34. The Farm in Bloomington

We have seen that in 1901 Johnnie's grandfather had sold his 160-acre farm to his son for $100, a common way to pass a farm on to the next generation when there was only one heir. We also saw that Johnnie's father then bought 119.5 acres in February of 1902 at auction with the highest bid of $12,447.50, $104.16 per acre, and sold parts of that property for $4200.00 (40 acres at $105 per acre) and $4147.50 (40 acres at $103.67 per acre), keeping the last 39.5 acres for himself and thereby adding 39.5 acres to his farm for $4100.00, $103.80 per acre). Johnnie's father now owned a 199.5-acre farm of excellent farmland for which his personal cost was $4200.00. As we shall see, he sold this farm in February of 1914 for $28,000.00, $140.35 per acre.

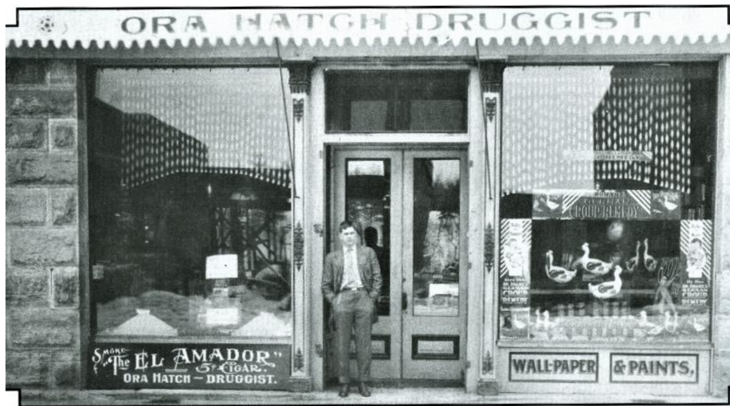
Gus had found a farm on the Bloomington fairgrounds road that he thought Johnnie's father would like, 240 acres for $20,000, $83.33 an acre, very near the fairgrounds. Johnnie's father did indeed like the deal and had the cash to buy the farm. Our Cousin Fred looked at the Bloomington mortgage index from 1906-1920 in Lancaster, Wisconsin and found that "there were no Crubel mortgages, which means they either financed the land purchases without a mortgage (borrowed from family) or paid in cash." We can feel quite certain that Johnnie's father paid in cash. Not only was he a very frugal man who saved money, but he had by then six daughters, two of whom were already hiring out and bringing money home to him. Eventually he would have a total of 11 children: 4 boys, one of whom died at age 3, and 7 girls. When Johnnie and I married, Johnnie was 23, his sister Elizabeth was 19 and married the same day we did, Caroline was 16 and would marry two years later, Henry was 14, Eleanor 11, Catharine 9, Mary 6, Frances 4, and William 2. William was born 7 months after Johnnie's grandfather died and would himself die the following year at age 3. Olivia was born July 24, 1910 four months before we were married, and Hubert was yet to be born on August 18, 1912.

So on February 10, 1910 Johnnie's father again went to Bloomington, this time with his two sons John and Henry and his packet of cash safe in a small leather packet that he carried under his jacket. They rode in Johnnie's buggy, again packed lightly with only small suitcases and oats for the horses, plus hot bricks for their feet and horse blankets to cover their knees. This time, however, they took the short route, going north to Gutenberg and staying overnight there with a German family they knew and then crossing the river on the ice in the morning with other travelers. The Landing ferry terminal and inn where they began their walk across the river has an interesting history. The photos below show the ferry terminal on the Mississippi River, the additional lodging built on top of the building in 1999, and the grand old stone building itself in the third photo.

