



Maud Hart and Delos Wheeler
Lovelace Family Papers.

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My grandfather, James Adolphus Hart, left Canada in the mid eighteen-fifties and came to Calmar Township in Winneshiek County, Iowa to homestead land. He left behind him, teaching school in St. Williams, Canada, Arosamond Price, to whom he was engaged. In 1857 he returned to marry her and took her by railroad train and covered wagon out to the Iowa prairies. Arosamond brought with her six silk dresses, a sewing machine and her mahogany melodeon.

After a few years the growing family moved to Frankville Township, to a farm near Odsian. Pioneer life was hard, as we all know, but Arosamond had a gay spirit which was not quenched. She was a very determined person, too. She resolved that her children should have a gentle upbringing and instilled fine manners in every one of them. When the country school was not in session, she taught them herself at home; and she brought them up to be deeply religious as she and James both were. The Methodists met in an old log building but there was no Protestant church in the vicinity and Arosamond made up her mind that there should be.

In June of 1876 she got out a sheet of paper and James headed the subscription list for a "church house", pledging \$100. Thomas, my father, then a boy of thirteen, hitched a team of horses to a wagon and drove his mother out to raise the rest of the money. Tolver Holvorson and Phineas Banning matched James's pledge and others gave varying amounts. My father never forgot that summer and told my sisters and me many stories about the drives with his mother and the fun of watching the list of pledges grow.

His mother was dainty, feminine, persuasive. While a farmer was explaining that times were hard, her eyes would rove over the barnyard and she would suggest "a pig from that fine new litter" or "that handsome calf, yonder." She always got one. I don't find piglets or calves on the subscription list but I know they were given and can only assume they were translated into money pledges and marked Paid. There were some athiests in that part of the county. My father always referred to them as 'infidels' ...but with the friendliest good will. He told how Grandma Hart would remind the infidels that they might like a church nearby 'when your daughter is married' or 'when your time comes to die.'

The sheet of paper became three sheets sewn together. By August \$1153.25 had been pledged and the Articles of Incorporation of the United Brethren Church were filed. (Later it became the Centennial Methodist Church.) It was to be used by all Orthodox Christian denominations and to be open for all funerals.

Grandma Hart was buried there three years later. She was only forty-five. She had left her stamp on every one of her nine children, and her grandchildren and even her great grandchildren are aware of her. Many of us have been taken to Washington Prairie to see "Grandma's Church."

It was a great pride to my father that at his father's death in 1913, he was given...by vote of his brothers and sisters...the old subscription list which I am now happy to put into the care of the State Historical Society of Iowa.

Maud Hart Lovelace

The State Historical Society of Iowa

CENTENNIAL BUILDING

Iowa City, Iowa

Office of the Superintendent

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

February 5, 1965

Mrs. Delos W. Lovelace
774 West Eighth Street
Claremont, California

Dear Mrs. Lovelace:

Fred Pownall has delivered the excellent picture with your letter which we are delighted to have. This is one of the best of its type I have ever seen. It is worthy of reproduction, even if we didn't have a story.

I get quite a bang out of pictures of this kind. I have just resurrected a little kindergarten picture in which I appear at Prescott School in Dubuque and lo and behold when I graduated from the eighth grade, I was president of the class.

Trusting it will be my pleasure to visit with you sometime, I remain

Very sincerely,



William J. Petersen
Superintendent

WJP/rg

The State Historical Society of Iowa

CENTENNIAL BUILDING

Iowa City, Iowa

Office of the Superintendent

WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

February 9, 1965

Mrs. Delos W. Lovelace
774 West Eighth Street
Claremont, California

Dear Mrs. Lovelace:

Just a note to let you know that your ^(W.P.) carrier did bring in those pictures which were excellent and I now am acknowledging the Funeral Notice which also is a nice little item to have as we build up this story.

I share with you the pleasure in knowing that this material ultimately can be made into a very inspiring little vignette of early Iowa history.

Very sincerely,



William J. Petersen
Superintendent

WJP/rg

was
throughly
corrected

Written to my old friend
Duckie (Dorothy) Ashby
in Iowa City - Iowa

December 21, 1964.

Dear Duckie,-

I held up our greetings to the Pownalls, with some fantastic notion that I would find time to put into it the long letter I've so long been wanting to write. Well, at least I'll send along something of all I want to say.

How pleased we are, for one thing, about the success we hear your Ellie is having. Isn't it gratifying to her parents? Our Merian is having a book published in February. It was done on assignment from the News Front Magazine and the Hammond Publishing Company, and she didn't have her own say about everything concerned with it. But she was delighted to be asked to do it, as it deals with the negro movement which which she is deeply sympathetic, as we are.

