

The Grinnell Herald

RAY & FRISBIE
PUBLISHERS.

Entered at the Postoffice at Grinnell, Iowa, on
Sept. 24, 1914, as second-class mail matter.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1916.

OBITUARY.

Mrs. Mary E. Conaway.

Born Dec. 31, 1829; died Oct. 3, 1916.

It would be impossible to write a history of Brooklyn without giving a history of Mrs. Mary E. Conaway, whose life was so linked with the developments of this city that she must be considered an important part of the local history. Mrs. Conaway first saw the small settlement called Brooklyn on the first day of May, 1857, when she and her family cast their lots with those who had pioneered, and she has remained here all these years—almost sixty years in one community.

Mrs. Conaway came here in the vehicle of the day—a carryall, having driven the distance from Iowa City, where the railroad terminated. Owing to the spring freshets and soft prairie roads three days were consumed in making this journey of fifty-five miles. Many times they found themselves mired in the roads where they would be forced to await the arrival of the regular stage coach to bring assistance.

Arriving in Brooklyn they found but one available house which could accommodate them until a home could be provided. In this one of four rooms already occupied by six people, the hospitality of the early days was extended to the newcomers, and Dr. John Conaway, his wife and two young daughters were sheltered for several weeks; or until they could be provided with a home of their own.

There was a whole-souled hospitality on every hand to welcome newcomers, and every assistance was given to show that the new people in the village were to understand that they were expected to enjoy with them the blessings which nature had provided. The household goods had been brought from Ohio by teams and the horses were desired by the owner of the only hotel in the town. An exchange was made and Dr. Conaway and his family entered upon a career of hotel management which had not been previously contemplated. The stage coach brought its passengers daily, to be cared for, and the endless stream of emigrant wagons moving still westward found this hotel a stopping place where weary travelers might find comfort in rest, nourishment and inspiration. Dr. Conaway soon built up

a practice in his profession that extended for many miles in every direction. The hotel business becoming too great a burden for the family the property was disposed of. A new home was built which for the early days was quite a pretentious residence. The house still remains almost as originally built in north Brooklyn. This home became the center for much of the social and religious activities of the town. It was at this home where the farewell reception was given to the soldiers of the community who went forth in defense of their flag. It was at this home where receptions were held to receive the soldier boys as they came back from the front. It was at this home where celebrations of victories of the Union armies were held, and from the portico of which the national airs were sung by choirs whose members have passed on. It was this home to which was brought the body of John T. Drake, the young soldier for whom the Grand Army post was named. It was at this home that practically every religious enterprise was inaugurated in the days when creeds were less important than church fellowship.

Mary Elizabeth Cuning was born at Ragersville, O., Dec. 31, 1829, and died Oct. 3, 1916, almost 87 years of age. Her parents were Richard Cuning and Nancy Julia (Swagler) Cuning. She was married to Dr. John Conaway in Ragersville, O., Oct. 7, 1849. They resided in Bakersville until 1857, when they removed to Brooklyn. They were the parents of six children. Three died in infancy. Mrs. Francis Dorrance died May 17, 1906.

Mrs. Florence McFarland, a daughter, has been the constant and faithful companion of her mother for a number of years. A son, Freeman R. Conaway, resides at Mason City, Ia. A sister, Mrs. Eliza Drake, of Brooklyn, and a brother, Michael S. Cuning, of San Jose, Cal., survive. A brother, Alfred Cuning, passed away a few weeks ago at Cleveland, O., in his eighty-ninth year.

Dr. John Conaway, after a most useful life in the community in which he was known for his unselfishness and his great love for all mankind, passed away May 3, 1883. He was born in Archer township, Harrison county, Ohio, Nov. 16, 1822. He had been a member of the Iowa state senate and had held many positions of trust in the community and was an earnest advocate of civic righteousness and education. Mrs. Conaway was always an earnest aid to him and they worked together, hand in hand, for the highest ideals. They loved their home and defended it under every circumstance, never neglecting it but maintaining that sacred partnership for maintaining the good, the true, and the beautiful.

(John)