and made a rough hive in which he hived the bees, set the hive against a tree and went about his business. This was a parent hive that furnished other swarms for forty years afterwards.

Returning to Milwaukee, father purchased a lumber wagon, a yoke of oxen, a plow and such other articles as were needed in pioneer life. For a number of months while the home was being built, we lived in a little log cabin that had been abandoned by a man named Haskins, who anticipating Horace Greely's advice to go West, had pulled up stakes and moved on as settlers began to come in. This was situated just north of the Williams Hollister brick house on the corner. This was real pioneer life. No fire place or chimney, no stove of course. Mother did all the cooking out of doors, a frying pan, tea kettle and baking kettle were the only conveniences.

Then the building of a home, the first frame house in that vicinity. Father and Uncle William did all the work. Oak trees were cut and hewed for the frames, the rafters, sills, joists and studdings were all worked out by hand, the shingles of oak, rived and shaved. In this connection I remember the froe, a long heavy wedge shaped blade with a handle at right angles, used for splitting out the shingles or shakes, also a curved one for splitting out staves. Father made all the water barrels, wash tubs and buckets that were used, hooping them with hickory hoops. For siding oak logs were hauled to Maxon's Mill. This sawmill was situated under the hill where an old flour mill now stands. A little settlement grew up around it which later was known as Maxonville, then Plugtown, now Fairfield. The house when completed was entirely of oak, except a panel under the mantel made of pine from a packing box. The chimney of stone, laid up with clay mortar and built one half outside of the house. I judge the building was about 18 x 24, no partitions on either floor. Father and mother slept downstairs.

The first recollection I have of anything was being awakened one bitter cold morning by my father chopping ice out of the barrel which he brought into the fireplace. Later I knew that all the water for the house use for two years was hauled from Keeler's spring on the south end of the Peter Latimer farm and that father was chopping the ice out of the barrel to fill the tea kettle.

I saw the first cook stove when I was six or seven years old. Our people had found one somewhere and put it in operation and the neighbors used to come in to see it as a curiosity. On this stove brother, Gene, managed to fall from a high chair when he was about two years old and burned his chin, the resulting scar explains why that old rooster wears whiskers.

After a time the first floor part of the house was plastered but the second floor was never treated to any such luxury. As the family increased and the boys got big enough to be kicked out of the nest we were sent up stairs to sleep. The oak siding and shingles had warped, leaving plenty of spaces for the snow to sift in and many times on waking in the morning there would be two inches of snow on the floor and on our beds. We never thought it a hardship but would jump out of bed, grab our clothes and hike barefoot through the snow downstairs to dress.

But there were redeeming features. The oak shingles hard as a bone, each one $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet long laid 12 inches to the weather, warped into the shape of a trough, and then the patter of the rain upon the roof was wonderful music. Our beds were close up to the roof so that we could reach the rafters while lying in bed and when it began to rain the feeling of security from the storm and the music on the roof put us to sleep. I don't believe we were ever awake more than a minute after the rain began.

Another of my earliest recollections is of a deerhunt by my father and Uncle William. I remember the start on a snowy morning, the men wore white shirts and white cloth about their caps, so as not to be conspicuous in a snow country. I do not remember their home coming or the start the next morning with ox-team and sleigh. Some time before noon Mother called me to the window to see the men coming down the road toward the house. They stopped at the door and I was taken out to see three buck deer with big horns stretched out on the sled. There was meat for the winter. The hides were tanned and buckskin mittens made and buckskin string for all uses for which cord is now put. In this connection my father made the only shoes I had until I was at least ten years old of buckskin or of his old boot legs. We never wore shoes or boots in summer time those days. We put off our shoes at the earliest coming of spring and only put them on again when the frost nipped too sharp in the fall. As an illustration: West of the old house was a 20 acre meadow where the cows were turned into graze late in the fall. On a specially cold night they would go to a low place in the northwestern corner of the lot to sleep. In the morning the grass would be covered with a white crisp frost. It was the duty of brother, Kinner and myself to bring the cows up to the house to be milked. We would start out barefoot, running as fast as we could to keep warm. We would make the cows stand up and stand in the warm bed they had made until our feet got warm, meanwhile starting the cows home and when they were well on the way, another run to destination.