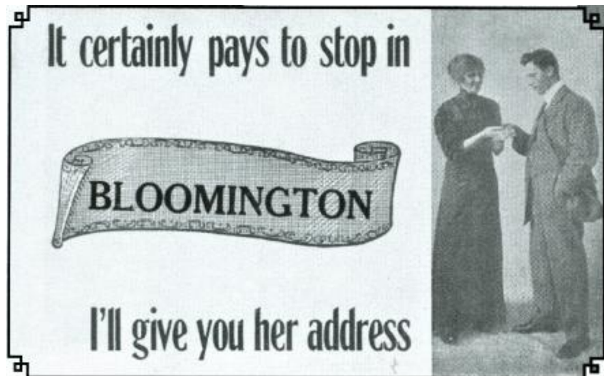
The Landing was originally a three-story stone warehouse and granary along the riverfront to store grain waiting for shipment on the river. It had a Gambrel roof and stone lintels, rose two stories above the street, and had two doors opening out to the street side. A line of lean-to bins with roofs lined the structure on the south side. These date to the button company era and at one time a two-story frame structure (roof line visible on east wall) and a single-story shed were east and north of the building.

According to the *Clayton County Register*, Mr. Wiest who owned the hardware store across the street built this warehouse sometime before August 10, 1858. This would date this structure slightly later than the other warehouses on the river. The 1858 city map locates the building, and the 1869 overview indicates that the building in its present state was standing then. The building served the Wiest Hardware Store and later the Class Warehouse. Wiest also purchased local grain and produce and shipped these goods out by steamboat, as did the other warehouses. In 1909, the Empire City Pearl Button Works of New York sent Chris Frommelt to install a button factory in this warehouse to take advantage of the abundance of raw material in the river, namely, the clam shells from which the pearl buttons were made. Thus was begun the fourth pearl button plant in Guttenberg. The Empire Pearl Button Company of Muscatine took over the building and installed electric-driven cutting machines. Chris Frommelt remained the manager. This plant outlasted the other plants in Gutenberg, and during the Depression, state funds subsidized a return to full operation and employment. By 1928, the name of the plant was "American Pearl Button Plant #1." The plant operated into the 1950's when plastic buttons put an end to this mode of button manufacture. At its peak, the factory employed 50 button cutters and carders and made buttons by the millions. It closed Nov. 29, 1960. As with most other button factories, the closure left behind huge piles of cut shells heaped up next to the plant waiting to be hauled away.

The river crossing on the ice went without mishap. Fortunately there was a light layer of snow on top of the ice to help guard against slipping. Even so, both Johnnie and Henry walked on either side of the two horses, holding their bridles tightly and moving slowly, with Mr. Crubel walking beside them. The crossing took no more than 20 minutes, and then the travelers were on their way again. When they reached Bloomington in the early afternoon they checked in with Mr. Donnelly at the Bloomington Hotel and had a late lunch before driving out into the country around Bloomington to see the lay of the land. When they returned at dusk to the hotel and had sent their horses to the livery, they had supper in the hotel and then walked around the downtown area for a while. Johnnie and Henry were impressed with the number of shops there were, and the electric lights they saw in many shops.



As they passed this store, they noticed the sign immediately because they had been told that Ora Hatch had once owned the farm they were buying, before the Harpers bought it from him. Of course Mr. Crubel was interested in Ora's thoughts about the farm, and finding the store still open, they stopped in. While Mr. Crubel and Johnnie talked with Ora, or Orrie, as he preferred to be called, Henry wandered around and noticed with interest some of the merchandise Orrie carried that was not at that time available in the New Vienna stores. Orrie's store was a "general store" that carried a variety of merchandise, including patent medicines and imported cigars. When Henry saw the postcards below, he had to have them to show his friends back home.



He also picked up an advertising card for Muley Maker, Orrie's most popular product, which Orrie invented and manufactured in his Bloomington laboratory. It was for dehorning cattle and was popular nationally, sold by mail order throughout the country, along with his Millers Horse Remedy. Two photos on the wall that caught Henry's eye were the photo of the 1907 Bloomington Baseball Team and the photo of Orrie on his elephant on Main Street in 1908 looking like he wanted to lead the parade.

