

ADH 9423

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with  
Margaret Averill

Conducted by Roby Kesler  
November 17&19, 1984  
2135 First Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Transcribed by Mary Bowden

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INTERVIEW TOPICS  
CEDAR RAPIDS: THE EARLY DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

I. PERSONAL LEAD-IN QUESTIONS

- 1 --When were you born? Where?
- 1 --How long have you lived in Cedar Rapids?
  - What are your parents' names?
  - Where did you go to school?
- 1 --Are you married or single?
- 1 --Did you raise a family? How big?
  - What has been your occupation (career) during your adult years?
- 5 --Averill family background

II. COMMUNITY TOPICS

A. Technology in the Community

- 1. Transportation
  - Railway travel (Union Station, trips to Iowa City on Crandic)
  - 1,2 --Trolleys (the Interurban)
  - 2,39 --Horses and First Automobiles
    - Mud roads and the seedling mile
  - 9 --Hunter Airport and the first planes
    - Cedar River (ferries, floods, dams)
- 2. Communications
  - Newspapers
  - Radios
  - Advertising
  - Telephones

B. People in the Community

- 1. Amusements/Recreation
  - Motion Pictures
  - Cedar Rapids Parks
  - Dances
  - Carnival Week
  - Chautauqua
  - Community Theater
  - Little Gallery
  - Symphony Orchestra
  - Circus
  - Greene's Opera House
  - Amusement Parks (Alamo)
  - Camps
  - Community Centers (YWCA, YMCA)
  - 7-8 --Brucemore Parties
- 2. Famous Characters
  - Cherry Sisters
  - 19-23 --Grant Wood
    - Carl Van Vechten (The Tattooed Countess)
  - 17,18,21,23,24-27 --Marvin Cone
  - 7,8,9,10,13,14,15,16,39 --Howard and Margaret Hall
  - 7,13,14,16 --Mr. and Mrs. George B. Douglas
    - 9 --Herbert Hoover
    - 9 --Harry Truman
    - 9 --Boating with Herbert Hoover's sons

3. Lifestyle

- Life before air conditioning
- Winter Activities
- 27-28 --Holidays (Memorial Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas) 7-8,13,14-16 --Brucemore
- 7-8 --Clothing 10 --Cottage of Margaret and Howard Hall
- Toys 20 --Palisades house
- Saloons/Taverns 10-13 --Yachting
- Farm Life
- 5-7 --Hilltop- Averill family home

4. Family Life

- 3-4,27-28 --Household Help
- Women's Roles
- Childrens' Activities/Behavior
- Sunday activities (Church life, Sunday Blue Laws)

5. Ethnic/Minority Life

- 3,4,5 --Immigrants (Czech, Greek, German, etc.)
- Indians
- Segregation of Blacks
- Jobs Available

C. Organizations and Institutions in the Community

1. Education

- Cedar Rapids Schools 43-44 --Dog show
- 13,14,37 --Coe College 41 --Children's theater
- Mount Mercy College
- Cornell College
- 17,40-41 --Junior League of Cedar Rapids

2. Government

- City Services
- Streets/Roads
- Relationship with Marion (Courthouse Dispute)

3. Medical

- 42-43,17,18,28-A-30,31-38 --Hospitals- St. Luke's
- 29,36 --Patient-Doctor Relationship
- Broken Bones
- Polio, TB, Debilitating Diseases
- House Calls
- 18,19,20,39,40 --Home Delivery of Babies
- 16,18,30,39,40 --Red Cross
- 18,28,30 --Gray Ladies
- 17,28-A,39-40 --Schick General Hospital -Army Hospital in Clinton
- 31-34,42 --St. Luke's Auxiliary
- 36-37 --Nurses
- 39 --Flu epidemic of 1917

4. Business and Economy

- Local Factories (Douglas Starch Works, Quaker Oats, etc.)
- Local Brewing Companies
- Retail Businesses /Department Stores
- Professions
- Banking and Finance
- Restaurants (Greek Restaurants in 30's)
- Businesses that no longer exist (old groceries, drygoods, icehouses)
- Farmers Market
- Mills on Cedar River
- Buildings Erected
- Manual Labor/Types of Jobs
- Companies (Labor Unions, Strikes, Pay)

5. Attitudes/Values

- Children/Discipline
- Sex/Petting
- Charity
- Divorce
- Work
- Working women, Voting Rights for Women
- Patriotism (World War I)

D. Historic Events in and Outside the Community

1. Catastrophic Events

- Clifton Hotel Fire (1903)
- Douglas Starch Works Explosion(1919)
- Bank Closings (1933)
- Lyman-Stark Building Collapse(1913)
- Public Library Murder(1921)

2. National Historic Events

- Womens' Suffrage
- 18,29-39 --World War I -Prisoners of war in Clinton
- Roaring 20's
- Prohibition
- Great Depression



## MARGARET BEERSTECHER AVERILL

Margaret Beerstecher Averill was born in 1898 in Three Rivers, Michigan, the daughter of Nora Dudley Beerstecher and Frederick Beerstecher. She came to Cedar Rapids as the bride of Worth Averill in 1923. In 1924 they had twins, Dudley and Nancy.

Mrs. Averill quickly became a part of community life in Cedar Rapids. She worked extensively as a Red Cross volunteer, a member of Junior League, and a member of St. Lukes Hospital Auxiliary. She was instrumental in establishing a psychiatric unit at St. Lukes Hospital in the 1950's. Her memories also include Brucemore, Marvin Cone, and Grant Wood.

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Date of Interview: November 17-19, 1984  
Place: 2135 1st Ave. S.E., Cedar Rapids  
Interviewer: Roby Kesler  
Transcriber: Mary Bowden

RK: Where were you born?

MA: In Three Rivers, Michigan.

RK: You have been here 61 years, so you were married and came here in 1923.  
Is that right?

MA: That is right.

RK: And started to raise a family, and tell me about your family.

MA: I had twins, Dudley and Nancy, born in July 29, 1924, had them right away.

RK: Tell me your impressions of Cedar Rapids when you arrived as a bride.

MA: I liked it very much, it was a nice size. It was just 48,000 and you came to know almost everybody and it was very friendly. I remember the streetcars going up and down.

RK: Where did you live?

MA: I lived on A Avenue for two years then we moved to 1831 Second Avenue, S.E.

RK: What kind of car were you driving then, do you remember?

MA: I remember that Worth had a brand new Oldsmobile to bring us home from the hospital.

RK: Was it open?

MA: No, it was a closed car, to take the twins home in.

RK: You said something about early Cedar Rapids, something about Street-cars, did you ride them?

MA: I have never been on a streetcar in my life, but I remember them very well, and I have never been on a bus in my life.

RK: Did you have a car of your own then?

MA: Not then, then later we got a second car, which was a Ford and I don't think it was convertible, it must have been a coupe or a runabout, I guess they would have called it at that time. I remember it was stolen from our garage, right soon after we got it.

RK: Did you get it back?

MA: We did get it back, it was all right.

RK: You said you lived right across the street from Dr. Bailey.

MA: Yes, Dr. Fred Bailey.

RK: Your nose and throat man, who was very prominent, and then near the Johnsons.

MA: Near the Johnsons, second house from Elmer Johnson and his wife and Ella.

RK: And the twins went to preschool?

MA: They didn't have preschool at that time, they went to Johnson, and at the beginning of ninth grade, they went away to boarding school.

RK: Where did they go?

MA: Dudley was at St. John's Military Academy and Nancy was at Milwaukee Downer.

RK: Did they walk to Johnson?

MA: Yes, they walked to Johnson.

RK: And they had friends that they gathered up on the way probably.

MA: Yes, Charys Lenzen and Betsy Blaise, were living close by and they went back and forth to school together.

RK: With twins, I know you needed help in the house. Tell me how you got your household help.

MA: Well, some of the best people I had were through the YWCA and, in fact, a maid lived in with me for 27 years. I got her through the Y, and she came to Cedar Rapids in 1923, but I didn't have her until much later. She came from Ely.

RK: Was she of Czech origin?

MA: Yes, Czech.

RK: So she lived in.



MA: That was Rose, that I had so long. That was the last one that I have had, live-in and she was very good help, and I found all the Czech people were very good.

RK: Where they difficult to find?

MA: No, one time I put an ad in the paper for a nurse maid, and I had 26 replies.

RK: Can you remember what you were paying help then?

MA: I think \$20 a week.

RK: And they stayed right there.

MA: They stayed in the house.

RK: And had six or seven days that they were there. Did they have a day off?

MA: Oh yes, they had a day off every week, and then usually on Sunday, if I didn't need them, why they were free.

RK: So you made lots of friends among the Czechs.

MA: Yes, I did they were wonderful people.

RK: They were a great addition to Cedar Rapids.

MA: I think so. I remember the last time I heard anybody mention the number of people and I think it was soon after I came here, there were 10,000 Czechs, I was told.

RK: I think we've missed that influx, haven't we?

MA: I think so.

RK: When the immigration was cut off.

MA: It's very hard to find good help now.

RK: What they gave to the city, can you say what you think they have given to the city?

MA: Oh, I think they have given a lot, and we had so many professional men and women, who were Czech. Farms and gardens are so lovely, and of course, the national Bohemian cemetery is in Cedar Rapids. I think they are great people.

RK: I do too, they are hard working and industrious and save money.

MA: Dependable.

RK: Margaret, when you were married to Worth Averill, it was a very noted Cedar Rapids family who had made great contributions to the city. Tell me a bit about Worth's grandfather, who was an early Cedar Rapids pioneer, we spoke of his building a house and his initials.

MA: He was Arthur T. Averill and he and his wife lived at 1120 Second Avenue, built a large home there, and had a son, Glenn and a daughter, Jessie. The Averill house was later turned over to St Luke's Hospital, and it became a dormitory for the students of practical nursing. Later it was sold, and it is now occupied by a lawyer and the members of his firm, who have restored the house to its original setting and it was built in 1870. It is now called Averill House.

RK: And when you were a bride, Worth's father, Glenn lived, maybe not lived there. They lived in the country, at a big home in the country, and the name of that?

MA: Hillgrove, it was on Ivanhoe road.

RK: How is it now?

MA: Well, it has gone through several hands, and people have tried to restore that to its original state, but not quite, but it's still occupied.

RK: Must be a large one.

MA: Very large.

RK: Now Glenn was Worth's father, and he had an aunt, whom I knew, Jessie, and Jessie lived there with, was that a cousin that she lived with?

MA: A cousin, yes, she came to live with her. She came from Chicago and her name was Lulu Averill.

RK: I remember my mother taking me to call there, and it was a great experience to be in that big house, and you were there often. Did they have a ballroom on the third floor.

MA: Yes, they had a ballroom on the third floor, and they used to have very large parties and dinner parties, they had dancing, they had piano, they had orchestra, and everything was set for about 24 people.

RK: You mean the dinner table?

MA: Well, I don't think they could all sit at one table but 12 could sit at one table and I think perhaps they had, a lap supper or something. I don't know just how they did it.

RK: And you were there often?

MA: Yes, but not at that time.



RK: But you mean the A.T. Averill's had these lovely big parties.

MA: Yes, that's right.

RK: And they must have been very good friends with the Douglas'.

MA: Very good friends, in fact, Mother Averill and Mrs. Douglas were very good friends when I came. Margaret was my first caller and Howard was the first person I met outside of the family when I first got here, and they were my life-long friends.

RK: Think of that, and they were your very first callers to come and welcome you to Cedar Rapids.

MA: That's right.

RK: My, what old, old friends, and you must miss them a lot.

MA: I sure do.

RK: People have asked me to ask you questions about the Halls, because we are appreciating Brucemore so much and we like to imagine the parties there. You said that they didn't give a great many.

MA: No, they didn't, what the biggest party that I've known them to have was a "Gay Nineties" party. I'm sorry I don't know the exact date, but it was on Howard's birthday, and it was New Year's Eve, and it was a costume party, it was great fun and I still have pictures of it, not here but I have them.

RK: What did you wear?



MA: I wore a ball gown that belonged to Margaret's aunt and Worth was dressed as a Confederate soldier, but they all thought he was a mailman.

RK: How were the other people dressed?

MA: Oh, Margaret wore a gown, of black sequins, a long gown, and Howard wore tails and a top hat, and I know everybody had a different costume, I don't remember.

RK: And you have pictures of that?

MA: I have pictures of that but they are at my summer home, they're not here.

RK: Can you remember other people who were there?

MA: Oh, if I stopped to think about it I probably would, but right now, I remember that the Holmes' were there and I remember having, they had a champagne supper and Mr. Dows was at my table, I remember that.