To go back a little, the Blackhawk war had settled the Indian question in Southern Wisconsin, but at the time of our settling there were many roaming bands of Chippewas and Winnebagoes. I remember one day my mother and I were alone in the house when about thirty Indians on ponies stopped at the house and by signs demanded something to eat. My mother was frightened of course and gave them all she had but did not satisfy them, so they began to prospect and found a half barrel of salt pork in the cellar. This they took possession of and with the aid of buckskin strings tied it to their saddles, and as they left the house going down the road towards Uncle Lem's, I remember what a sight it was: The Indians with their buckskin clothes and feathers and the white pieces of meat.

In old times the ponds contained much more water than now and there were many that were deep enough to swim in that are only dry depressions now. Often in early spring, on sunny days, we would go in swimming in these ponds while big cakes of ice were floating in the water, but we were not obliged to do it and it was great fun.

I have memories of our early schools. Just south of the old house, father had built a brick milk house. This was a milk house in the summer and for many years a school house in winter. The first school there was taught by Sarah Smith, later Mrs. James N. Sherman. The only furniture was benches made of oak slabs with wooden pegs for legs. This building was about 12x16 inside, in which we could gather from twenty to thirty pupils.

In old times the Public roads ran diagonally from Uncle Lem's past the old house and on past Arthur Stewart's and joined another road east of the Knilians homestead, but at that time the home of George James. Finally when the roads were laid out on section lines this road was abandoned. This compelled father to build the new house eighty rods west. The barn was built at the new location a year before the house was built and we had school one summer taught by Mary Weed, a beautiful girl, sister of Mrs. E. Latimer. Then when we moved to the new house half of the old house was usually occupied by a Methodist minister and the other half used as a school house. I may say here that about 1845 an addition was made to the old house, which accounts for the two rooms. The new house (the residence now on the K. N. Hollister farm) was built in 1850. All the lumber used in its construction was hauled from Milwaukee. All the work excepting the help from an apprentice (one of the Rowley boys) and a few days work by Ira Rood of Darien was done by E. Latimer, even to the making of the window sash, doors and blinds, his wages \$1.25 a day. The usual carpenter wages at that time was a dollar a day, but as Uncle Eben combined the trade of carpenter with the profession of architect - he got the extra twenty-five cents.

Finally a school house was built in the James district, a little more than two miles away, where Kinner and I were sent to school for several years. Our first teacher was Sarah Irish, a sister of Earl Irish, whom I assume many people in Delavan remember. It was called the James district for the reason that George James lived on the present Knilians farm and Perry James lived a half mile south.

I remember one day a dog got my dinner pail and having the average boys appetite I was hungry. Elijah Belding lived in a pioneer shanty near the school house. I told my troubles to George Belding and he volunteered to get me something to eat. We went to his house, the family was away, the door locked, but we broke in and found a jar of buttermilk and a stack of cold buckwheat cakes. That was the best feed I ever had.

Finally the country became settled and a school district and school house was talked of in our neighborhood. Then there was trouble. There were two factions, one headed by Houston, the Connables and Hollisters who wanted a school house where it is now located in District No. 11, in a corner of the Peter Latimer farm. The other faction, headed by Rial N. Weed wanted it near his house on what is now the farm owned by Samuel Stewart Jr. They were about evenly divided and there were a great many very hot meetings.

E. Latimer sided with Weed. One meeting I remember in particular, the last one, at which the majority decided to locate on the Latimer farm. Houston and Latimer got into a quarrel, they both had their coats off, when Latimer begged someone to hold his before he ate

Houston up. Weed was beaten at this meeting and laid it to the chairman of the meeting, William Hollister. I heard him remark as he left the room, "There sat old Bill Hollister like a damned old turkey cock who didn't have sense enough to put his motion." Weed was a character, never known a day's work but managed somehow to get along and support a big family. He posed as a lawyer but never seemed to have a case. He remarked one day at our home, "If the damned fools in Walworth County had known enough to appreciate talent, he would have been a prominent attorney."