Local Baseball Team 1907

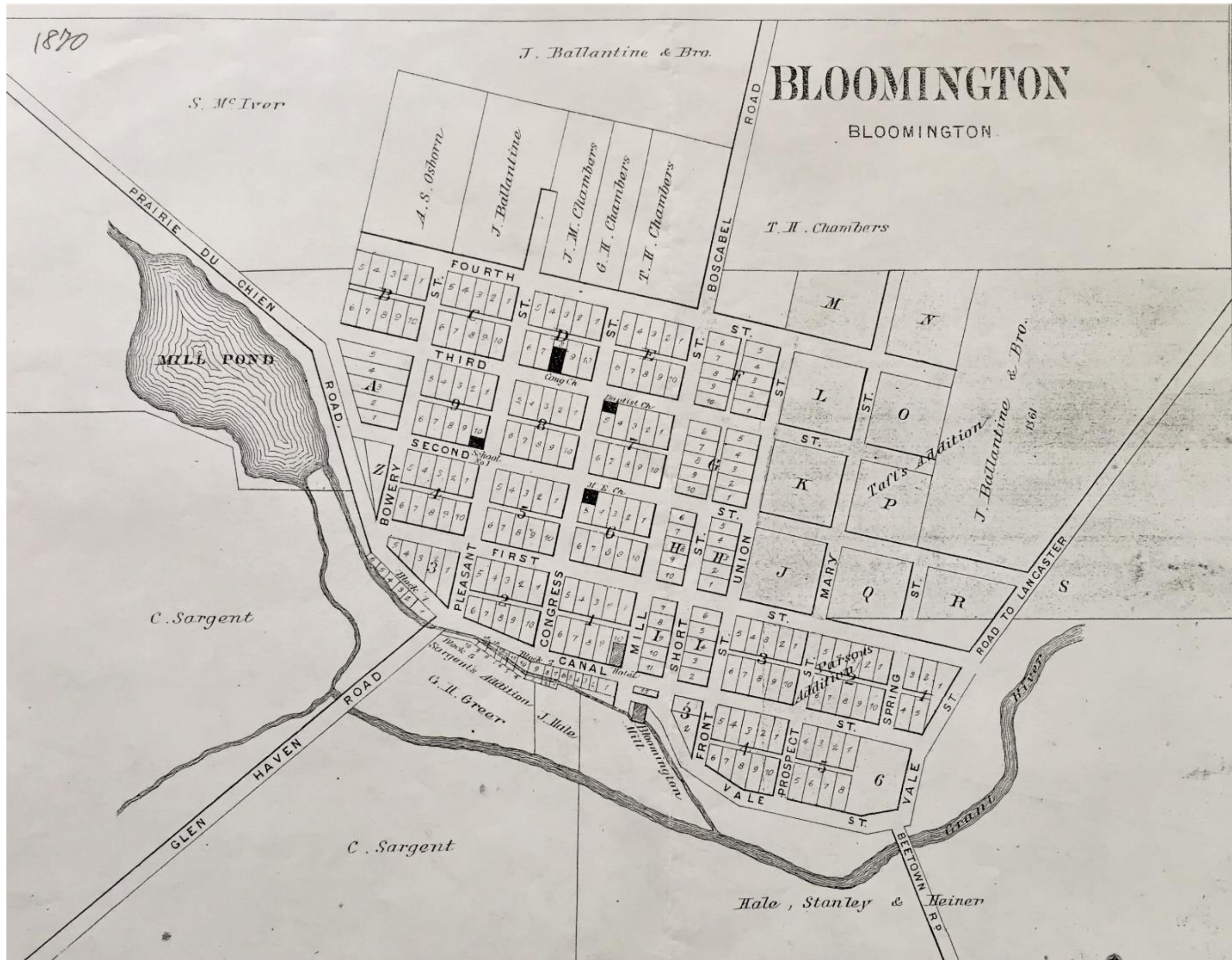
The next morning the Crubels met Gus in the Hotel restaurant and were soon on their way to the Harper farm, above. As they drove the four miles north out of the village, Mr. Crubel asked Mr.

Donnelly about Ora Hatch. He was satisfied to learn that Orrie, as he liked to be called, was a local businessman and community leader who was known for his sense of humor as well as his love of a challenge. That famous photo of Orrie on the elephant was a publicity stunt for the William Jennings Bryan stump appearance the year before, but yes, it does look like Orrie wants to lead the Fair parade!

