

With maney other things, will relate a Short history of my experience and the part and interest I took in the late war of 1861. When the confederates fired on Fort Sumpter in April 1861, it fired the hearts of all the loyel people in this county. The President made a call for seventy five thousand volenteeres soldiers, the call was quickley re- sponded to and we all went to work raising volunteers. I then lived on my farm in Mahomet township, we went to work with a will and soon raised a company of one hundred brave young men. I assisted in raising this company. At that time my son Henry H. Harris was only seventeen years old, I thought he was too young to enlist. But after his earnest entreaty to be allowed to do what he could in helping save the union, I gave my consent, notwithstanding most of my farm help had gone into the field of service. He enlisted under Capt. Armstrong and went into General Butlers devision in New Orleans where he served almost three years in the hot bed of the rebellion, where he remained till his honorable discharge which he received in 1864(?). After raising our company in Mahomet township, the boys were taken to Joliet to be sworn in to the service. I gave them one hundred dollars as a token of my good will and after having seen them sworn in and spending a few days in Joliet with them I returned to my home, and arranged my farm affairs. This was early in May 1861. I then left home for Washington to see my old friend Abraham Lincoln who was then president of the United States, and was burdened with the great responsibility of the terrible crisis that had falen on our Government and county. I having bene an old friend of the President for twenty years knew him when he first lived in Decatur in June 1836. He was then a rail maker and a Personal friend of mine. He often had bene at my home and shared our hospittaly frequentley in going

from Decator and Springfield to Urbana to attend court. I had often visited his home. From my acquaintance with the President I had formed a Strong attachment for him. Knowing him as I did I Knew that he would Need some Incouragement in his great responsibiltyes. Thus I left my buisness and home and went to Was hington to see the Presidint and Stand by him and give him all the incourgement I could command. The President heard of my arivill in Washington, he emmediately sent a notee to me to come at once to his house, the presidents house and home. I responded at once to his invitation. He met me at the dore and gave me a harty wel- come, took me in his familey room to see his wife and children. They ware all glad to see me. The president talked about every thing in refer- ence to the war and was anxious to learn what the feeling was throuout the county, especially the feeling of his home people and Illinois in general. I went to Washington to see and encourage the President and when the time came to make an impression upon the President in the right direction you may be assured I did acomplished all I desired. Well, the President Straightened up and said, "I know you and your visit has given me more incuragement than I have had from any one. I will want you to call in the morning at Nine o'clock and go with me to the cabinet meeting. I want to introduce you to each member." I called at Nine oclock, went to the meet- ing and was made acquainted with one of the greatest boddy of men that ever assembled together to transact buisness. Mongomiry Blair envited me to go home and tak diner with him, he was Post Master general. I took dinner with the familey. I was treated in great Stile for havin bene an old acquaintance and a close friend to the President. In the cabinet meeting the president gave a history of our acquaintance. This gave me maney friends with the heads of Departments and I was Splededley treeted

with officers of the army and General McDowell and many others. The next day after I arrived in Washington Col. Elsworth was Killed. Elsworth had been the President's private Secretary before the war. Elsworth was a cornel of a regiment called the Suaves company. Raised in New York, they were all large strong men and great fighters. Elsworth marched his regiment over to Alexandria and one Jackson had kept a big hotel and had a rebel flag flying on the top of his hotel. Col. Elsworth and one of his men, his name was Brumney, went on top of the House took the flag down and was coming down with the flag when Jackson met him and shot Elsworth dead and was pulling the trigger on Brumney. He was too quick for Jackson and shot Jackson through the head. Elsworth was brought over to Washington and taken to the President's house and his funeral was preached in the east Blue room. I was present. There was a big crowd. Elsworth's remains were shipped off to Ohio some where for burial. Jackson had an extensive bar in his Hotel. After Elsworth's killing his regiment, the Suaves, took possession of the hotel bar and helped themselves to the entire house, kept the cook and quartered there. I was over there in two days after Elsworth was killed and went all through the House. The cooks were all colored and slaves so they just kept all the house and made it headquarters for the soldiers. The bar was free to all the soldiers. This was an exciting and scary time. The rebels had a hundred thousand soldiers about twenty miles from the capital. The president had made all the protection for the treasury department. The treasury building it was about four storey high. For its protection there was great bags of sand piled all round the building to the roof, two bags deep from top to bottom and the President had made arrangement in case of emergency, he could get to New York in safety.