I call to mind many old timers who pulled up stakes and moved west as the country became too thickly settled for them. Among these were the Moores, Stanleys, Teachouts, Rowleys, Belfers, Hardys, and Haskins. The Moore family alluded to, was that of Widow Moore who lived many years in a big log house on a farm now owned by James Stewart. I recall four boys, the oldest, William, lived for many years on the farm known as the Wickham-Cheesbro. Talcot Moore built a log house west of his mother which was occupied of later years by the Rowleys. The Teachouts lived on the present George Christie place. W. H. Hardy was a big red headed Indian trader, going later to California. I remember when he had a terrible toothache, old Dr. Blanchard came with his turnkey. Hardy was laid flat on his back on the floor. One of the hired men held his head down, the doctor got astride of him and I can hear the yell Hardy gave when that tooth came out, even today.

I heard Hardy was an Indian trader. He used to load a wagon with stuff the Winnebagoes and Chippewas liked and go somewhere, north, south or west to trade. On one excursion he brought home a big birchbark basket of maple sugar which my father purchased from him. I would not give much for a boy who would not steal maple sugar when there was a 100 pound chunk of it handy, so Kinner, Ham Moore and I kept pretty well sweetened until we came to the bottom of that basket. Then we quit. The Indians, as we learned later, had a habit of cooking muskrat in the boiling maple sap when making sugar. One rat evidently got away for the bottom of that basket was lined with the flesh, bones, and hair of one of the amphibious rodents.

Ham Moore, the youngest son of Widow Moore, was our chum. His only fault was his innocent disregard for the truth, sort of a white-headed Ananias. On the road between our house and Uncle Lem's was an oak tree into which someone had bored an auger hole, which at that time I mention, had grown over. Kinner, Ham and I were passing the tree one day when Ham stopped us and remarked very earnestly that there were bones of fly in that tree. We asked him how he knew. He said he came along there one day just as the hole was growing over and he caught a fly and put it in and just as he put it in the hole grewed over.

I sometimes went with my father to Milwaukee which was for a long time the only market for our wheat and pork. On one of these occasions Kinner had by strict economy saved an old time copper cent. He gave it to me with a commission to buy him an apple in Milwaukee. I did so. It took two days to make the trip home and all the time I carried that apple, sorely tempted, but finally delivered it but all the smell had been taken out of it.

The first real shock of my life and the one I think made me more bashful in my youth was on my tenth birthday. I started out in the morning fully inspired with the importance of the event and wound up at Uncle Lem's. Aunt Ann was peeling potatoes and singing "My Name was Captain Kidd, when I sailed, when I sailed...." I approached her as big as a barn and straightening up informed her that I was ten years old. She looked me over carefully and then remarked, "A little runt, ain't you?" I went home.

Our first span of horses, Tom and Jack, wonderful animals, were purchased in 1844. The trip to Milwaukee and back could be made in express time, four days if loaded both ways, and three days if loaded only one way.

The taverns along the road were wonderful caravanseries. The farmers always carried oats for their horses. The regular charge at the hotels was 50¢ for supper, breakfast and lodging and feeding the horses. This was later raised to seventy-five cents. Whiskey was three cents a drink and cigars one cent each.

I remember old Minnie Valentine, a 250 pounder, who lived nearly opposite the old Homer Smith place. She was a cigar maker, and the story was current that she rolled the cigars on her leg instead of using a board. Someone asked her why she did this and she answered that sometimes a board would get lost but she always knew where to find her leg.

I wonder how many living in Delavan now remember the railroad celebration when the Racine & Mississippi rails reached there? I was attending school in Delavan on that occasion and boarding at the brick tavern (they are called hotels now.) It was about the wildest day I ever saw. It was claimed that every man in town got drunk except E. Latimer and James Aram. The name Aram brings to mind a joke played by Bill Phoenix and one of his pals. Passage and Aram kept the principal store in Delavan for many years. A big sign over the door read "Passage and Aram". The boys rubbed out the "and" between the names and substituted the word "is" and put a comma after the "A" in the Aram. Translate it yourself.

The brick house on the corner, now the Gardener farm, was built by Rial N. Weed about 1844 and for many years Weed's Corner's post-office. A few years later Rufus Conable bought the Weed farm and Weed moved to the farm now known as the Samuel Stewart Jr. farm.