In less than a half hour their buggy was pulling up to the Harper's front door, where they found the Harpers waiting for them. After introductions, they were shown around the farm and fields and then treated to dinner cooked by Mrs. Harper, an excellent beef dish with mashed potatoes and gravy plus green peas with onions in bacon grease, followed by apple pie with a slice of yellow cheddar cheese on top. The meal was so satisfying that the travelers felt the need for an afternoon nap, but Mr. Crubel was aware that negotiating had to continue. The Harpers listed the farm and household items they would be taking with them, and Mr. Crubel arranged to buy what he wanted from the remaining items, which was most of them, but only at a bargain price. The hay, corn and oats remaining in the barns would be included in the sale price for the farm. Then Gus joined Mr. and Mrs. Harper in their buggy while the Crubels climbed into theirs, and the two buggies traveled back to the village to close the sale at the Woodhouse & Bartley Bank. There all went as planned, and a half hour later the Crubels shook hands all around and walked out of the bank with the deed to the farm.

So it was that on February 12, 1910 Johnnie's father, John Crubel, bought a farm of 240 acres from Thomas Harper for $20,000, legal description SW 1/4 and W 1/2 of SW 1/4 of Sect. 12, Township 5 North, Range 5 West of 4th PM (240 acres) in Bloomington, Wisconsin, Patch Grove Township. This was a working farm and move-in ready. Because Mr. Crubel had gotten a good price for the land and a very good price for all the farm and house furnishings, he was in an expansive mood and invited the Harpers to lunch at the hotel, where the Crubels learned more about the Harpers, about Bloomington, and about farming in southwestern Wisconsin. Mr. Harper had stopped by the Bloomington Record office on the way to the hotel and picked up a copy of an 1870 map of

Bloomington showing that the village had been platted ambitiously way back then, and also showing the Grant River and the canal that fueled the grist mill and gave the downtown main street its name, Canal Street. Johnnie was keenly interested in the map and brought it back to show it to me.



As the Crubels learned over a prolonged lunch, the Harpers had an interesting story. Thomas W. Harper, or Tom, as he would like them to call him, was born in 1849. His parents were from Kentucky and North Carolina and had settled in Beetown, the small village near Bloomington, before it was even a town. He was born on his parents' farm there, got married to his dear Lorinda and had a small precious baby daughter Minnie, and they all lived with his parents on the farm because he was the youngest of his family. Then he lost his beloved Lorinda, God rest her soul, and he eventually found "this dear precious girl here, my Clara, and she is 11 years younger than me and an absolute peach." And here his precious Clara blushed like a peach, Johnnie told me later. Clara's father had originally come from England. Tom and Clara bought 240 acres in Section 36 of Patch Grove Township, just two miles north of the farm Mr. Crubel was buying. He and Clara settled down there. At that time in the 1890s Mr. Townsend owned the farm in Section 12 that Mr. Crubel was buying, and Mr. Hatch then bought the farm from him but soon decided farming was not for him and he wanted to sell his farm. So Tom and Clara bought it because it was closer to the village of Bloomington, and Tom sold his old farm to Mr. Frey. Ora went on

to develop his famous dehorning fluid and his horse medicine and open his drugstore in the village, and Tom and Clara settled into farming on the Townsend/Hatch farm. By 1900 they had six children, three boys and three girls. But now, Tom said, it was time to move on. He was sitting here before them as a man of 60 years, his Clara was 48, and his children were mostly grown, except the little Indian boy they adopted from North Dakota. Some of his good friends had moved down to Texas and told him Texas was the place to be, that life was easier there, and they were making money in cotton. Roy and Mollie Bailey, Robert and Bessie Denser, Frank and Mary Ott – they all moved down there and said the same thing, that there are lots of opportunities in Texas, and they sent him a newspaper clipping, which he showed to us. "1909: These are prosperous years for cotton farmers. Cotton sits on the throne as the money crop of Texas. Texas has 11,000 miles of rail service and 3591 miles of paved roads. It is definitely a booming state, and the first oil well is already in operation in Beaumont - who knows what will happen then." Railroads and paved roads and cotton – that was the future. Mr. Harper turned to Mr. Crubel and said, "Well, we tried so hard to get a railroad here, five times we pushed hard for it, and I am tired of fighting those railroad people. Maybe you will have better luck than we did." Privately Johnnie thought that trucks might be the future. Mr. Crubel told Tom how their land agent Gus was actually one of the people who helped get a railroad line built near New Vienna, even when the community was so divided about whether they wanted one. And then when all the brouhaha died down, the railroad there lasted only a year.