RK: Dressed Up?

MA: Dressed up, everybody was, everybody and they still have a picture of Margaret and Howard in their game room downstairs. Oh, it was such fun.

RK: Did they have an orchestra, did you say, that you danced to.

MA: No.

RK: No orchestra there.

MA: I don't remember that they did, no, but it was a fun evening. Now, other than that, they entertained very little, and they would have different people for dinner or out of town guests for the weekend, and of course,

they entertained Hoover twice, and let see who else?

RK: Well, lets see, they've entertained Hoover's son and I remember the quite important picture in the library of Hoover and Truman sitting together. Where you at any of those parties, Margaret?

MA: No, I wasn't. Howard asked Worth to help entertain the Hoover boys and so we all went out to the airport, Dan Hunter's airport, now the two boys were not supposed to go in the same plane, the same boat, or the same car, at the same time, you know, but they did. Worth and Howard took them up in Dan Hunter's little plane, We were all so worried! Then they came back and both Howard and Worth had boats up the Cedar River, so we got them in the car and took them up there. They went in the boats, and then, when it was time to come home, I don't know how it happened, but I was the chauffeur for our car that had one of the boys in it, and I was so scared that I would hit something on the way home! We managed all right, but it was an exciting afternoon!

RK: How old were those Hoover boys then? Were they in their 20's or were they younger?

MA: Oh, no, they were grown, they must have been in their 20's.

RK: Maybe out of college?

MA: Could be, I don't remember that part, but I know they did all these things they weren't supposed to!

RK: They must have been enjoyable people, too.

MA: Yes, they were very nice. And now Margaret would have a tea now and then,

and, of course, she entertained her sewing group, which she belonged to since school days, and I remember she had a tea for the Sustaining League members, when some of the new members were brought in. But, really as far as actual parties, they had very few. They would take their friends to their cottage, entertain them down there, they liked that better than having it at the house.

RK: I have a wonderful story about that. We were down there for dinner or picnic, and Howard would go around asking everyone, (and there would be about eight or ten of us), how we wanted our steaks, and we would say 'medium rare', 'well-done', and he would nod and Margaret would turn to me and say, 'He always asks that, and they always come out the same!' My, what wonderful hosts they were down there!

MA: They were, and then of course, they had the place in Marathon, Florida, which was lovely, and they had guests for a short duration; their house wasn't made for much company.

RK: And you were down there.

MA: I was down there. Father Averill owned a yacht, and then he wanted to sell it, and Howard and Margaret bought it.

RK: Oh, that was the history of that yacht, I didn't know that.

MA: And it was called the Marlotta, part of my name and part of Carlotta's name. Carlotta was Arthur Averill's wife, Marlotta. At the World's Fair, that would be '31, '32, '33;--I don't know which.

RK: '33, they brought it up to Chicago and on to Charlevoix and we went up there and were with them on the boat in Charlevoix. Then when they took the boat back down to Florida, we met them at Peoria and went down quite a



long ways with them. Irene was with us then; she wasn't married.

RK: They brought the boat from Florida, way up to Charlevoix?

MA: Yes, the inner coastal, and then up the canal and up to Chicago.

RK: Then you said something about Peoria?

MA: They started down, and then we took our car and went to Peoria and got on the boat. Then we had a man drive our car on down, I don't know if it was New Orleans, or where we got off. So we were with them part of the way down.

RK: Wasn't that an experience!

MA: It was great. Then when we visited Miami, the next year, we had the children with us, and we were with them on the boat there.

RK: How big a crew did he have on that boat?

MA: Oh, they only had—Father Averill was a graduate of engineering and he was, the reason he bought a Rolls Royce was to see what made it run, and he bought the boat for the same reason. So, often they had only the cook, who was a captain really, and Father Averill. I don't remember how much Howard had. It only needed two men, really.

RK: Such a good looking boat, they always had a model in the library.

MA: Nancy has that now.

RK: How nice your daughter, Nancy, has that model now, because it had an Averill beginning.



MA: He had it made in Fort Clinton, Ohio, and while they were making it, Worth and I went from our Michigan place up to Ohio, to see them building it.

RK: How many did it sleep?

MA: Well, four besides the cook. No more than that--six, I think it was six besides the cook.

RK: Marlotta. Was that name on the front of that?

MA: I don't remember if they changed it or not.

RK: So, it was Glen Averill, Worth's father, who had that built. Isn't that just fascinating, because I have often wondered about it. Well, you knew it well, didn't you, Margaret?

MA: I sure did, from the time it had its first plank put in.

RK: And did you use some champagne to launch it?

MA: I don't think so, I wasn't there when it was launched.

RK: Was Margaret a good sailor?

MA: Yes. Well we never went, we started, while Father Averill still owned it, we started from St. Petersburg to go to Cuba and it was the year after the big storm. That would be about 1928, and the Coast Guard came out and made us go back, because it was starting to boil up again. And we went to, we went into the Bay of Sarasota, and the anchors wouldn't hold, so we had to go over to the city dock, and they hardly had enough fenders to hold it off of the dock. I remember they took Worth's mother

and me off the boat at midnight, because it was just terrible. It was so rough, and we could hardly walk to get to a hotel, the wind was so terrible. So we never got to Cuba. That was when people went to Cuba.

RK: I am so glad to know about this yacht because, as I said, I had seen the model of it so much in the library.

MA: Then they sold that, and got a bigger one, and I was never on that because Margaret didn't go in it, hardly ever after he died. I saw it, but I was never on it, not that one.

RK: Which all brings up memories of Brucemore and how much you were there. Tell me how you think Margaret and Howard would feel right now about Brucemore and how it is used as a cultural center for the city?

MA: Well I'm sure they would both be delighted because it meant so much, Especially to Margaret, since she was brought up there, and to think that it's being kept up so beautifully, and that so many people who never had an opportunity to see it before are seeing it now and enjoying it. In fact, go back farther than that. I think Mrs. Douglas would be delighted, because she used to have concerts there, and people dancing on the lawn, and all kinds of groups there, so, I think, go back to her. I think they would all be simply delighted with it.

RK: Do you remember being there for any particular thing that Mrs. Douglas had?

MA: Not any particular thing, no. I remember Mrs. Douglas, always had her hat on and her dog under her arm.

RK: Yes, I know she did a great deal for the Coe faculty, because my family

were the recipients of that, being on the Coe faculty. She was the first woman trustee of Coe, and came on the board soon after Mr. Douglas' death. You were saying, before, that at Mrs. Douglas' funeral, you and Dr. Bailey were with Howard, because he was ill?

MA: He was ill in bed in Garden House and they had the service piped over to the house so we could hear that, and then someone else came and I went over and stayed with Margaret at Brucemore, right after the services. Father Campbell was still there, and I wasn't there right during the service but I heard it.

RK: Father Campbell had that service?

MA: I'm sure he did, because he was the one that was there.

RK: And what were you saying about the dog and the lion?

MA: The day of the service they wanted--Howard wanted to get his dog down to the vets. There was so much commotion around there, and people were afraid of the dog, but the dog knew me, so I got him in the back seat and somebody drove him down there. And then people were afraid to feed the little baby lion down in the basement. So I went down to feed the lion.

RK: Margaret what did you give the baby lion?

MA: I don't know what it was.

RK: Where was he in the basement, in the laundry?

MA: In a cage, a large cage, I don't remember which room.

RK: He was in a cage?



MA: Oh, yes.

RK: Because sometimes he was out, wasn't he?

MA: I didn't see him out much, really.

RK: So you went down there to feed him. Well, people going through Bruce more, and I think last year there were over 20,000 who went through, and one of the questions is about, always about a lion, and, of course, he is buried out there in the dog cemetery and do you know how Howard got interested in lions?

MA: I have a picture of Howard with the lion's paws up over his back. I have that up in my Michigan house. He knew people at MGM in California, and I think he had a picture taken with a lion out there, you remember that was their trademark, the lion. That's how he got interested in lions.

RK: Then Leo was a descendant, or . . .

MA: I don't think he was related to the MGM lion, I don't think so, and that was so sad the way Leo died.

RK: Oh, yes, do you want to tell that, because people are often asking about it?

MA: Well, he was in a cage out by the garage, and people used to come around. It was very secure, they could come and see him. But some children were fooling around there and they poked a stick in his throat, and, as a result of that, the lion died.

RK: And they really couldn't treat him.

MA: No.



RK: Oh, that was sad, it was unfair.

MA: Yes, it was.

RK: He was such a part of Cedar Rapids, because he roared every afternoon at five.

MA: I could hear him roar down at my house on Second avenue.

RK: Yes, and of course, we lived right behind, and it was like a streetcar going by, you didn't hear from Leo after awhile, when it was 5 o'clock. I think you're right about what you say about Mrs. Douglas enjoying all this, as well as Margaret and Howard. Their generosity certainly continues, doesn't it.

MA: It is too bad, in a way, that people didn't realize all of the good that they all did, Mrs. Douglas, and Margaret, and Howard. So many things have come to light since they died, of people who were being helped, that people didn't know about.

RK: They were so humble and modest about it. Yes, that's true, it's all coming to light so much that they did. I was so close to Howard in working with the Bender swimming pool. He was the one who gave me the big send off. Now, I think about how Margaret Hall, (and we were talking about Bruce-more) was the one who was responsible for Margaret Averill making a big contribution to the Red Cross, tell us about that.

MA: Well, she worked in the office at Red Cross. I remember she was doing something at the YMCA and I went down to see her and she said, "Oh, you should sign up for something," and I said, "Well, what would it be?" and she said, "Oh, I don't know," and I said, "Well I did, way back in World War I, I did some

driving for a Red Cross nurse and I had some training in motorcar. Well she said that would be nice, so that was the beginning of my 20 some years in Red Cross. Then I did various things from then on.

RK: What all did you do for the Red Cross?

MA: Well, I was liaison between the chapter here and the activities in Shick Hospital in Clinton and I would drive back and forth.

RK: And you would drive back and forth with people, or with doctors?

MA: No, not doctors, with people. It was the camp and hospital council, it was called. The Junior League at that time helped with some supplies that we needed to take down there, I took supplies down. I remember, one time Marvin Cone loaned some of his pictures to go in the auditorium down there for a certain length of time, and I took Marvin and Winnifred and the pictures down in my stationwagon. When we got down there were Italian prisoners of war and we had a terrible time finding somebody of command that would speak English. They all came down and wanted to help, help unload the pictures. They could do that all right, but after that we had to get somebody else to supervise it. So I was on the Red Cross board most of the time for 20 years. I was kind of liason between that and the psychiatric unit when it started at St. Lukes. They had Gray-Ladies there and different people. So I was associated with it for over 20 years.

RK: My you've made big contributions! To go back to Clinton, how often a week would you go down there?

MA: Oh, it wasn't that often. They had the meetings down there once a month. So I always went once a month and then would try to get supplies to take down in the mean time and go down again.

RK: And you were in uniform, as I remember, the Red Cross uniform. This was during and immediately after the war, we had Italian prisoners there. Were there any other kind of prisoners there?

MA: Not that I recall, there probably were, but I don't remember. It was a heart-breaking thing to see the planes come in with these men, all the way from a full-body cast to the mental patients. That got my interest in the psychiatric unit is why I, how I got into mental health. In 1953, the members of the board of mental health, we had a meeting and working through the hospital is how I got in on it. It was to put the trained volunteers in the psychiatric unit. So I was with the psychiatric for 20 years, I overlapped, you see.

RK: Oh Margaret, my you've done a lot! We're going to talk about St. Luke's Hospital a little later and all that you contributed for 27 years, I think or more. Because when Margaret Averill name's is mentioned, St. Luke's goes right along with it. But it all started down with your Red Cross work down in.

MA: Well, a lot of it did, yes.

RK: To seeing these prisoners come in that needed you. How did they react to Marvin Cone's paintings?

MA: Oh, well it was different, of course the psychiatric patients were sort of confined to quarters, they didn't get around that much. Most of them enjoyed; but, of course, most of them could not appreciate them. It made a nice cheerful room, you know, in the auditorium.

RK: Marvin's paintings give a feeling of peace and serenity and beauty.



MA: Then I think I went down when we picked them up.

RK: Talking about Marvin Cone and what he did for those prisoners of war, down in Clinton at the hospital there, with Margaret taking him down with his paintings, which, of course, reminds everyone of his best friend, Grant Wood. I know you were close to Grant Wood.

MA: I knew Grant Wood, mostly because he was married to my husband's aunt, and got to know him quite well, in fact. He was commissioned to do a painting for Upjohns, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. So he and Aunt Sarah came down to my summer home in Three Rivers.