She and Bert came out for a visit in November. They voted for no sight-seeing this time which was gorgeous as we could just keep the coffee pot perking and talk, talk, talk. Of course we had to show them off to a few of our friends with a little entertaining. Merian had brought her manuscript along and Delossy's manuscript and my manuscript had to be moved off our desks for her use and Bert's. He always has stuff to read for he's an editor. The house had sheets of paper drifting over everything and balls of crumpled paper on every floor but the house is used to it.

I've been wanting to consult you ...and Fred especially....about another sort of manuscript which has come into my possession. A great, great treasure of the Hart family. It seems that when my Grandfather Hart was farming near Ossian there was no Protestant church in that part of Iowa, but Grandma was determined that there should be. She got out a sheet of foolscap and Grandpa headed it with a pledge toward a church of \$100 and one Tolver Holverson matched it and Tom, my daddy, who was thirteen years old hitched a team of horses to a wagon and drove Grandma out to raise the ~~money~~ rest of the money. This was in June of 1876 and by August she had pledges of over \$1000 and the Articles of Incorporation of the United Brethren Church were filed. The church was to "be open for all funerals and serve all the orthodox Christian denominations." Later it became the Centennial Methodist Church. It's on Washington Prairie, near Ossian. I've been there. Grandma was buried in the church yard, her The paper, which had become three sheets of paper sewn together, which she had carried all around the countryside, my daddy driving, was given to Daddy years later after my grandfather's death.

death, because he ... "addy" ... had driven her. He told us children many times about that money raising. Grandma Hart was a dainty, persuasive, determined little lady and she charmed the stinkiest athletes into contributing and if a farmer couldn't give hard money she would talk him out of a piglet or a calf. I don't find them on the paper but she got them! Even without the pigs listed, however, it's an interesting old document with the signature of all these Winnishiek (I think it was Winnishiek) County and their pledges... sometimes as small as two or three dollars. Most of them are marked "Paid" but not all. (No doubt they all paid later.) I also have the original ~~xxxx~~ hand-written Articles of Incorporation.

To end all this rambling... the reason I am troubling you, Fred, is to ask if you would kindly give these documents to the proper person at the Iowa Historical Society. That is, if they would care to have them, I feel they should be offered there. I would, of course, send them to you with a more coherent note of explanation than this. ~~xxxxxxx~~ I'm seeking your help because I had bad luck with a small historical society which shall be nameless, which I gave, after my father's death, the sewing machine Grandma Hart brought from Canada to Iowa in 1857. When I visited the place later, I could find no record of it. It was lost in a maze of old sewing machines none of which were identified as to former owners. I'm sure such a thing would never happen at such a fine place as the Iowa Historical Society. Just the same I kind of want Grandma Hart's precious paper, taken by the hand so to speak, into its new home.

Please don't bother with this ancient business until your holiday rush is over. and we hope that holiday will be full of joy for you.

Some time when we are in Minnesota (but alas we very seldom are) we'd love to barge in on you, in that idyllic summer cottage, and couldn't the four of us talk Des Moines and Camp Dodge until the cows came home?

Our love to you all,

STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA



IOWA CITY

Department of Publications

January 6, 1965

Mrs. Delos W. Lovelace
774 West Eighth Street
Claremont, California

Dear Maud:

Many thanks for the lovely commission you handed me in your Christmas letter.

William J. Petersen, superintendent of the State Historical Society of Iowa and a long-time good friend of ours, is delighted. He had heard of the old church on Washington Prairie and considered it important in Iowa history. To have possession of the two original documents would be wonderful.

Grandma Hart's great, great treasure will be in good company. The State Historical Society of Iowa is now in a new building of its own on the Iowa campus. It is one of the biggest and most active in the middle west.

If you will send the material to me, with any information you may wish to add to the really exciting story in your letter, the gift will be most gratefully received by the State of Iowa.

Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. As Grandma Hart would say: God bless you.

For 1965, and for many years to follow, all good fortune to you and Delos.

Much love,

Fred

Good letter from D. to follow.

January 15, 1965.

Dear Fred,-

Your so-kind reassuring letter was balm to my troubled spirit. After receiving it, I went most happily about the business of putting down on paper what I know about the old subscription list. If I have written at too great length, or if any of the material I have included is extraneous to your purposes, please feel free to return it for suggested cuts or any other revision.

I am sending ~~skxxxx~~ with this the subscription list and the Articles of Incorporation and a picture of Arosamond Price Hart. (Her name is sometimes spelled Arosamond, sometimes Arosmond, but I chose the former for the piece I wrote. I find it Arosamond on the back of the picture, in the handwriting of her daughter, My Aunt Flora Bowder, whose daughter sent it to me.