When Johnnie talked with me later and told me all about the trip he said, "It seems like nobody is satisfied with what they've got – they all keep looking for something different and just keeping moving around. People from Wisconsin are moving to Texas, people from Iowa are moving to Wisconsin. It's just one big old musical chairs, it is." I didn't think that was so bad, as long as we got our own farm. Johnnie told me he saw in the Harper house some really pretty quilts that Mrs. Harper had sold to his father, even though she got almost nothing for them. Johnnie also told me that he was very excited about the telephone service we would have on the farm. Tom had already hooked up the exchange to Lancaster, so we could talk to our families in Iowa and even South Dakota, and Tom said that for a little more money each month we could hook up to the exchange from New Glarus for our dairy business, like some of his neighbors were doing. As we have seen, a telephone exchange that became important for Johnnie and me in Wisconsin was the Brodhead Telephone Company exchange because it was this telephone exchange that would connect us to the important cheese center New Glarus. New Glarus controlled much of the cheese and canned milk industry in southwestern Wisconsin at that time, and the milk we produced on our farm was ultimately sent to New Glarus. Johnnie was also excited about the possibility of having electricity on the farm. Tom had already installed some of the poles that would carry the electrical wires from the road to his house and barn, but he had not gotten his neighbors to cooperate with putting up poles along the road for the two miles from the Fairgrounds to the farm. Because of the importance of the Fairgrounds, the village had extended electricity out that far, two miles, but people who wanted to have electricity beyond that would have to install their own poles. Johnnie knew that some of the Crubel friends from Petersburg and New Vienna were considering relocating to Bloomington, and he was quite sure that he could talk them into sharing the cost of putting up those poles.

Then the Crubels and Harpers talked about the details of possession. Tom and Clara would prefer to move in April, they said, maybe around the middle of the month. They needed to close the sale on the farm they were buying in Justice Precinct 4 in Haley, Texas, and they expected to be able to do that by

the middle of March. They would continue to take care of the farm and the animals here until they moved, and they had a good neighbor who could continue to do that after they were gone, if Mr. Crubel would be willing to pay him a fair wage. Mr. Crubel said that suited him fine because it would give him time to prepare. Mr. Harper and Mr. Crubel shook hands, and Tom extended an invitation to the Crubels to visit any time they were down Texas way.

With everything to his satisfaction about the whole enterprise, Mr. Crubel suggested they stay an extra night in Bloomington. He wanted to spend more time in the creamery and talk with some more farmers; he wanted to see the Catholic Church; and he wanted to see the place where ice was cut each winter. Johnnie wanted to see the electrical generating plant and talk to some people about the Ford automobile, people like Fred Welsh, Mr. Brown and Mr. Garthwaite. He also wanted to check out the library so he could tell me about that. Henry wanted to go back to Orrie's place and talk about elephants (and maybe find some more pictures of girls, but he didn't say that out loud.) They started in town with a visit to the creamery and a visit to see the electrical plant, where Fred Welsh caught up with them because Mr. Donnelly had told him they were interested in information about the Ford automobile. He invited them to coffee and cake at the Hotel, where they spent almost an hour with Mr. Welsh. He convinced them of the safety and reliability of the Ford and told them that Bloomington would now have its own parts and repair service with Mr. Brown and Mr. Garthwaite. Then he showed them the prices of the various automobiles on the market. By the time they all left the hotel to look at Mr. Welsh's Ford Model T out front, Johnnie knew he would buy a Ford from Mr. Welsh, and he planned to convince his father and my father to do the same.