RK: Was he painting it there or had he done it?

MA: He was painting it there.

RK: What was it?

MA: It was a portrait.

RK: A portrait of maybe one, . . .

MA: One of the executives of the state.

RK: Maybe, I think it's (Alcott.)

MA: Kalamazoo, oh, Battlecreek, oh what do you mean?

RK: Oh no, at Kalamazoo, of the Upjohn's boys.

MA: Upjohn's are in Kalamazoo.

RK: Oh, I was thinking of the Gills, I met. So he did a portrait of one of the founders, or the president, or someone. So he did it at your cottage?

MA: No, no, no, I say he came to our cottage to visit us.

RK: So he had already painted it.

MA: He was in the process of painting it.

RK: But he didn't paint it there?

MA: Not at my house.

RK: So he was married at that time to your husband's aunt, Aunt Sarah. What did you do at the cottage, was he interested in the water and . . .

RK: Well, he was interested, the house was quite new then, it was built in 1936. The house was quite new, and it has an enormous fireplace and a very wide chimney shows on the outside and it's all white. He said, "I'm so glad that you didn't put an ornament on the chimney." He loved the place, but he was so glad that we didn't put anything on there. He knew so many that put an initial or something on there. He liked it. Then he visited us several times at the Palisades, our house in the Palisades.

RK: Grant and Aunt Sarah.

MA: Yes.

RK: Did he enjoy the beauty of the Palisades?

MA: Yes, he did.

RK: I don't know if he painted, did he paint anything of the river or the island?

MA: No, not that I know of.

RK: I don't know of any either. He loved to paint, I've enjoyed his flowers that he's painted, the ones we have.

MA: Now Margaret and Howard have a picture of their new place, you know that painting. I can't remember who did that.

RK: I don't know, I can see it.

MA: It wasn't Grant, because that was after his time. I remember going with Marvin and Winnifred to see Grant in the hospital in Iowa City, just a little while before he died. He was sitting up in bed and was so glad to see us.

RK: And his humor was still on tap, I understand. But how sad for Marvin to have to say good-bye to such a dear friend. That was the last time Marvin saw him too?

MA: I don't know that, it was the last time I saw him.

RK: My, what a loss it was, he was so young.

MA: And Marvin too.

RK: My, Cedar Rapids has been fortunate to have had such creative, wonderful people.

MA: That's wonderful.

RK: And Aunt Sarah, the marriage, lasted about three years, didn't it?

MA: I think so.

RK: They weren't very well suited to each other.



MA: No, I don't think so, She was rather tempermental, she'd been in light opera, had a wonderful voice and did much of her singing in Chicago. No, it was too bad, it just didn't work out.

RK: Too bad, and her name, she had been married before and her name had been Sarah?

MA: Maxin, originally, Sherman, Sarah Sherman Maxin.

RK: And the Sherman was here, wasn't it, or not?

MA: Sherman was Mother Averill's name, they were sisters.

RK: So where did Sarah grow up, did they grow up in Cedar Rapids?

MA: They came from Monticello, and she was in Chicago a long, long time when she was married to Dr. Maxin, who was a dentist. They lived in New Buffalo, Michigan, on Lake Michigan.

RK: Wonder where Grant and Sarah met, how did they know each other?

MA: Here in Cedar Rapids.

RK: At a party or something?

MA: I don't know that. She was very nice to his mother, she was very fond of his mother and was very nice to her.

RK: Which was her, oh you mean to Grant's mother, oh, that's nice. She lived with them, didn't she? Did Grant's mother live . . . ?

MA: I don't think so, not that I know, I think she was gone.

RK: Oh, she knew her before, then. Well then, anything else you want to say about

Grant Wood, you have a Grant Wood, don't you?

MA: I have four, I think.

RK: You have four Grant Woods, my, how you treasure them.

MA: I do, because Marvin told me that he doesn't know of any other boat pictures that Grant made, and I have an oil and a water color, both.

RK: Oh, that's a Grant Wood, I didn't realize that. It's a picture with about five sailboats, in the harbour.

MA: The other one, I think, has two boats, it's in the other room.

RK: We're looking at the Grant Wood paintings, which, Margaret, you said he didn't .

MA: Marvin told me, I was lucky to have these two, because he didn't remember Grant doing any other boats.

RK: These were done in France, and they're sailboats, and there are about five in this one, and there are three or four in the other, they're lovely.

MA: The second one is done in oil.

RK: Tell us about the other Grant Wood, that he did in Paris.

MA: That's called "Woman on the Klee", and it shows a huddled figure of a woman on a doorstep, that was also done in France.

RK: And it's hanging right near one of Marvin's, and tell us about that one.

MA: Well, that is a cloud picture, and there was a time when Marvin quit painting clouds and went to the more modern things, so I commissioned him to paint

this one, and I am very fond of it.

RK: And tell us the other Marvin Cone's you have.

MA: I have two more that he did in France, and then I have an etching, a portrait of myself.

RK: Which is lovely. You remarked about one of the Marvin Cone's you have in your library, and tell us what Marvin said about that, because it's so really unique with Marvin.

MA: Marvin never praised his own work, in fact, he didn't, he almost belittled his own work, but when I got this one he said, "That is a good one." So I'm specially pleased to have that particular one.

RK: Because I don't think Marvin ever said that very often.

MA: No, I don't think he did.

RK: No, he would say, "You may not want this painting; you may get tired of this painting." You had to argue with him to buy it. But when he said, "That's a good one"... It's a painting of rooftops.

MA: Rooftops of Paris, it's called.

RK: So, it's a treat to be here and see these lovely paintings by our famous Cedar Rapids artists, we could talk a great deal about Marvin because you've been so close to him, and I so close to Winnifred.

MA: That's right, ~~they're~~ lovely people, and I've known them ever since I've been in Cedar Rapids. In fact, soon after I came to Cedar Rapids, Colonel Robbins had a party for the people that were in the 34th division, that



were still in Cedar Rapids, -that were in his outfit. And Worth was in his outfit, in fact, he was a chauffer for him in New Mexico and that's where I met Marvin.

RK: Now this was?

MA: Soon after I came here.

RK: So that would be about 1923 and Marvin was at this party. Marvin was an ambulance driver during in the war.

MA: No.

RK: He was in the war.

MA: Yes, but I don't remember what he did, I don't really remember.

RK: But Colonel Robbins gave a party.

MA: Got them all together, all those that were in Cedar Rapids.

RK: So it must have been in about 1923, the war hadn't been over very long, the first world war.

MA: Well, I think it was a little more than that, because Winnifred didn't come to the party because Doris was a baby, and Doris is older than my children. So it must have been a little later than that.

RK: My, you could tell lots of stories about Marvin's humor.

MA: Yes, I can't think of any particular one, but he cared very little for material things and he would never have a car and finally in the winter, it was difficult getting back and forth to Coe, so he bought a second

hand car, and he didn't care anything about cars, and didn't know much about them. But he was a great person.

RK: A great person, his humility, I always think of his modesty and his humility and his great ability that he had. We are the ones so fortunate to live here and be able to see so many of his paintings. I just wonder how many he did, Winnifred keeping a catalog of those, isn't she?

MA: I don't know.

RK: I don't know, but they're all lovely. Tell us a little about Marvin, when he wasn't painting.

MA: Well, when he wasn't painting, he was studying, I think and he, of course, taught at Coe, both art and French. So he kept himself busy that way. He was not very interested in social things, he was a home-body. He was very content with his life; I think he enjoyed living that way.

RK: He was the most enthusiastic grandfather, as I remember. He thought being a grandfather was about the greatest thing one could be.

MA: Yes, he has four grandchildren, all nice people.

RK: And one with his ability.

MA: Yes.

RK: At least one of them, who is really an artist.

MA: Steven, he lives in Germany, studying and painting and having exhibits.

RK: Marvin would be very proud of him.

MA: He would.

RK: It's interesting how that ability has come down. I think the other children have it in a different way, too, don't they, the other grandchildren.

MA: Yes, they do.

RK: We're going to talk about Thanksgiving and what Margaret did when her children were little, and some of the family traditions. This being near Thanksgiving right now.

MA: Usually, we went with the family, either Hillgrove, in the country, for Thanksgiving. Later we went to Aunt Jessie Averill, Aunt Jessie's house for Thanksgiving and Averill's house. Later I had the Thanksgiving dinner at my house.

RK: Tell us about what you had and what you did, if you had it at noon.

MA: We usually had it about one o'clock, and had all the trimmings with the turkey of course.

RK: Now you had, what we don't have now, all the help you had then. So, did you have a cook and a waitress and a maid and, tell us about that.

MA: At Hillgrove they had two couples, it was a very large house. Aunt Jessie always had at least one, and then when she had big parties she would have help, besides the one that lived there.

RK: How many did you have at home?

MA: It depended, I mean, probably six or eight, and I . . .

RK: Oh, you mean six or eight guests, I thought you meant servants.



MA: No, just one.

RK: And then you had a driver.

MA: Well, I had a nursemaid and a cook and then later we had a driver.

RK: But Thanksgiving was a regular happy time. Was there anything else about it?

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

RK: We're going to talk about the Red Cross and her big contributions over many years at St. Luke's Hospital. Margaret, when you were going down to the Army Hospital, what is the name?

MA: Schick General.

RK: Schick General, as a Red Cross worker in uniform, you did get some ideas of what Cedar Rapids needed, didn't you?

MA: Yes, I visited the psychiatric unit in the hospital in Clinton, many times, and as the soldiers returned, the servicemen returned home, there was a great need for psychiatric help. In 1953, the head of the mental health unit selected two or three people, which formed a nucleus to work with St. Luke's Hospital, to set up a psychiatric unit for the patients. That was in 1953 that we planned it and soon after that one wing of the hospital was set aside for the psychiatric patients. Gray Ladies worked there and there was a large program for, training program for volunteers. They were carefully screened and supervised while they were working there, and it grew, and grew, until there are three separate units at St. Luke's Hospital, now, for the psychiatric patients.

RK: How many does that include, how many patients is that?

MA: I'm sorry, I can't tell you, and it varies with the kind of patients you

can have. One unit is a locked unit. The other two are not, those for the people who are recovering.

RK: Margaret, what psychiatrists did we have way back in 1953, what was the status of that in Cedar Rapids?

MA: Well, I think we had four at that time, and they worked with us and helped with the training. Of course, all this was approved by the head of the hospital. It really was a wonderful thing and the volunteers are still working with the psychiatric patients at St. Luke's.

RK: I would think you'd feel proud of that, because that was so needed. What did doctors do before they had that unit there, with mental patients?

MA: I don't know, I think they just went into the regular hospital unit, because there was no special one at that time.

RK: In seeing these war prisoners or these boys returning from war needing the psychiatric care and help, could you tell us a little bit more about that, some of these were Italian prisoners of war and some were American soldiers coming back.

MA: Oh, yes there were several different nationalities, but the prisoners of war were all Italian, at that time. Dr. Sedlacek was a great help, the father of the Sedlacek boys, he was a great help, setting that up.

RK: Were there others in Iowa, at that time, other units?

MA: I presume, I'm not sure of that. There were none in Cedar Rapids.

RK: Very needed.



MA: Badly needed, of course some of these boys went to the veteran's hospital in Iowa City, I also visited that, and their psychiatric unit.

RK: When you visited there, Margaret, what did you do look over the set up, the administration and the organization of it?

MA: Pretty much, as much as I could of course, we were escorted there, in that unit, by the head nurse or someone of equal qualifications, and I learned as much as I could from that and then we just started from there in 1953.

RK: My how needed it was, and how it is used today. You know in years to come anyone listening or reading this, won't know what Gray Ladies are, do you want to tell them what Gray Ladies are.

MA: Well gray ladies were Red Cross workers in uniform, who worked in the hospital during world war one, and then later, after world war two, why a few of them still worked in the hospital, but that program was phased out. We don't use those now.

RK: But, the volunteers, are just called volunteers.

MA: They're just volunteers, not in uniform.

RK: You were in uniform all during the war, weren't you Margaret, in Red Cross?

MA: Anyone doing anything for Red Cross was in uniform.

RK: You were in uniform. Were you ever an actual volunteer in the psychiatric department or were you more of an instigator and administrator.

MA: No, I was the, I don't know what you call it, the chairman of the training

program and supervisor.

RK: And in this training program, you called on these four psychiatrists to help train these volunteers. How long was their training?

MA: Oh, well probably, I would say, probably three sessions, of a couple hours each.

RK: And of course, the nurses themselves were very well trained weren't they.

MA: Yes, that's right.

RK: I wonder how many volunteers they have now, that would be interesting to find out.

