

early ⁺ in the county
Some experiences of Miss Margaret McEllen
and Mrs. S. E. Woolworth.

I came to Jackson Co. with my parents from
Biron, Ogle Co., Illinois, when but five years
of age. My father bought a farm from
a man who had tired of the west and ~~the~~
being separated from his wife and family
had given up farming. At this time the
county was covered with wild grass which
grew very tall and in the fall there were
many terrible prairie fires which it was
necessary to fight day and night in order
to save the little settlement. Some of the
people lived in sod houses.

When I was sixteen years of age my father
started a general store at the south end of Loon
Lake which my sister Mary and I had to tend.
One day as I was alone at the store a man

on horse back road up, asked for a drink
of water, which I gave him, then inquired
if I knew of a place he could find work
for a few days, as his horse had become
lame. I told him father would hire him,
as it was in harvest and we needed help to
shock oats. In the morning father told him
where to go to work. This man took his horse to
the field with him and all of the three weeks
he worked for us the horse was never 20 feet
from him. He was not very lame as one
day I had occasion to try him out. Our
cattle got in a neighbors field and as I was running
to get them out, this fellow told me to take his
horse which I did, and he went like the wind
so there was no lameness about him. I enjoyed
it as there never was a horse too fast for
us girls, nor a gun we could not shoot.
So we had many meals of ducks and geese
in those glorious days when wild game

was free and plentiful. Well, this man proved to be Henry Gardner the outlaw of the younger gang. After leaving our place he was going through Sioux City the office who were on the look out for him chased him up the streets shooting at him. An Editor from Sioux City was at our home during the time this man Gardner was there and wrote us about his being in Sioux City. He was not killed at that time but was later - at one time my father saw the pictures of the Younger boys gang and easily recognized the picture of our hired man.

In our family there were nine girls and two boys at home until grown up. Then father would invite the neighbors for a dance, but two of the old time fiddlers who played all night for \$2. a piece - start at eight o'clock and not go home until the sun began to shine in the morning. Then milk the cows and go to the field for a days work. Think of

the difference between today and 56 years ago. I ~~would~~ ^{would} my life to live over again - give me the good old days, Every body trapped muskrats and had plenty of money -

Do any of you old settlers remember when Rob. Guhlke and I took first prize for the best Polka - we danced in the red school house -

There were a great many indians, when we came here, ~~but~~ mostly friendly but tricky. One morning when father went to milk he found three of them milking his cows.

The winters were very severe with many snow storms which lasted three days at a time.

We had the school at our house for the winter and one time there was a storm which lasted for several days and the children all stayed ^{until the storm was over} at home we had school right along.