There is another picture which I will send you shortly. It does not concern the Washington Prairie Church, but the Banning School ~~Hussewhuh~~ is near the church. I'll give you explanatory matter about that when I send it. If either of these pictures is not suitable for your collection, just send them back .

Thank you again, I feel so grateful

January 15, 1965.

Dear Fred,-

Your so-kind reassuring letter was balm to my troubled spirit.

After receiving it, I went most happily about the business of ~~preparing~~ writing a statement to accompany the subscription list. If it is too long, if some of the material in it is extraneous to your purposes, please feel free to send it back for revision. I thought you might like to have my memories concerning the list put down on

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR (enraptured, that is)

Jan. 18, 1965

Dear Maud:

Grandmother Hart's documents have arrived safely and in good order. They are, along with the picture of the lovely lady and the excellent piece written by the lady's lovely granddaughter, in the fireproof original documents files of the State Historical Society of Iowa. I am sure they will some day come to life again in print.

Mr. Petersen of course received the material in person and is very grateful. You will be hearing from him. Our best to you and Helen,
Fred

The Engle Christmas book was a good seller---it came out just the right time for the desperate Christmas shoppers. We did think Ellie's pictures helped. She has just been commissioned to do a mural for the children's room in the public library here, and that will be fun for her, I'm sure. She did one for the children's ward in the hospital in Ithaca several years ago, so this shouldn't present too many problems. We wish you could know her and John and their children. They are dear people.

Dorothy May, in New York, loves it there, but we miss her. We hope she can get to Wisconsin, come summer. We hope you people can come there, or here, too. Surely you will be whizzing into Minneapolis one of these days---or coming to Iowa City to see where Grandma is tucked away. We hope to take off for the woods early in May, to stay until the last of September, so, if you do come eastward, our address is Star Route, Solon Springs, Wis. We really are nearer Hayward, but the postoffice continues to be Solon Springs.

Our winter surely is being wintry Sub-zero, these days, but the Hayward paper, which we get weekly, records -40^o and such, so I guess our -10 and -12, the last few days, isn't the worst. California, I know, is nice and warm these days. We were there, the first time Iowa went to the Rose Bowl, and the weather was glorious. How did you choose Claremont for your home? We have known many girls who have gone to Scripps and loved it. Do you ever see Charlie Darlington? We thank him so much for tying up the threads of our friendship. Looking through an old photograph book the other day I found a snapshot of me at Camp Dodge, probably taken at the same time as the one you mentioned in your first letter. I was wearing a steel helmet, a georgette crepe dress, and spats, yet.

Friday---

Dear Maud and Delos---

How wonderful it has been to get acquainted with Grandmother Hart, that great pioneer, who now has her own niche in the fally of the Historical Society of Iowa. Dr. Bill Petersen, a good friend indeed, is so thrilled to have added her to his group, and I'm sure will see that she is treated with proper respect.

The lovely photograph which came today will be passed on to him, too. Meantime, I have admired those tasty crocheted collars--surely the vogue at that time. I'll bet the girls also had crocheted lace on their corset covers--or Ferris waists.

Bill Petersen is a dedicated historian, and we, too, are so pleased to know he has Grandma Hart under his wing. The society publishes a monthly magazine, the "Palimpsest," for which I have done some writing. The society has a fine building with very modern equipment and a good staff.

Hearing from you is such a joy. It seems such a short time since we were all in Des Moines, but, of course, that was a long time ago---but wasn't it fun? We are still in fine fettle, kept younger than we might have been by contact with many young students. Living in Iowa City has been fine, as we just can't vegetate, even if we wanted to. Now, having Ellie and John and the grandchildren handy, we simply cannot become too doddering.

Ah, me--youth was strange and wonderful.

Last year Virginia Lewis West Patterson called us. Do you remember her with the War Camp Community Service? We had a fine visit with her--she was a fugitive from a retirement ^{home} in Ft. Dodge, which she had found intolerable. Over the years, she had been married twice, widowed or divorced (we didn't pry) had run an antique shop in New York, and was off for parts unknown and as yet undiscovered adventure. A bit shrill, but interesting for an evening.

If you ever see Parade Magazine--a Sunday paper supplement--our nephew Neal Ashby, is an associate editor, and the editor, Jess Gorkin, one of Fred's former students, and a dear friend. My brother, Ted, is a feature writer for the Boston Globe, after some years as a columnist on the Des Moines Tribune. He travels arpund New England finding interesting characters to write about-- a wonderful assignment!

My, how I do go on. Won't you do the same? We love hearing from you and do hope our paths will cross before too long.

Much love----

Grandma Pownall

Whatever became of Duckie?