MA: I'm sorry, I'm not in that field now. I really don't know.

RK: Well you started it.

MA: Well I helped.

RK: Well it was interesting how you got the impetus to do that from the war prisoners. You also are responsible for starting the auxiliary, which is such an important part of St. Luke's.

MA: Well in 1949, Mr. Hankins was head of the board of the hospital. He asked about six people to meet and talk with him about the need. It seems that many years ago, perhaps in World War one, I don't know just when it was. There was an auxiliary, but that had phased out and as St. Luke's grew they needed help. Out of the six people who met, we recruited about, oh perhaps 12 more to start with and I believe at our first meeting, this was in 1959, and I think in our first meeting, we had 32 members. It has grown now

until there are about seven hundred.

RK: Just think of that, can you remember the other people that Mr. Hankins called in with you, to get this idea rolling?

MA: Betty Soboda was one of them, I'm afraid I don't have that.

RK: Well it isn't too, important, I was just wondering. We're talking about volunteers in the hospital, well in St. Luke's auxiliary. They're not all volunteers in that auxiliary, but a lot of them, is tht right or are they all volunteers?

MA: No, not every member of the auxiliary is a volunteer, but then they have a lot of volunteers in the hospital, who do not have belong to the auxiliary. It's just wonderful what they've accomplished a few years ago, we celebrated 1,000,000 hours. We were the first ones in the state of Iowa to accomplish that.

RK: That's a marvelous record. I think volunteerism is so American, in giving of yourself, really. I have just seen the "Annie" production by the St. Luke's auxiliary for the St. Luke's auxiliary, which they do every year, with the Community Theatre. I was wondering how you raised money, way back in '59, '60, and '61?

MA: We started a gift shop in 1951. The room in which we were to start wasn't even finished. We had Christmas merchandise and we had it on sawhorses, out in the lobby, because the room wasn't ready.

RK: Was there any other way to earn money for the auxiliary?

MA: Yes, I don't remember the first one, but I remember what we did with the



proceeds, we bought thermos coffee jugs for the patients. That's the first thing we did, we also paid for the tunnel connecting the hospital and the nursing home, and on and on up to the bridge between the parkade and the hospital.

RK: This shows the great amount of money that was raised, to be given, because those are all expensive things. You had something about the electric sign for the emergency.

MA: I was on the building committee and I thought it was terrible that you could not see the emergency sign on the building, it was on the building. If you came across 10th Street, you were facing it, you could see it, if you came from the east or the west you could not see that. I sometimes think they put it up there to get rid of me.

RK: To keep you quiet. Well, it was needed.

MA: It was very badly needed. So that was my pet project, and my present one is the lifeguard ambulance.

RK: That's your recent one. Tell us how that started.

MA: Well, there were so many farm accidents and accidents and things that happen in the country, and places where the ambulance could not go. The one that they are using now, if I am correct was bought from the city and fixed up as an air ambulance, it is quite nice, but now they're badly in need of a new one. That's very expensive and they're trying now to raise funds to buy a new one. You would be surprised how many lives they save during a year. It's remarkable, and then also it is used to fly patients to Iowa City and goes all over the county, of course.

RK: Auto accidents, there have been so many of those, as well as farm accidents.

MA: They can land right on the pavement, if it's an automobile accident or something. It's so badly needed, it is a wonderful thing.

RK: Is it kept right there at the hospital?

MA: The heliport is at St. Luke's and of course, the ambulance is at Mercy, and the pilot is at St. Luke's and the paramedics are at Mercy. When a call comes in the pilot goes out and warms up the engine, and by that time the paramedics are over from Mercy.

RK: My, was that paid for by the auxiliary?

MA: No, that was not one of our projects.

RK: But it was one of your pet interests.

MA: Pet interest years ago.

RK: Margaret, I've been thinking about the great changes you've seen in the hospital from the time you were doing all this, starting of so many things way back in 1949,'50 and into '60, and continuing, and one of the big changes that I think you must be pleased about, and interested in, and may have had something to do with, is the new surgicare unit, which is very new and very successful. Would you tell a little about that?

MA: Well there were so many surgeries being done and so many people staying over who really didn't need to spend the night there and it saved a great deal of expense for patients. The doctor determines whether or not they use the surgicare and they have their surgery, and there is a 20 bed recovery unit, and they are able to go home the same day. It seems easier

for the patient and certainly less expensive, it makes quite a difference in the attendance, occupancy in the hospital.

RK: You said that you as a patient yourself, and were home in two hours when you had similar surgery done years ago, when you stayed three or four days. So you're a good example of this new kind of care.

MA: I feel that in that particular area, every person with whom the patient has contact is personally selected and screened, because I have never seen anything work so smoothly and everyone from the guard to the nurses are caring people.

RK: You probably have seen a difference in even that, because in the days of 40's and 50's, I remember we were very critical of hospitals because they didn't care. We used to say that, but now we are not hearing that, with hospital care. You mentioned that these people were screened because they did have so much empathy.

MA: Yes, I think that is true. The nurses, doctors, technicians, everybody I think is more caring and think of the patient as a whole, not just what they're doing particularly, and I think that is good and I think a lot of that has come about because of the family practice, they are training the doctors all the time, have special training for family practice so they can take care of all members of the family and really get to know them, and I think that is a big step forward.

RK: So they're treating the patient as a total, totally, and that has a great deal to do with their mental attitude and their recovering.

MA: I think that kind of goes back to the old times when the doctor made



house calls and he knew about every member in the family. I think that makes it easier for them to treat the patient.

RK: So you've seen lots of changes, and that is one of them. You were saying the nurses are more highly trained now.

MA: I feel they are, now, There was a great need for the practical nurses. They did serve a great purpose. They were great, but now that's being phased out at St. Luke's Hospital, they don't seem to be in need of them, like they did. It is the same with the Nurse's Aides.

RK: I think Margaret we ought to explain what a practical nurse is, because if they are being phased out, I'm thinking of 50 years from now they won't know what a practical nurse is.

MA: Well a practical nurse had all the training that the professional nurse had in the first year, but they were limited as to what they could do, really, but they were a great help to patients, and I find now that they are being used in the homes a lot, now that there are not so many of them in the hospital.

RK: And how did they differ from a Nurse's Aide?

MA: A Nurse's Aide was more, ~~it ran errands and things like that, she took~~ care of the flowers<sup>S)</sup>, and she did an errand for the patient, and she telephoned, brought her books and that type of thing. No nursing at all, whatever.

RK: A Nurse's Aide was a volunteer, wasn't it?

MA: Not necessarily.

RK: They could be paid?

MA: They were hired by the hospital, in the past.

RK: And the practical nurses had a year of training and could work with patients in a limited way. And so they are being phased out now because they are not needed. As I read about nurses now, and you said they were more highly trained and skilled, that they are going on for graduate work, and getting a bachelor of Science degree in addition to their RN, I know that Coe has a program like that.

MA: Yes, well now, some of the professional nurses have their classes at Coe, and that is holding up pretty well, that program.

RK: They're getting their chemistry, I think they have had their chemistry there for years. Coe has a good biology department. Margaret, there are so many new units, as we were talking about with the surgicare. Would you like to mention any other recent new units at St. Luke's?

MA: About ten years ago, they made a new unit for newborns and premature children, 1972, and it has saved so many lives. Some of the babies around three pounds, one of them was a little less. They have immediate care special nurses who have had intensive training for this particular thing, and it has proven to be a wonderful thing. They average about 200 babies a year, so far 3,000 have been helped.

RK: Yes, I read that there were 350 babies a year and it is called the neo-natal and it is the only one in the city.

MA: In the city, I think it is one of the only ones in the state.

RK: And I happen to know of a baby that was just about two pounds or a little under that survived. In the past, these babies didn't make it. That must be a big thrill to you to see that change.

MA: It is wonderful, otherwise they probably would have died.

RK: Yes, as they did. There have been so many changes in baby care, when you had your twins, how long were you in the hospital?

MA: Three weeks, because I was nursing them and they had to stay there that long because they were so premature. See they were six weeks premature.

RK: How much did they weigh?

MA: Four and a half to five and a half.

RK: And then you had a nurse that went home with you, and she was known as a baby nurse.

MA: That is right, Miss Welch.

RK: And today, the mothers come home and go right to the supermarket to shop. But then in that day, and in my day, my mother had a nurse that came out from Cleveland that came out to spend two or three months. Of course, the mothers were kept in bed two weeks without any exercise, now they get right up and I've known some that walk from the delivery room to their room. So there are lots of changes.

MA: Princess Diana did.

RK: Yes, she did. In 24 hours she came out on the balcony, so there are lots of changes. Your interest in, your many contributions to St. Luke's, as we said, started with what you were doing with the Red Cross during the war.



Driving down to Clinton, to the Schick hospital, but as I remember, your interests in motorcars went way back before then. So tell me about that and back in 1917, what you did after you got out of high school.

MA: Well it was during the dreadful flu epidemic, and Three Rivers had no hospital, the basement of the Methodist Church, or rather the first floor of the Methodist Church, was turned over and made into a make-shift hospital. Many, many people died there and when some of the patients were able to go home, the nurse had to go visit them in the home and continue taking care of them, and I drove them, drove her to these different places and, or drove the relatives of the patients, back and forth.

RK: And you knew about cars.

MA: Well yes, I went into a garage to learn more about cars and then later out here, when I joined the Red Cross, it was through the motor club.

RK: And you were asked to do that . . . .

MA: By Margaret Hall.

RK: Who said they needed drivers and here you had been driving, so that continued. And when you went down to go back to when you drove here to Clinton, to the hospital, you said something about taking a jeweler along.

MA: Yes, it seems they had an arts and skills group, they called it. People that had a service, that were trained for certain things would go down there and give lessons to the boys in therapy. There was a jeweler, I'm sorry, I don't remember his name, who lived on third Avenue and he offered his services so I would take him down there. There were artists

and different people from different places that would come down and conduct these classes.

RK: And teach, for instance, you were teaching these soldiers who had been wounded or were ill, to make jewelery, for instance.

MA: One of the first things they tried to do as soon as the man was able, there were women there too, by the way, the first thing they do is get them on their feet and get them into a program of some kind. Music or art or weaving or jewelery making or anything that would get their fancy, and that was one of the valuable parts of their recovery.

RK: And you made one or two trips a week, down there.

MA: No, no, I would make one or two trips a month, there were monthly meetings of the Red Cross.

RK: And you would take provisions down, things that they needed.

MA: That's right. Things that were donated and we would take down there.

RK: So really, your work with the Red Cross, way back in, not as the Red Cross, but as a driver and helping with the hospital in Three Rivers was really the beginning of all, really all that you've have done at St. Luke's. It is interesting how your interests started way back there and has continued, and you've made many contributions. Margaret, all the time you've been doing this, in the hospital, way back, you were also one of the early members of the Junior League Service League, which later became the Junior League. So you weren't idle by any means. Could you tell us a little bit about what you did in the Junior League Service League, now this was before 1934, when we became the Junior League, the Junior League

became national.

MA: I don't remember that.

RK: Well, you were busy, everybody had to work.

MA: We all had to work, maybe Ellen would remember, but I don't.

RK: All right, what about, do you remember when you were Chairman of the Children's theater. You were chairman of that, which was an early thing in the League, wasn't it?

MA: Yes, it was, and we had a woman come here from National Junior League, and I don't think you call them that, the Junior League of America, or what is the title?

RK: The Association of Junior Leagues of America.

MA: That's right. She came here to see the work we were doing in putting on the plays and she gave us a very good recommendation, I'm sorry I can't remember her name. She came from the east some place. We had an office in the Montrose Hotel at that time. I remember that, we had a luncheon, for her, I remember that.

RK: And I think, Liz Glanville is telling some of that, but you were the first chairman of the Children's theater, which is continuing today. It must be a lot of satisfaction seeing all this going on. We don't have the soup kitchen, that the Junior League had during the depression.

MA: No, but they have expanded so, the membership is so large now that they can cover many, many fields. Where there were just not enough to go around before.



RK: I wish you would talk about your feelings toward volunteers, as volunteers, as women as volunteers.

MA: We have some wonderful men volunteers at St. Luke's and some of them belong to the auxiliary, which is very nice. We have couples who work together, as man and wife, work together in the hospital, and that's fine. They cover all over the whole hospital, there is a whole list of things they can sign up for and are trained for and I don't know what they would do without the volunteers, I really don't know. They are so valuable to the hospital and many organizations could not exist if it were not for the volunteers.

RK: And I know how you would feel about a volunteer being paid, therefore she or he would not be a volunteer.