Cutting ice on Bloomington Creek below quarry bridge

The day was wearing on, so after a quick look inside the library, where the librarian gave Johnnie a small printed brochure about the library to bring home to me, they hitched up the buggy again and went out to the Bloomington Creek by the quarry to see where ice was cut each year. Mr. Crubel was inordinately proud of the pure water they had in Petersburg and New Vienna, and he kept talking about how important pure water was. They were satisfied that the water in the creek would be pure. Here is an excellent article in *encyclopediadubuque.org* about ice harvesting as it was done on the Mississippi River.

ICE HARVESTING. As a rule, ice-cutting in the United States took place in January through the early part of March. When ice was thick enough for operations to begin it was scraped, if covered with snow, and, if rough and wavy on the surface, it was sometimes planed. When the snow had been cleared, the field was "prospected" for the best point to begin cutting. Holes were bored and a measuring rod was inserted to test the thickness. The rod was marked in inches and the lower end was turned off at a right angle to hook on to the bottom of the ice. It paid to cut the thickest ice even

if a smaller quantity of it was gathered. The preference was given to that part of the field above the ice-house, if on a river, in order to gain the help of the stream in floating the detached ice down to the house. The further away from the house the cutting took place the more the time, labor, and money was required to harvest the crop, especially as the channels for floating the cakes to the house were always likely to freeze up overnight. Late in the season, ice harvesting continued into the night with light given by torches and bonfires. In these photos we see the process: 1) Horses drawing ice saws cut a groove 11 inches deep in the ice. 2) Large sections of ice were cut by hand. 3) Panels of ice called "floats" were separated from the remaining mass. 4) These "floats" were guided down a channel cut in the ice to a mechanical chute extending from the company's large ice house to the river.

All along the channel were men with pike poles to keep the "floats" moving towards the chute. At the river end of the chute, which was 150 feet long, men used steel bars called "spuds" to break the "floats" into individual cakes each 22 by 28 inches. A water wheel at the end of the chute caught each cake and sent it up the chute to the ice house. Naturally cold work, the harvest continued unless the temperature fell to well below zero. In February 1914, for example, the harvest had to be halted for a blizzard and cold weather. The channel from

which ice was harvested froze each night and it took from three to five hours to reopen it. As many as three hundred men were involved.

The ice house was divided into five compartments. Men with pike poles were stationed at each compartment opening to divert the ice cakes from the conveyor into the compartments. Inside each compartment were twelve men who moved the cakes into orderly rows with all space used. All ice cakes which appeared defective were pushed off the conveyor to the ground. The ice was packed in sawdust which insulated it and helped prevent melting. Delivery was made to homes and businesses displaying an "ice today" card in the window. In August 1874, 300 tons of ice was sold to merchants in St. Louis.

The article goes on to talk about transportation problems, wild fluctuations in the price of ice, the serious shortage of ice when ice boxes became prevalent for cold storage in businesses and homes, and, of most concern to many people, the safety of this ice for use by humans. Despite health inspections, the safety of human consumption of ice from the Mississippi River was repeatedly questioned. In 1895 ice from a particular slough was condemned, In 1897 several ice dealers were notified they could cut ice only from the main channel of the Mississippi and if they failed to act on the order their ice would be condemned for domestic use. In 1903, 200 deaths from typhoid fever were linked to consumption of contaminated ice. Nevertheless, ice cutting was big business.

In January of 1885 Cushing and Fischer had 250 men and 40 teams involved in cutting ice at Zollcoffer's Lake. The firm already had 5,000 tons of ice sixteen inches thick being stored. An estimated 150 men and 40 teams were involved in filling the ice houses at the foot of Third Street. Workers were also involved in filling 300 railroad cars with ice for destinations between Dubuque and Cairo, Illinois. An order of 1,000 tons was to be shipped to Jackson, Mississippi and an equal amount to Cairo, Illinois. The company estimated that at the finish of the ice harvest an estimated 25,000 tons of ice would be placed in storage.