It is wonderful how foolish little things crowd the minds of old men. About this time country dancers were fashionable. At one of these Wallace Conable stepped on the dress of Jim Weed's partner when they were dancing. Jim remarked that he ought to be kicked. Next morning Conable showed up at Weed's and called Jim's attention to the remark and asked him if he was still of the same opinion. The answer of course was "yes". Conable turned around, lifted his coattail and invited Jim to kick. He did. Then Conable turned and gave him the licking of his life.

I think Rial Weed brought the first reaping machine into our neighborhood. It was a Hussey, before the time of McCormick, a cumbersome thing. The sheaves were raked off in the rear of the platform and had to be bound and taken out of the way before the machine came around again.

At that time the regular wage for harvest hands was \$1 per day. Then all grain and hay was cut by hand with cradle and scythe. The harvest hands from Chicago and Milwaukee thought the reaper would put them out of business and made a great fuss about it and as I remember they mobbed the reaper and put it out of commission. But the reaper had come to stay. Farmers broke up more land, doubled and quadrupled their acreage with the result that in a few years these same \$1 a day men were demanding \$4 a day and three jiggers. Now three jiggers a day for twenty men meant some whiskey but it was as cheap as anything else except water. I remember my father used to give a five gallon keg and seven shillings, in other words $87\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ and send me to Johnson's distillery in Delavan to get the keg filled, $17\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ a gallon. This distillery was located just south the spring on the hillside. Later it was used by Barker for a vinegar factory.

Finally Lucian Barnes built a house very near the old distiller site.

The first threshing machine was brought into that country by Isreal Stowell. It was what was called a traveling machine, that is, i got its power from the hubs of the wheels. A load of sheaves were thrown on the platform and the machine with horses hitched to it was started across the field and the threshing done while moving. It had no fanning mill attachment, the grain and chaff all came out together; but it beat the flail out of sight and was popular until something better came on the market.

Among the early harvest hands was old Dan Stafford, an industrious, honest, old Irishman, one of the kind who always wore a plug hat of ancient vintage, a long tailed coat and carried a shillalah on St. Patrick's day. One harvest the weather was very hot and the grain was ripening rapidly, much to its injury. Finally there came a rainy day. My father and I were out in the yard, guessing on the weather when old Dan came along. He put his arms on the fence and said, "Mr. Hollister, did ye ever see the grain ripen in a minit, as it has the last three or four days?"

As I look back along the pathway of time, what a charm there was in the oldfashioned, pioneer days of sixty to seventy years ago. The freedom of it all. The tramps in the woods, the swimming hole the great oak trees, the birds, the wild flowers, and more than all the comradeship of those days.

Our games were strenuous; wrestling, foot racing, swimming, old fashioned baseball, made us sturdy and self-reliant. And then as we grew big enough, the rifle and the shot gun. Prairie chickens roosting on the cornshocks, quail by the hundred, wild geese and ducks plentiful, with millions of wild passenger pigeons all stimulated the young Nimrod to great accomplishment with firearms.

In 1860 when the Civil War was on, most of these boys enlisted. It has always been the wonder of the world that new recruits could go into battle like veterans. Their early experience with firearms explains it. There were but few of my company but were fine rifle shots. I sometimes wonder how it would be now if our country was called suddenly to recruit a big army. But boys we were then and those who survive are old men now.

Of my early associates I recall first my brother, Kinner, as a boy and man my closest friend of all and I only wish he had been spared to help me write of early days. Next was my brother, Gene. He appeared a little too late to share in some of the early experiences of we two older ones. Then there was Ham Moore, Andy and Archie Stewart, Trune and Nob Jones, Sun Welch and George Belden, Jerome and William Dockstadter, and Norm Keeler. The later Stewarts and Hollisters too young to count. Most of these boys had some peculiarity or characteristic by which they were known. Ham Moore for his white hair, his extreme good nature and wonderful imagination. Give Kinner and Nob Jones a jack knife and they would have built a threshing machine. Andy and Archie Stewart, good and industrious boys, always ready to do their share in work and play. Trune Jones could spear fish and was expert with a rifle and Sun Welch could play the fiddle. The majority of these men have gone over the divide. As all were good boys, they were good men. Each did his duty in life as he found it to do. Here's tears for the comrades who are waiting for us on the other side of the range and blessings on the frosty heads of those who live!