MA: And it would take away something from the volunteer. The volunteer's pay is the reward for what they do. You can't buy that.

RK: They receive more than they give.

MA: I'm sure that they do, and we get letters all the time thanking for all the volunteers do for them, and now we have someone at St. Luke's, Georgene Stapleton, who greets all the people who come into the hospital and directs them and helps them with their problems. That's one of the best public relation things we have had.

RK: You are treating the whole family now as we spoke of before.

MA: And of course, we have a playroom for the children, a supervised playground, for those who are too young to visit the patient. That leaves

the parents free to visit the patients.

RK: That was very needed, when my mother was ill, I had to leave my five year old sitting alone in the lobby, all the time.

MA: No way on earth are there enough guards to see that the whole thing runs smoothly.

RK: Well, you could really write a book on the value of volunteerism, because that is what you have done all your life, it seems to me.

MA: It seems to me, it is more worthwhile than a lot of things that people do. They waste their time and some people don't want to be tied down to something, but if they would try it the reward is so great, that I'm sure that they would be glad they did.

RK: Margaret, when speaking about the Junior League, as we were, one of their first projects was to have a dog show, and you, I always associate you with dogs, because you have always had them. Tell me about when you went to the Junior League dog show and the kind of dog, and where it was held.

MA: Well, this was in the late 20's and it was held in the old Greene's Opera House, and it wasn't a very good place and it wasn't a very large show, but I remember my Great Dane took first place in the puppy class. That was one of our first money-raising projects.

RK: And then you went on showing dogs.

MA: I went on and showed this particular dog to its championship.

RK: Tell us more about that first dog show or any other after that before the kennels association took over the dog shows. As I remember, they were in

the Coliseum.

MA: Yes, that's right, from then on they held them in the coliseum. I don't know where they are being held now.

RK: I think out at Hawkeye Downs.

MA: I think it probably is. There was one out there, I know.

RK: There's probably more interest in thoroughbred dogs now than when you were first showing yours.

MA: Oh, yes, I think so. The trend is so different, sometimes a great Newfoundland will win, and then a little Chihuahua, or some little tiny dog. They go in fads, I think, the Cocker was very popular.

RK: What is now?

MA: A Newfoundland, was won the West Minster show this year. Very large black dog.

RK: Did your dog ever win first?

MA: He won the working dog group, but he was never first in show, but always first in Great Dane class.

RK: What was his name?

MA: Rolling Hill Vider was his father and his pet name was Dragon.

END OF SIDE TWO - END OF INTERVIEW







# Her 'Swan Song' Is Due

C.R. Gaz. 9-19-76 P. 5C

By Gail Cooper-Evans

"When I go to the October board meeting, that's my last one...My 'Swan Song'."

Margaret Averill chuckled at her words. After 27 years of service, she is being retired from the St. Luke's hospital board.

"I'm past the age when retirement is mandatory," explained Mrs. Averill, whose curly red hair and alert manner belie her 78 years (come Sept. 27). Mrs. Averill has actually remained on the board three years past the usual limit because her last term began before her 75th birthday.

She blushed when told she looked more like 60. "Oh thank you," she said. "I don't feel my age either."

Margaret, as she is known to most of hospital workers, was honored by the St. Luke's auxiliary Monday for her many years of service to that organization. During her 27 years on the hospital board, she represented that body on the board of the auxiliary. In fact, she was one of founders of the auxiliary back in 1949.

"There had been an auxiliary years before but it fizzled out. I was asked to start another one so I did."

Auxiliary members Monday gave her a gold charm and bracelet and a scrapbook of newspaper clippings and photographs depicting her years of affiliation with the hospital.

"I was so pleased to get these things," she said, smiling broadly, eyes wide open. She was especially proud of a personal thank-you letter from retired St. Luke's administrator Louis Blair.

## Larger Group Now

"I tried to call as many people as I could who were responsible for the scrapbook, but of course I can't call them all. I'm going to put a note in the auxiliary newsletter. I think that's a good idea, don't you?"

The auxiliary she helped organize has grown from its 35 original members to 850 today.

That's the biggest change in the group, Mrs. Averill observed. "The women now have widened the scope of the organization," she pointed out. "We've always had a financial project. Now, each year, the project costs somewhere around \$100,000. . . We've just voted to spend that amount on an intensive care nursery."

She said it is vigorous fund-raising by women of the auxiliary that gets the jobs done, citing the annual St. Luke's Follies which brings in "somewhere around \$8,000 to \$10,000 each year."

Despite her retirement from the board, Mrs. Averill will continue to serve on a number of hospital committees. Still, she won't be spending quite as much time at the hospital, and she isn't sure how she will use her extra time. Mrs. Averill, whose Cedar Rapids home is at 517 Vernon drive SE, usually spends her summers at her lake home in Michigan. She will have more time, she said, to visit her grandchildren. Her children, twins now 52, are Dudley S. Averill of Chatsworth, Calif., and Mrs. Lawrence Regan, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

The spry grandmother likes working with the "young" women in the auxiliary, whom she calls "just great, wonderful people." She laughed, wondering aloud whether she should say she "prefers" working with young people. She decided it would be permissible. "Young people help you stay young, I think," she added.

Her volunteer work has always provided her with great satisfaction, Mrs. Averill said. "I was fortunate to have the time to volunteer."

## Averill House

Her late husband Worth's grandfather, Arthur T. Averill, originally came to Cedar Rapids from New Jersey. According to Mrs. Averill, he was responsible for erecting many C.R. buildings including the Montrose hotel. Averill house, 1120 Second avenue SE, the family estate, was sold to St. Luke's hospital several years ago for use as a student nurses' dormitory.

The house is now owned by the Citizen's Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and used as a halfway house for recovering alcoholics and drug users.

Mrs. Averill feels very strongly that volunteers should not be paid for their work. "You're not a volunteer if you're paid. Volunteers' motives in working are different. They have a desire to give service. It's different from being paid."

"You get a lot of satisfaction from volunteering," she continued. "You are paid in satisfaction. . . You'd be surprised at the numbers of people who have fulltime jobs and come in every evening to work late in places like the (hospital) Gift shop."

Mrs. Averill, gracious and unhurried, looked around and asked the time. "I have another meeting to go to at 4. I'm not sure where it is though," she smiled, looking for help to the hospital public relations director, Ron Brady, who accompanied her to the interview.

As she moved out into the hallway, the sounds of "Well hello, Margaret" were heard up and down the corridors as she was met by the many friends she has made at St. Luke's.



— Gazette photo by John McIvor

The last board meeting at St. Luke's hospital is coming up for Margaret Averill. She laughingly refers to it as her 'Swan Song'. After 27 years of dedication to the hospital, Mrs. Averill is retiring from the board. But she will still serve on a number of committees.



# GLENN AVERILL, FINANCIER, DIES IN TAMPA, FLA.

5/12/40  
Identified With Many  
Business Enterprises  
Here; Member Of  
Pioneer Family.

Cedar Rapids News--

Glenn Mark Averill, 71, Cedar Rapids-financier, land owner and industrialist, died Saturday at 11:30 a.m. at Tampa, Fla., his home for the last 12 years. His death came as the result of complications following a cold contracted on a business trip to New York two weeks ago.

Identified with extensive enterprises, Mr. Averill was chairman of the Morris Plan bank board, a heavy stockholder in the United Light and Power company, the Montrose hotel and Commonwealth apartments, a director of the Welch-Cook-Beals company and owner of the 500-acre Ivanhoe farm southwest of Cedar Rapids.

## Many Financial Interests.

For 22 years he was executive vice-president of the Cedar Rapids Gas company which was sold to United Light and Power; was president of the Cedar Rapids National bank for 10 years before it was absorbed by the Merchants National bank; was vice-president of the Cedar Rapids Life Insurance company, a stockholder in the Cedar Rapids and Marion City railway and treasurer of the former Kentucky Midland Coal company.

He held considerable stock in the Florida Land and Timber company. At one time, the Averill interests included business projects in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida and Kentucky.

Mr. Averill's death followed by six months that of his sister, Miss Jessie Averill of Cedar Rapids, who was associated with him in Glenn M. Averill and company, an organization formed to handle the family's enterprises, including the varied interests inherited from their father, A. T. Averill, one of Cedar Rapids' foremost civic builders. A. T. Averill died Feb. 14, 1910, a millionaire.

## Son Flies To Florida.

Mr. Averill died before his son, Worth Averill of Cedar Rapids, and his confidential secretary and associate, Edwin C. Evans, could reach his bedside. Together with Miss Lulu Averill, a cousin, they flew to Tampa from Chicago Saturday morning.

His wife and a second son, Arthur Tappan Averill II, live in Tampa where the latter is in the lumber business.

Virtually from birth, Glenn Averill was trained to succeed his father who, with John T. Hamilton and others, made successful investments in Cedar Rapids. The elder Mr. Averill purchased a controlling interest in the Cedar Rapids Gas Light company in 1875, served for 20 years as president of the Cedar Rapids National bank, was proprietor of the Vincennes, a leading family hotel in Chicago, financed the building of

(Continued on Page 2. This Sect.)



11/28/39

# MISS JESSIE AVERILL ACTIVE IN CULTURAL LIFE OF CITY, DIES



JESSIE AVERILL.

Miss Jessie Averill, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur T. Averill, pioneer residents and builders of Cedar Rapids, died at 8:30 p.m. Monday in the family home at 1120 Second avenue SE.

She is survived by a brother, Glenn Averill, of Tampa, Fla., and two nephews, Worth S. Averill of Cedar Rapids and Arthur T. Averill of Tampa, Fla. Her parents died in 1910.

Miss Averill was born in Cedar Rapids, Dec. 6, 1876, at the former family home on Fifth avenue SE between Fourth and Fifth streets, in the rear of the old Washington high school, from which she was later graduated. She subsequently attended Dana hall at Wellesley, Mass., Smith college, and the University of Chicago, from which she received her degree in 1904.

Following her graduation, Miss Averill served as cataloguer in the Cedar Rapids public library until 1909. This interest in books was maintained throughout her life. Miss Averill continued and building the library of her parents. Her other hobbies were the collecting of stamps and clocks.

She was a charter member of the College club, a member of the American Association of University Women, and a patroness of the Coe chapter of Chi Omega society. The national office of the sorority honored her with a service pin for her work.

A supporter of all cultural and philanthropic movements, her greatest efforts were exerted in behalf of the Children's home. She served as a member of the board, and with the late George Dutton was responsible for the annual Christmas parties at the home. Ostensibly, Miss Averill and Mr. Dutton collected toys for

Miss Averill's interests were wide. She traveled in Europe in 1912, 1926, 1929 and 1931 and was fond of motoring, traveling from coast to coast in her car. Although not a musician, she was keenly interested in music, attending concerts in Cedar Rapids, at Coe and

Cornell colleges, and at the University of Iowa. She frequently spent several of the winter months in New York and Chicago, attending the theater.

Basketball and football were her favorite sports. She attended games at Coe, Cornell and Iowa, having season tickets at all institutions, and usually taking a car load of friends with her to the games.

Miss Averill's maternal grandfather was the Rev. Miles Doolittle, among the first of the ministers of the First Presbyterian church, who came here because of his friendship for the Rev. Dr. James Knox.

Since the death of Miss Averill's parents in 1910, Lulu Averill has resided with her and has been her constant companion. Mrs. Frank Hollenbeck, a sister of Lulu Averill, has also resided with her since the death of her husband several years ago.

Funeral services will be held at the Turner chapel Wednesday at 2 p.m., conducted by the Rev. Dr. Robert Little. Honorary pallbearers will be Alfred Durin, Edward Herman, Malcolm Bolton, Dr. Lester DeFarrman, Edwin Evans and Ralph Epler. The body will be cremated.

# A DANCING PARTY.

Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Averill Entertain Their Guests in Charming Fashion.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Averill was the scene of old time hospitality last evening which was highly enjoyed by the favored guests. Mr. and Mrs. Averill received their guests in the parlor on the first floor, and were assisted by their son and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Glenn M. Averill. The house was prettily decorated with carnations and greens. After all had arrived they were invited to the dancing room in the third floor where Professor Tlapa's orchestra was in readiness to play. The room was a perfect bower of draperies, portieres, cushions, pillows, and cozy corners, and altogether was a most attractive place for either conversation or dancing. Old fashioned square dances were the only ones allowed and many who had not tried to dance for years found that they had not forgotten how to trip through a quadrille. The old favorite, the Virginia reel, and "Old Dan Tucker" were both danced with grace and energy, and the love of dancing was quite revived in all. A few who were satisfied after one or two dances went down stairs again and amused themselves playing cards. They were served with supper and then the dancers were called to the dining-room, and the delightful occasion was at an end before twelve o'clock.