Wages paid were an important source of income in Dubuque. Teams were paid $3.00 daily with laborers earning from $1.25 to $1.50. In 1885 the second largest ice harvesting firm was Pier and Ackerman. They had 30 teams and 150 men cutting ice on Lake Peosta and three large ice houses at the foot of 14th Street. Each storage facility could hold 5,000 tons. Pier and Ackerman also had the contract for filling three ice houses belonging to the Heeb and Glab breweries.

Ice harvesting provided seasonal employment for many people of Dubuque. In 1914, as an example, it was estimated that the harvest would mean that 600 men or all the surplus workers in Dubuque could find employment with the big three packers. Three of the leading packers in 1916 were Thomas James Mulgrew, Conlin and Kearns, and the Fischer Ice Company. All ice concerns were each employing crews of between 75-125 men.

Many companies were involved in harvesting ice and each maintained their own "territory" on the river within a decision of the Iowa Supreme Court. In 1901 the Court ruled that individuals or businesses could not stake the banks of a stream prior to it being frozen and ready for cutting. For example, the Dubuque Brewing and Malting Company established their territory in "Hooper's Cut." The Dubuque Star Brewing Company cut the ice from the river directly in front of their business. Christopher Capritz operated his own icehouse and cut ice from the river below the Eagle Point Bridge. The Milwaukee Railroad Shops operated a field on the river and inlets near their business. Mulgrew had a field below the Dubuque High Bridge from which they expected to take 30,000 tons of ice in 1910. The Fischer Ice Company operated in an area opposite their icehouse just above Third Street. In 1906 an alleged ice trust made a major news item in the local newspaper.

In 1924 the ice harvest continued as a local business although ice-making machines were becoming increasingly common. In 1851, John Gorrie was awarded US Patent 8080 for an ice machine. In 1853, Alexander Twining was awarded US Patent 10221 for an ice maker. In 1867, Andrew Muhl built an ice-making machine in San Antonio, Texas, to help service the expanding beef industry before moving it to Waco in 1871. In 1873, the patent for this machine was contracted by the Columbus Iron Works, which produced the world's first commercial ice-makers.

In 1924 it was estimated that over one million cakes of ice (one foot long, one foot wide, and fifteen inches thick) would be removed from the river. The thickness of the ice varied. In 1936 reports showed the ice had reached a thickness of 24 inches. Local consumption accounted for two-thirds of the ice sold, while the rest was shipped to points within 150 miles or used in railroad refrigeration.

Just prior to World War I large scale ice harvesting began to diminish with electricity making modern refrigerators more common. In 1941 Conlin and Kearns employed a crew of only fifty. Mulgrew and Company fielded a crew of sixty which was expected to complete their work in four days.

On their return to town, they stopped by the livery stable so that Johnnie and Henry could see Earl King and the state-of-the-art livery. Henry was intrigued by the fact that horses like trotters were used for nothing but racing. Joe Greer, shown here on his horse, came in while they were there and told them that Bloomington had been into horse racing since 1873. It was a thriving enterprise here and was important to the Fairgrounds and the community. By the time they returned to the hotel it was dusk, and Henry sped off to Orrie's Drugstore while Mr. Crubel and Johnnie

talked with some of the men who had congregated at the hotel for a cup of coffee before going home. Both Mr. Crubel and Johnnie were satisfied with what they heard, although Mr. Crubel privately suspected a few of the farmers had exaggerated their skills and their production quotas. He kept his counsel. Johnnie was already thinking about the farm as his and was planning the improvements he would make on the farm. He also thought about the words he might use to convince his father that he could handle his own farm. At supper that night Mr. Crubel informed them that they would travel straight through to Petersburg on the following day, stopping only to rest the horses. The meal then lost a little of its shine for Johnnie and Henry, who had enjoyed their brief taste of "living well." But Johnnie was soon dreaming and planning again, and Henry was thinking about the things he would show to his friends back home and the stories he would tell them.