652

DIRECTORY OF

Archer, Albert, laborer.

Aussiker, Deitrich, cigar dealer.

Austin, W. L., laborer.

**AVERILL, ARTHUR T.**, President of the Cedar Rapids Gas Light Co., office, No. 9 S. Commercial st.; residence 106 Greene st. Mr. A. was born at Highgate Springs, Franklin Co., Vt., Sept. 14, 1843; came with his parents to Lee Co., Ill., in 1852; lived there until 1854, when they moved to Whiteside Co., Ill.; lived there until he came here in March, 1865; was Superintendent of the McCormick Mower and Reaper agencies for several years; in 1869, established the firm of Averill & Hamilton, dealers in agricultural implements, seeds, coal, etc.; continued that firm for five years; Averill & Amidon conducted the same business for two years, then Mr. Averill carried on the business for two years alone; from 1870 to 1874, he was also a member of the firm of Averill & Verharen, at Vinton, Iowa. Mr. A. has been President of the Gas Co. for three years; he was Alderman of the Second Ward in 1875. He married Allie R. Doolittle Oct. 22, 1867; she was born in New York State; they have had three children, two living—Glennie M., born July 15, 1868, and Jennie M., born Dec. 9, 1876; lost one son—Arthur, who died in infancy.

Ayres, L. M., Business Manager Cedar Rapids Times.

1-28-1958  
20 years ago: 1978

Feb. 4: Cedar Rapids attorney William F. Olinger purchased the Averill House, 1120 Second Ave. SE. Olinger said he planned to spend at least \$100,000 to restore the home to its original grandeur and place it on the National Register of Historic Places.

The landmark mansion was originally built by Arthur T. Averill in 1870. The Vermont native formed a farm implement company in Cedar Rapids in 1869 and later owned the Cedar Rapids Gas Co. He also financed construction of the former Montrose Hotel and founded the Cedar Rapids Savings Bank, which merged with Merchants National Bank in the 1920s.



# Averill House purchased by C.R attorney

By Mary Burke  
Gazette staff writer

The Citizens' Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, at a special meeting Friday afternoon, accepted the offer of a local attorney to buy the landmark Cedar Rapids mansion which housed the agency's halfway house for men.

Averill House, 1120 Second Ave. SE, built 108 years ago by Arthur T. Averill, was sold to William F. Olinger, 2 Cottage Grove Woods Drive.

Neither Olinger nor CCA officials would reveal the purchase price.

The building was vacated last month after the agency reported losing \$30,000 a year in upkeep of the house.

The CCA purchased the building from St. Luke's Hospital in 1974 for \$97,000. St. Luke's, which acquired it in 1954, had used the building as a student nurses' dormitory.

Olinger, who will take possession of the facility March 1, plans to make an application to have the house placed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

"If registered we will try to restore it, to the best of our ability, to its original condition," Olinger told

The Gazette. The "we" he referred to is his family.

Olinger admitted that he has no experience in restoring old homes, but said he has investigated the availability of federal matching funds for restoration. He described the possibilities as promising.

He reportedly told the CCA that he intends to spend at least \$100,000 to restore the house. He then hopes to convert it to a commercial use, although he has no specific plans at this time.

## Use as offices?

"I think it's important that the commercial use will make it open to the public," Olinger said. When asked about the possibility of its being used for office space, Olinger said, in that case, he would hope that it would be open to the public at some special times.

He said his current problem is assembling historic material on the building to be submitted with an application to the historic registry.

He's asking anyone that knows the whereabouts of the original appointments of the house to contact him at his office (364-0114). He also is looking for lighting fixtures, blueprints and photographs.

Arthur T. Averill, who built the house in 1870, was born in Vermont in 1843 and moved to Cedar Rapids in 1865. He formed a farm implement manufacturing company in 1869 with John T. Hamilton. In 1875 he took controlling interest in the Cedar Rapids Gas Co.

He was one of the founders and first president of the Cedar Rapids National Bank, which merged with Merchants National Bank in the 1920s. He also financed the construction of the Montrose Hotel.

1870

The Cedar Rapids Gazette: Sat., Feb. 4, 1978 \*3A

## Third floor ballroom

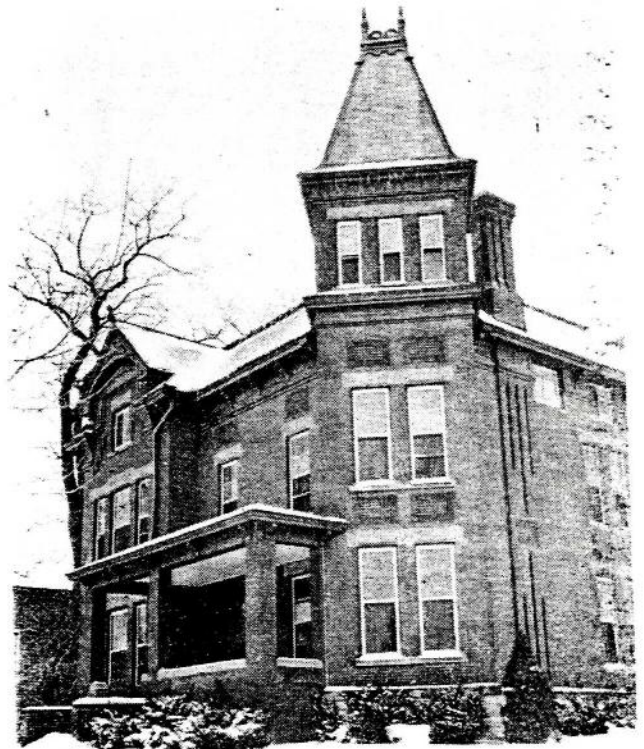
Mrs. Margaret Averill, 517 Vernon Drive SE, wife of Averill's grandson, Worth, said Friday that the house originally had six bedrooms and five fireplaces. The entire third floor of the mansion was a ballroom, she said.

She said the last Averill to live in the house was Jes-

sie, the daughter of Arthur Averill. Shortly after her death in 1954 the house was sold to St. Luke's.

"I think it's a good thing if he can do it," she said. "But I don't know if he'll ever get it back to the original condition. There have been so many things done to it and things taken out of it over the years.

"I would have hated to see it torn down, though. It's such a beautiful house — or at least it was."



Averill House





**Arthur Tappan Averill--1116 2nd Ave. (still standing)**

Mr. Averill arrived in Cedar Rapids in March 1865 at age 21. He became assistant to the local agent of C. H. & L. J. McCormick and in 1869 became superintendent of agents for the firm. He persuaded his former classmate, John T. Hamilton, to come to Cedar Rapids and formed the firm of Averill and Hamilton.

He purchased a controlling interest in the Cedar Rapids Gas Light Co. in 1875, serving as president until his death in 1910. He also served as president of the CR National Bank for 20 years and financed the building of the Montrose Hotel.

# Two buildings added to list of historic places

Two Cedar Rapids buildings have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places, according to Adrian D. Anderson, director of the division of historic preservation in Iowa City.

The two structures are AT. Averill House, 1120 Second Ave. SE, and CSPA Hall, 1107 Third St. SE.

Current owners of Averill House, William and Jean Olinger, 2 Cottage Grove Woods Drive, nominated the property to the National Register. CSPA Hall was nominated by Steve Altheide of Coe College. The hall is owned by Service Press and Litho Co.

Averill House, built 108 years ago, is a fine example of High Victorian residential architecture, according to Anderson. Important architectural elements of the house include the pierced, vertical brick chimney panels, paneled cornice, detailing of the lintels and the clean, crisp lines, which contrast with the more free-form character of the Queen Anne style which also was popular in 1886, when Averill House was built.

The house was constructed for Arthur Tappan Averill, who made his original fortune from a farm implement company.

The Olingers purchased the house in February from the Citizens Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, which had used it for a halfway house for men. It was vacated in January after the agency reported losing \$30,000 a year in upkeep of the house.

Olinger told The Gazette at the time of the purchase his family would try to restore the house to its original condition if it was placed on the National Register.

The Citizens Committee had purchased the home from St. Luke's Hospital in 1974. St. Luke's had acquired the building in 1954 and had used it as a student nurses' dormitory.

Averill House is undergoing rehabilitation for use as offices.

CSPA Hall was built in 1890-91, with additions in 1900 and 1908. Anderson terms it significant for its association as a social and cultural center with the Czech community of Cedar Rapids.

CSPA, a fraternal benevolent society, was founded in St. Louis in 1854. Cedar Rapids' first chapter, Prokop Velky Lodge, was organized in 1879, with two more lodges following by 1882.

The hall's importance is demonstrated, Anderson said, by the fact that it had to be substantially enlarged twice within 10 years to accommodate the activities which took place there.

The building now is used for commercial purposes.

National Register properties are eligible for federal matching acquisition or restoration funds. The structures are protected to some degree from any federally assisted or licensed projects that might adversely affect them.

e to Cedar Rapids.  
pencer in 1863; she  
; they have had five  
the living are Ella;  
a and Bertha. Mrs.  
daughter are members  
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**IN O.**, boards at  
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nd Joseph W.  
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gent.

Bennett, Saml., Road Master, B., C.  
N. R. R.  
Benish, Joseph.  
Benish, Wenzel, blacksmith.  
Berthel, Conrad, hotel and saloon ke  
Berthel, Julius, hotel and saloon ke  
Berry, David L., proprietor of "Sul  
Cigar Store."

Besek, Michael, mason.  
Bettesworth, Geo. W., clerk in Iowa I  
Co.'s Office.

**BEVER, GEO. W.**, Vice Presi  
of the City National Bank, corner C  
mercial Street and Iowa avenue;  
dence, 101 Eagle street.

Bever, James L., Cash. City National B  
Bever, John B., Teller City National B

**BEVER, SAMPSON C.**,  
born in Columbiana Co., Ohio, in  
year 1808; his paternal grandfather  
a native of Germany, but emigrate  
this country in the year 1777, joined  
Revolutionary army as a private at L  
ristown, New Jersey, under Gen. W  
ington; his maternal grandfather w  
native of Scotland and emigrate  
America during the Revolutionary W  
locating in Washington Co., Penn.;  
father, James Bever, was a small far  
on the banks of the Ohio River, at  
time of Sampson's birth, but in 180  
moved West to the "New Purcha  
in what is now known as Holmes  
Ohio, where he died in 1811. Sa  
son never saw the inside of a sc  
house until he was nine years of a  
when fifteen years of age he left h  
and went to Brownsville, Penn., go  
the entire distance, 150 miles, on f  
where he engaged in a store for  
years; at the expiration of this tim  
engaged to take charge of the g  
works of Bowman, Sweetzer & B  
man, one mile from Brownsville;  
shortly afterward bought out the fi  
interest, they giving all the time  
wanted to pay them; he, however,  
hard work, perseverance and energy  
the end of two years, paid off all his  
debtedness to them, and had a g  
profit. On the 8th day of Aug  
1833, Mr. Bever was married to M  
Mary Blythe, daughter of John Bly  
Esq., a farmer near Cookstown, Pe  
At this time, being convinced that  
war carried on between Andrew Jack



# OFFICERS NAMED FOR NATION

## Cedar Rapids Junior League to Elect New Officers





1899

was married to Esther F. Hotchkiss in Naugatuck, Connecticut. Four children have been born to them, of whom two are living. They are Elbridge H., now associated with his father in business, and Edwin L., who is well known as a writer of verse and short stories and is a frequent contributor to some of the best periodicals of the day. He is now a resident of Chicago. Since retiring from office, Mr. Sabin has been in great demand as a lecturer in all parts of the United States, going to the far east and the far west. He has also found time to publish several books. His "Talks to Young People" is a revised collection of addresses to graduating classes while he was city superintendent in Clinton. Together with his son, Edwin L. Sabin, he prepared a little book called "The Making of Iowa," which contains thirty chapters on Iowa history, entertainingly written and treating of especially interesting features in the early and formative period of the state's existence. The book has had a very large sale.



of his ticket and in 1894 his name was on both the republican and democratic tickets. He has always been an earnest republican and has taken an active part in the councils and conventions of his party. In 1899, when Judge John S. Woolson died, Judge Towner was the most prominent candidate to succeed him as federal judge, though in the end the congressional delegation was unable to agree upon him and Congressman Smith McPherson received the appointment. Judge Towner is recognized as a man of fine literary ability and is also possessed of original musical talent and is well known as a composer. He was married in 1887 to Miss Harriett Cole and they have two children.

TOWNER, HORACE M., who lives in Corning, Adams county, is a district judge of the Third judicial district, serving his third term. He is one of the ablest district judges in the state and is a leading candidate for the supreme judgeship this year. Judge Towner was born in 1855 in Belvidere, Illinois. His father, John L. Towner, was a native of New York and a minister. His mother was born in Massachusetts. In his boyhood Mr. Towner attended the public schools in his native town and after completing the course there began to teach. In this way he earned the money to attend the higher schools and to study in preparation for his profession. He alternated teaching and studying, returning to the occupation of teacher whenever his means were exhausted in attending school. He was admitted to practice law in Iowa and in 1880 and immediately began the practice of his profession in Corning. That town has been his home ever since. In 1890 he was elected district judge for the Third judicial district and was re-elected in 1894 and 1898. He has always run many hundreds ahead

AVERILL, ARTHUR T., a prominent and successful business man residing at Cedar Rapids, comes of good old New England stock and was born at Highgate Springs, Franklin County, Vermont, September 14, 1843, where he lived with his parents until he was eight years of age and then came with them to the state of Illinois. His father, Mark R. Averill, was a farmer in





Franklin County, Vermont, where he was born. After removing to Illinois in 1851 he followed farming and merchandise until he was sixty years of age, when he retired from an active business life. The father of Mark R. Averill was a Quaker and strong abolitionist. He settled in Northern Vermont in the latter part of the eighteenth century, where he became a large land owner and followed his trade, that of builder. Ada Durin, who became the wife of Mark R. Averill and was Arthur T. Averill's mother, was born in the southern part of Vermont, and was engaged in teaching school when she met and married Mr. Averill. Their son, Arthur T.; attended the district school until he was ten years of age and after that until he reached the age of his majority he went to school during the winter months only and worked on a farm during the summer. In March, 1865, he came to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and began work for the McCormick Harvester Company of Chicago. Mr. Averill had no business training except as a boy would gain through his own efforts while working on a six hundred acre farm. He laid early the foundations of success upon which have been built the extensive business interests that he now controls. His

habits of industry learned on the farm and a system of economy started him on the high road to a successful career in business life. He made it a rule that his expenses should not exceed his income and while working on a salary he had his employers interests at heart and aimed to make money for him. In 1869 he engaged in the implement business under the firm name of Averill and Hamilton. This house is still doing a prosperous business under the name of Hamilton Brothers. He also started an implement house at Vinton in the year 1870 under the firm name of Averill & Verharen. This business was afterwards transferred to F. G. Ray, who has an extensive trade. Mr. Averill came into control of the Cedar Rapids Gas Light Company in 1876 and has been president of that company ever since. He is and has been since the organization by himself in 1887 president of the Cedar Rapids National Bank. He is president of the Averill Wagon Company and also of the Averill Grocery Company, serving in this capacity three years with the former and two years with the latter.

Mr. Averill has also dealt quite extensively in real estate and still clings to his early liking for farm life and raises considerable stock. He is a director in the Cedar Rapids Canning Company and the Cedar Rapids and Marion Telephone Company. Mr. Averill has always been a firm believer in the principles of the republican party. At the present time he is not a member of any club, society or church. Mr. Averill was married to Allie R. Doolittle in October, 1867. They have two children, a son and a daughter: Glenn M., a resident of Cedar Rapids and secretary of the Averill Grocery Company, importers and wholesale, and the Cedar Rapids Gas Light Company; Jessie M. is a student at Dana Hall, Wellesley, Massachusetts.

and New England  
at Highgate Springs,  
mont, September 14,  
with his parents until  
age and then came  
of Illinois. His  
ll, was a farmer in



GLENN AVERILL

SUNDAY, SEPT. 21, 1930.

# Cent Better Off Than in 192

## Business and Culture Meet in Rapids

Group More Famed for Avocations Than for Vocations



Left to right, (top row)—Col. C. B. Robbins, C. B. Svoboda, Glenn M. Averill, Jay G. Sigmund; (bottom row)—Ernest R. Moore, the late Dr. G. E. Crawford.

Politicians, Doctors,  
Poets and Authors  
Business Partners.

BY JOHN HENRY.  
(Special to The Register.)

CEDAR RAPIDS — I recently told my good friend, Jay Sigmund of Cedar Rapids, Ia., that the office boy of the Cedar Rapids Life Insurance company must be one of the busiest persons in the city—keeping things going while the bosses were "avocating." Mr. Sigmund laughed; he knew what I meant.

The six major officials of the company are all better known, I'd say, outside the insurance field than in it, despite the high standing of their company.

The president, C. B. Robbins, formerly was commander of the Iowa American Legion organization, and succeeded that other Iowan, Jack MacNider, now minister to Canada, as assistant secretary of war. Mr. Robbins was in the Spanish-American war, and left for dead on a battlefield. He was saved by a native.

Aided Czechoslovakia.

The secretary, Mr. Svoboda, is

tion credited with doing more than any other to gain Czechoslovakia her independence. Two years ago the new republic decorated Mr. Svoboda for his wartime labors.

Glenn M. Averill, the first vice president, is following in his father's footsteps as a public utility developer and banker, being president of the Cedar Rapids National and the Morris Plan banks.

Mr. Sigmund, the other vice president, is known among all literary folk for his poems, his plays and his short stories. For the past several years the leading poetry anthology has contained his works.

Former Lieutenant Governor.

Ernest R. Moore, the treasurer, formerly was lieutenant governor of the state, and has been mentioned as aspirant for the governorship or senatorial place. He is head of a very successful banking institution, and, despite it all, has had time to write authoritative histories.

The late Dr. George E. Crawford, medical advisor, was Iowa president of the American Medical association and served the medical section of the American Life convention as chairman. He was considered one of the nation's authorities on blood pressure, and wrote the first treatise on it. He died last spring.

The officers of this company apparently get a good deal of fun out of living in and around Cedar Rapids. Each has his own, or has available, a cabin on the Wapsipinicon river, the legends of which have been put into plays by Mr. Sigmund.

Mr. Robbins, or "Colonel," as

his title ranks him to be called, recently bought the old Matsell farm of 1,100 acres on the "Wapsy," and is erecting a huge log cabin there to entertain his friends. This farm once was owned by August Matsell, the first chief of police of New York City.

Writes Poem.

Of this farm, Mr. Sigmund, mindful of the "Wapsie" Indian legends, recently wrote a poem about the place, the last verse of which is:

"Steel blue rivers sigh and creep  
Where the Wabeek towers sleep  
And ghost lovers come each mid-night

When the old farms are asleep:  
I have heard these lovers weep!"

There must be something about Cedar Rapids that mixes the commercial and the cultural. On the walls of the chamber of commerce—that commercial organization—hang pictures by Cedar Rapids artists. The Torch Press, founded by Luther Brewer there, has the world's greatest collection of Leigh Hunt. Merle Collins, of the Collins Mortgage company, will back any worthwhile artistic venture. David Turner, undertaker, fitted up and gave, rent free, a studio to Grant Wood, artist.



## SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS 157

"Miss Abbott was one of the greatest teachers who ever entered a classroom, and one of the outstanding secondary executives of the Middle West . . . she was honored and beloved all her days in Cedar Rapids. Of gratitude for what she did there is no limit. Personality—Abbie Abbott possessed it in a marked degree. There was none other that ever resembled her so far as we know. In her was combined dignity and friendliness. She was frank to the point of bluntness, yet never gave offence. She was thirty-five years in Washington High."

It may be at the risk of sentimentalizing to hint that Miss Abbott's thirty-five years were the golden age of schooling in Cedar Rapids. However, during most all of that time there was but one central high school for all the city. The late Glenn Averhill, son of one of our wealthiest families, himself a bank president, once told the writer he felt one of his most valued experiences was the four years of intimate association in Washington High School with the student aggregation from every quarter of the town, those whom he was to meet and do business with in all his after life. His idea was that attending public high school made for more solidarity and mutual understanding in the life of the city.

The Grade Teachers' Association commemorated on October 23, 1923, the fiftieth anniversary of the teaching service of Emma J. Fordyce in the schools of Cedar Rapids. This was the first time a fiftieth anniversary of teaching had occurred. There has been no other since that of Miss Fordyce.

Emma J. Fordyce invested all her projects with peculiar interest, seized the salient points and set them working in her pupils' minds like yeast in warm dough. For instance, commercial arithmetic is not usually an inspiring branch, but Miss Fordyce organized her class into a New York Stock Exchange and she had her boys hurrying to school to find out whether they had become millionaires or paupers overnight. Not content with the daily newspaper quotations on stocks, the more enterprising started corners of their own, bid up favorite stocks to dizzy heights, and so realistic were the inevitable financial crashes that the close of class hour found the students on the verge of hair tearing and fisticuffs. In fact, although it stimulated her pupils to prodigies of work in mathematics, Emma Fordyce had finally to discontinue her stock market exchange because its enthusiasm was distracting the whole school.

She told one of her astronomy classes what she was going to do in



A.T. Averill Tappan

Arthur Averill arrived in C.R.  
in March of 1865 at the age of 21. He  
was born in Vt. Sept. 14. 1843.  
He was Superintendent of the  
McCormick Mower & Reaper agencies.  
In 1869 he along with John T.  
Hamilton formed the firm of  
Averill & Hamilton, dealers in  
agricultural implements, seeds  
& coal. In 1875 he purchased  
the controlling interest in the  
C.R. Gas & Light Co. He served as  
president of the C.R. Nat'l. Bank for  
20 years, and financed the bldg.  
of the Montrose Hotel. He married  
Ellie R. Doolittle in 1867. She was  
born in N.Y. State. In 1870 he  
built a <sup>brick</sup> home at 1120-2nd Ave. S.E.  
It is still standing and is now a  
law office. It is of the Queen Anne  
style.

He lived until 1910.  
His daughter lived in the  
home until her death in 1954,



# MRS. AVERILL'S DEATH A SAD SHOCK TO CITY

SHE LIVED BUT TWENTY-FOUR  
HOURS AFTER THE DEATH  
OF HER HUSBAND.

SHE WAS UNCONSCIOUS

AND THUS WAS SPARED THE  
KNOWLEDGE OF MR. AVER-  
ILL'S DEATH.

GAVE HER LIFE TO H M

Nursed Him in the Earlier Stages of  
Illness Until Her Own Strength  
Gave Way—Public Funeral  
Services at Residence  
This Afternoon.

REPUBLICAN FEB. 16, 1910

Out of respect to the memory  
of A. T. Averill the banks of  
Cedar Rapids will close at 2:00  
p. m. today (Wednesday).

For the second time in twenty-four  
hours, death has entered the Averill  
home at 1120 Second avenue. On  
Monday afternoon at 3:50 Mr. A. T.  
Averill passed from life, and yeste-  
day afternoon, almost to a minute of  
24 hours later, Mrs. Averill slipped  
quietly into the Great Beyond. While  
it was known generally that Mr. Aver-  
ill was seriously ill, the fact that Mrs.  
Averill was in like condition was  
known to only a few and so the news  
of her death came as a distinct shock  
to the community, following, as it did,

to the community, following, as it did, so closely after that of Mr. Averill.

In the earlier stages of Mr. Averill's illness, Mrs. Averill was his constant nurse and attendant. She insisted on performing this service of love, even after her strength had given out and wearied nature was no longer able to meet the demands made upon it. She kept bravely at her task until after the visit of Dr. Billings of Chicago and his unfavorable diagnosis of the condition of Mr. Averill. Then came a collapse, from which she never fully recovered. Her condition became steadily weaker from day to day and last Thursday it became so alarming that Glenn M. Averill, who was in Chicago on business, was summoned home by telegraph.

The rally in condition, which came at that time was but temporary. She grew steadily worse and on Monday lapsed into unconsciousness so that she was mercifully spared the knowledge of the death of her husband.

Mrs. Averill was born in Watertown, New York, and her maiden name was Allie R. Doolittle. Her father was a Presbyterian minister. The family moved west while she was a young girl, locating first in Delavan, Wisconsin, and after some years' residence there, coming to Cedar Rapids. She grew to young womanhood in this community and on October 22, 1867, was united in marriage with Mr. Averill, who was then a young man of twenty-three, struggling to get a start in the business world. In those early days of small things and later ones of easier circumstances, she was a true and loyal helpmate, ever ready and willing to bear her share of the burden. Her management of the home was ideal, and as her strength permitted she was active in the social life of the community.

Three children, two sons and a daughter, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Averill. These were Glenn M., Arthur and Jessie. Of them, Arthur died in infancy. Mrs. Averill is also survived by one brother, Henry M. Doolittle of Valley Falls, Kansas.