The weather the next morning was fortunately friendly to the travelers, cold but without snow or undue wind. Their horses and buggy were brought round as requested, and by daybreak the travelers were on the road to Glen Haven with fresh oats for the horses and food and hot coffee for the humans. Mr. Crubel generally preferred silence, so for the 13 miles to Glen Haven there was little sound except for the clip-clopping of the horses' hooves or an occasional snort or jangle of the harness. Birdsong could be heard, off in the trees, and the ducks and geese called to each other. When the travelers eventually stopped at a small inn, they sent the horses to the livery for a good rub-down, feed, water, and an hour of rest while the men enjoyed a relaxed dinner in front of a pleasant fireplace. The innkeeper assured them that the ice was safe to walk across between Glen Haven and Gutenberg, even at noon. The walk across the ice went smoothly, and the roads from Gutenberg to Petersburg were clear and good. Shortly before they arrived home at dusk, Mr. Crubel told his sons he had decided on a plan. Mr. Crubel would buy the farm cash outright and in his name. He would send Johnnie and his sister Caroline (Lena) to Wisconsin on May 1. They would pay off the neighbor who had been taking care of the farm. They would clean and repair farm equipment or house furnishings as needed and start the spring plowing and planting. Catherine Plagge, the widow in her 50's who lived with the Crubels in Petersburg as a hired helper, would continue to help Josephine. Mr. Crubel had someone in mind for the hired man position, and if terms could be agreed upon, that man would start work on the Petersburg farm on March 1 so that Johnnie would have two months to work with him and train him in the farm management practices Mr. Crubel demanded. Johnnie would pay Mr. Crubel $650 a year rent for the farm in Bloomington, which would be deducted from the $20,000 cost of the farm whenever Johnnie could raise the balance owed. Then they would draw up legal papers making Johnnie the owner of the farm. As usual, there was no discussion once Mr. Crubel had come to a decision, but in this instance Johnnie was very well pleased and quietly jubilant, taking care not to show too much enthusiasm. He was amazed that he did not have to convince his father of anything, and that his father was so casually trusting him to run a farm on his own. At the time he did not know that his father had privately spoken to a man he knew from New Vienna who had bought a farm in Bloomington, and had asked him to keep an eye on Johnnie. In the end, Johnnie told me, it didn't really matter. When the farmer stopped by occasionally during that summer and fall, Johnnie was actually glad to see him; and Johnnie did learn a lot about local farming and local politics from him.

He could hardly wait to tell me everything and begin to make plans for our future, he said. When he told me his news, I was not so restrained as he was, and after I had leaped into his arms and hugged and kissed him, I danced around madly, laughing and whooping until my mother told me to behave myself. But it was all just too thrilling! I would now have a house of my own on a farm of our own, living with my handsome Johnnie, and I knew that Johnnie and I would be wildly successful. His 16-year-old sister Lena was not nearly so well pleased. She already had a beau in the neighbor boy Henry Goedken, and she tearfully tried to convince her father that she would even work extra hiring out if he would let her stay in Petersburg. But her father had his mind always on thrift and efficiency and had determined that Lena was to help Johnnie until Johnnie's marriage, which we had quickly set for November 22 as a double wedding with Joe and Lizzie. Johnnie was to pay the hiring out wage to Lena, who would then give that to her father. Lena had no choice and finally set about making the most of her remaining time with Henry Goedken. I told her repeatedly that she could talk to Henry on the phone every week, just as I was planning to do with Johnnie. She informed me haughtily that the Goedkens did not have a phone yet. Johnnie and I had already decided on a set time that he would call me every Sunday night. Privately I felt very grown-up and modern and sophisticated with this arrangement. Meanwhile, I now had a very good reason to apply myself to my hope chest contents, and there were just so many things to do while Johnnie was gone: write down recipes from my mother that I was not too sure about, make sure I knew exactly how long to pressure-cook canned vegetables and how much salt to put on top of the bacon for preserving, assemble a small first aid kit and make sure I knew what to do for simple maladies and for emergencies – oh my, it all started to seem daunting! I wished I had paid closer attention to all of that instead of always thinking about a book I was reading or dreaming about things. My mother and older sisters were very patient, and were pleased, I think, that I was finally getting serious about homemaking, and they assured me I could always call them for guidance if I needed to. I determined I would be the best homemaker ever, and the best wife anybody could be for my Johnnie.