On account of the death of Mrs. Averill the funeral arrangements as announced in The Republican of yesterday morning have been changed. Public services for both Mr. and Mrs. Averill will be held this, Wednesday, afternoon at the residence, 1120 Second avenue, at half past four o'clock. They will be conducted by Rev. Dr. E. R. Burkhalter of the First Presbyterian church and Mr. George C. Gilfillan, first reader of First Church of Christ, Scientist. Music will be given by Mr. Bertrand Alan Orr.

Early Thursday morning the bodies will be taken to Davenport for cremation, the escort being the members of the family and the well-wishers.

# A. T. AVERILL DIES AFTER A LONG ILLNESS

PASSED AWAY AT HIS HOME YES-  
TERDAY AFTERNOON  
AT 3:50.

2-15-1916

HIS FRIENDS HAD HOPED

THAT HE MIGHT RECOVER FROM  
HIS ATTACK OF HEART  
TROUBLE.

PIONEER BUSINESS MAN

Came to Cedar Rapids in 1865 and  
Has Been One of the City's Most  
Influential and Prosperous  
Business Men.

Arthur Tappan Averill, president of the Cedar Rapids Gas Light Co., and president of the Cedar Rapids National bank, died suddenly at his home, 1120 Second avenue in this city at 3:50 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Mr. Averill had been ill for some months with heart trouble and at times his condition had been such as to cause grave alarm in the minds of his family and friends. But for some weeks past his general condition seemed to be better, and those who knew his daily condition were of the hope that he might regain sufficient strength to be moved to a more favorable climate. At noon yesterday he was in exceptional spirits and sat up while he ate his luncheon. Later he had a nap and afterwards visited with his son, Glenn M. Averill, and his nurse, Miss Averill. At 3:50 Miss Averill was called for a moment to the telephone in an adjoining apartment and in her absence the summons came swiftly and surely.

#### Funeral Will Be Private.

Owing to the extreme illness of Mrs. Averill, the funeral, which will be held Wednesday forenoon, will be private. The body will be taken to the receiving vault at Oak Hill, where a brief prayer service will be offered.

Born in 1843.

Arthur T. Averill was born in



Born in 1843.

Arthur T. Averill was born in Highgate Springs, Franklin county, Vermont, on September 14th, 1843. He came with his parents to Lee county, Illinois, in 1852 and moved to Whiteside county, the same state, in 1854. He grew to young manhood there, attending school at Geneseo with John T. Hamilton, with whom he afterward engaged in business. He was 21 years of age when he came to Cedar Rapids in March, 1865. His first work was that of assistant to the man who was the local agent of the McCormick Harvester and Reaper company. Later he became agent for the McCormicks and by 1869 had become superintendent of agents for the firm, having charge of the Iowa business.

#### **His First Business Firm.**

While working for the McCormick firm Mr. Averill induced John T. Hamilton, his schoolmate in Illinois, to come to Cedar Rapids as his associate in business, and in 1869 the firm of Averill & Hamilton was formed, to deal in agricultural implements, seeds, coal and kindred lines. This partnership continued for five years, after which time, for two years, it was known as Averill & Amidon. Then Mr. Amidon disposed of his interests and Mr. Averill conducted the business alone for two years.

#### **President of Gas Company.**

In 1875 Mr. Averill purchased a controlling interest in the Cedar Rapids Gas Light company and became its president, a position he retained to the time of his death. Mr. Averill took a personal pride and interest in the gas plant and though he had many opportunities to dispose of it refused all offers.

He felt keenly the trouble engendered over the rate cases and took the matter to heart in a personal manner that was largely responsible, without question, for the physical break-down that came some months ago.

#### **President Cedar Rapids National Bank**

Mr. Averill was also president of the Cedar Rapids National bank, having been chosen to that position on the formation of the bank twenty years ago. In that position he took a leading part in the financial world of Cedar Rapids and was in truth, one of the city's wealthiest citizens. In addition to his various business and real estate investments in Cedar Rapids, Mr. Averill was or had been interested in projects in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida and Kentucky, and was also proprietor of the Vincennes hotel, one of the leading family hotels of Chicago. He had been singularly fortunate in his ventures and he invested much of the money made away from home, in his home town. As an example, the Montrose hotel would in all probability have never been built, had it not been for Mr. Averill and the money which he put into the project. The Welch-Cook building, now nearing completion, is also a monument to his faith in his home city.

Mr. Averill was married on October 22nd, 1867 to Miss Allie R. Doolittle of this city. Three children were born to them. Of these Mr. Glenn M. Averill and Miss Jessie Averill are now living. A son Arthur died in infancy.

## DOUBLE FUNERAL HELD YESTERDAY

IMPRESSIVE SERVICE FOR MR.  
AND MRS. AVERILL.

MANY FRIENDS FROM HERE AND  
ELSEWHERE IN ATTENDANCE.

Masses of Flowers Speak of the Es-  
teem and Affection in Which  
Couple Were Held—Funeral  
Party Goes to Daven-  
port Today.

REPUBLICAN FEB. 16-1910

The funeral services for Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Averill were held at the family residence on Second avenue yesterday afternoon at half past four o'clock, in the presence of a numerous gathering of friends. Men from the business world were there and women from the homes, the clubs and social circles, all there to pay their last respects to the husband and wife, father and mother who were lying in death side by side. Two caskets covered with flowers, roses and lilies and violets intertwined with smilax, was the awesome and solemn spectacle that confronted those who came to mourn with the sorely bereaved children and grand children. The caskets stood at the upper end of the hall, almost hidden from sight by the beautiful foliage and flowers. There were no sounds of mourning in the house and no tears were made visible. Everything was simple, lovingly simple and solemn, beautifully solemn and sacred, sacred with the hope that men and women have in the future into which the two souls had departed.

of the house of mourning as quietly as they had assembled a few minutes before. No funeral services could have been more simple or more impressive. There was not a superfluous word, there was not a direct reference to the sad occasion upon which the people had assembled. All that was understood and all that might have been said personal to the deceased was thought and felt by those who were within the home. All words spoken would have been superfluous in a family home that was surcharged with the sorrows that had come to it in a dual death.

This morning the two caskets will be taken to the railway station to be conveyed to Davenport where cremation will accomplish in a moment as in the twinkling of an eye the slow process of nature in the ordinary burial under ground.

The banks of the city closed at 1 o'clock yesterday afternoon in respect to the memory of Mr. Averill and all work ceased on the Welch-Cook building in which Mr. Averill was interested.

Those who were present at the funeral from other cities were:

Mrs. C. H. Sanford, sister of Mr. Averill; Mr. John Averill, his brother; R. L. Grant, manager of the Vincennes hotel; G. B. Hengen, Ralph Van Vechten, Miss Edith Weeks, Miss Lulu Averill, Mrs. R. A. Reed, Mrs. M. W. Pinkney, all of Chicago; J. H. Ingwersen, Clinton; J. H. Shoemaker, Waterloo; S. S. Lichty, Vinton; Charles George, Minneapolis; James Bracken, Tama.

The funeral party which will go in a special car to Davenport are: Mr. and Mrs. Glenn M. Averill, Arthur and Worth Averill, Miss Jessie Averill, Miss Lulu Averill, of Chicago; Mrs. R. Reed, of Chicago; Miss Edith Weeks, of Chicago; Rev. Dr. E. R. Burkhalter, and the pall bearers, Messrs. George Dutton, Alfred H. Durin, Edward Haman, Kent C. Fernan, John J. Meade and Ernest A. Sherman.



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DEPUBLISHED FEB. 16, 1916

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Every part of the spacious home was filled with the friends who came to honor the dead and to remember the living who had been left behind. Promptly at half past four o'clock Mr. Bertrand Allen Orr sang a beautiful hymn, "Shepherd, Show Me How to Go," Mrs. Phoebe Sherman Haman playing the piano accompaniment.

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ernment.

## WILL BE NO CHANGE

IN THE BUSINESS ENTERPRISES  
OF THE LATE A. T. AVERILL

Mr. Glenn M. Averill Will Be the  
Head of the Company and Will  
Carry Forward His Father's Plans.

REPUBLICAN 8/25-1910

Cedar Rapids will be glad to learn that the great business enterprises of the late A. T. Averill are to go forward as nearly as possible as they would have done had he been permitted to carry them forward himself, according to the plans which he had been formulating not long before his untimely death.

These enterprises were many and large and they meant a great deal more to the business of Cedar Rapids than many have known. It is known here generally that he was president of the Cedar Rapids Savings bank, the Cedar Rapids Gas Company, and that he was interested in the Hotel Montrose, the Welch-Cook building, and several other Cedar Rapids enterprises. He also had a fine farm of a thousand acres southeast of the city from which he derived much pleasure. It had been a source of gratification to him that he had reached a stage in

his business affairs where he was able to do handsome things for Cedar Rapids, in which he had much pride. He wanted to help the town grow in a great way. That is why he helped to build Hotel Montrose, and the magnificent Welch-Cook building. He had it in mind to do more along the same lines and so make the city really great and prosperous. It is a great asset to a city to have men financially able to make such big improvements possible. Mr. Averill was conspicuous in the greater Cedar Rapids movement and he would have been still more conspicuous had he lived longer.

But it is not so generally known that Mr. Averill also added much to the business activity of Cedar Rapids because of the fact that he made this the headquarters of many of his larger enterprises in other states. At the time of his death he was the principal owner in the Kentucky Midland Railway company, an immense property of coal lands, equipped with the most modern mining machinery so that it stands far above the mines in its vicinity because of its superior buildings and machinery. This enterprise is only just getting started, but it is certain to be one of the biggest and most productive mines of that region.

Mr. Averill was also heavily interested in an immense plantation in the most fertile part of the state of Louisiana, and this was financially managed from Cedar Rapids. It also, was just getting started, just beginning to realize the benefits of the cash basis on which Mr. Averill had placed it. Methods of diversified farming had also been introduced by Mr. Averill, greatly to the prosperity of all those who work upon it and who had hitherto been following the credit store system and the policy of raising nothing but cotton; this system is common in the south.

These are only two of the many business enterprises of Mr. Averill. A big hotel at Chicago, the Vincennes, was also owned by him. But he is learned that all these enterprises are to go forward just as Mr. Averill had planned them. There will be no change, except that Mr. Glenn M. Averill will step naturally into his father's place at the head. For many years Mr. Averill had been his father's private secretary and lately he had taken sole charge of the business. He will probably meet with problems where he will feel a desire to have the advice of his father, as of old; but he has long been familiar with his father's way of looking at such problems and there is no doubt that he will solve them successfully.

Though there is no direct information, it is not unlikely that a company will be formed in which Miss Jessie Averill will be one of the partners and she will continue to live in the old home on Second avenue. Cedar Rapids will have a kindly sympathy and good will for Mr. and Miss Averill and wish them success and happiness in the great duties and responsibilities which have been placed upon them.

That Mr. Averill left no will is a fact and neither did Mrs. Averill. The omission is understood to have been intentional, and not accidental. It was understood between the father and mother and the son and daughter that it was their desire that the business interests of the family should be carried forward, without change and without intermission. The father and

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**Description**



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The people of Cedar Rapids will welcome Mr. Glenn M. Averill into the larger activities of its business life. He is a young man who has long been identified with the city. He is in a position to do much for Cedar Rapids and all will wish him well.

Syndicate Clothing Company are successors to Oscar Solomon.

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# DEATH OF MARK R. AVERILL

A Well Known Citizen and a Man  
Greatly Loved by all who Knew Him—  
The Remains to be Taken to Illinois  
for Sepulture

Mark R. Averill, father of A. T. Averill and Mrs. Chas. H. Sanford, died last night of bronchitis at 7:30 at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Averill, on Fifth avenue. Mr. Averill was born in Swanton, Vermont, Dec. 22, 1811, being 81 years 1 month and 21 days old at his death. He removed to Lee county, Illinois, in 1852. Two years later he removed to Whiteside county, Illinois, where he resided on his farm. He was raised a Quaker. He had had two sisters and three brothers, two brothers and one sister survive him. He had eight children, three sons and three daughters living, one son in California, one in Nevada, two in Illinois, A. T. Averill and Mrs. Charles N. Sanford in Cedar Rapids.

Mr. Averill was married to Miss Addie Durin in 1833 in Vermont. Mrs. Averill survives him at the age of eighty. A brief private funeral service will be conducted from the house of Charles H. Sanford, No. 341 Fifth avenue, this afternoon at 4 o'clock, by Rev. Dr. J. H. Palmer. Interment will be made at Prophets Town, Illinois, leaving here at 3:30 a. m. tomorrow.