

## CANAWLERS AT REST

### HORATIO J. HARRIS

Find-A-Grave # 77175141

**b. February 4, 1815**  
**d. September 25, 1859**

**By Carolyn I. Schmidt**

Horatio J. Harris was born of February 4, 1815 in Newark, Ohio to Dr. Noah Harris (1787-1832) and Margaret Peggy (Elliott) Harris (1790-1863). Dr. Harris was a prominent physician there. We don't know much about Horatio's early life or his family.

After graduating from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, Horatio moved to Indianapolis, Indiana and resided for a short time with Nicholas McCarty's family. Nicholas had moved to Newark after the death of his father and had become a good friend of Dr. Harris while living there. McCarty was employed in a dry goods business and eventually operated his own business. In 1823, at age 28, he headed for the new capital city of Indiana where he opened a new dry goods business and entered politics. He was a Fund Commissioner for the Wabash & Erie Canal.

While living in Indianapolis, and probably through the influence of Nicholas McCarty, Horatio was appointed assistant engineer on the Wabash & Erie Canal. He then went to work along the Wabash River near Delphi, Indiana and helped build the canal. He made the personal acquaintance with many young men along the line and, through their influence, at age 22 was selected to deliver the oration on July 4, 1837 celebrating the United States' anniversary. He was a small man and did not appear to be very intellectual, so the public was not expecting to hear much of a speech. The people of Delphi and the surrounding area were surprised to hear the finest address ever listened to in Carroll County at that time.

A few months later Horatio entered the law office of Messrs. White & Lockwood, attorney's-at-law in Lafayette, Indiana. There he began studying that profession. Apparently the study of law didn't take long for in June 1838 he returned to Delphi and began his law practice there.

In the winter of 1839 Horatio was elected the principal clerk of the Indiana House of Representatives. Then in 1840 he was nominated by the Democratic party to serve in the Indiana State Senate representing Carroll and Clinton counties. He was elected and served from 1840-1842. At the expiration of his term as senator, in the Winter of 1843-44, he was elected Auditor of the State at age 29.

After serving out his last term (1848-1847) as State Auditor, Horatio went to New York City for a few months and assisted the Agent of State in carrying the Butler Bill into operation. This bill transferred the ownership of the Wabash & Erie Canal from the State of Indiana to private investors and provided for the completion of the canal to Evansville, Indiana. It located the headquarters of the canal at Terre Haute, Indiana and established a three-man administrative board with Charles Butler and Thomas H. Blake elected by the bondholders and Nathan Palmer appointed by the governor. After the death of Blake in November 1849, he was replaced by Thomas Dowling. For more about the Butler Bill see the October 2012 issue of *The Hoosier Packet*, vol. 11. no. 10.

In 1847 Horatio, age 32, married Martha Louise Quarles Davis, age 21. She was the daughter of Judge John Tunstall Quarles of Russellville, Kentucky. Her father was an old friend of Joseph E. Davis of Mississippi, the brother of Jefferson Davis, who became President of the Southern Confederacy. Her parents and grandfather died, leaving her an orphan under the care of her widowed grandmother Martha Brooks Wallace. While Mrs. Wallace and Martha Louise were on a visit to Hurricane, the home of Joseph Davis, Mrs. Wallace became ill and died. Joseph's family accepted the young girl as a family member and she became "a cherished and beloved daughter." She was educated in Kentucky.

Horatio, with his new bride Martha Louise, moved to Jackson, Mississippi and remained there about two years. They had three children, Jefferson Harris, born in Jackson about 1847 and died young; Eliza Harris, born January 28, 1850 at Vicksburg, Mississippi, married Charles M. Flanagan, a prominent merchant of St. Louis, Missouri on January 2, 1872, and had six children - Charles M Flanagan, Columbia Carroll Flanagan, Horatio T. Flanagan, Lucy Flana-

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gan, Harold Flanagan, and Nellie Flanagan; and Margaret Harris, who married Honore P. Jackson, grandson of Honore Perigny Morancy, and lived in New Orleans, Louisiana.

In 1849 Horatio and his family moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi. Although he was a Democrat, he was able, through the influence of Jefferson Davis, who was a son-in-law of General Zachary Taylor, to have Taylor appoint him District Attorney for Mississippi. He was commissioned as an United States District Attorney of Mississippi for the southern district on August 10, 1850, re-commissioned on August 4, 1854, and again on March 7, 1859. He held this position until his health caused him to resign. He was proceeded in it by Richard M. Gaines, July 9, 1840 and followed by Carnot Posey on November 4, 1859.

Horatio became an intimate friend of both Joseph and Jefferson Davis. He served as Joseph Davis' attorney, business agent and political confidant.

He wrote letters to Jefferson Davis. In the one from Vicksburg on April 17, 1851 he expressed his views on the "Southern question" saying that he thought there would always be a war against slavery, that they were a defeated party and that they were in no place to make demands. He said, "We must wait, keeping our souls in patience, which, we are told, bringeth forth experience and in experience, hope...I believe the Southern people will awake and unite, not to preserve the constitution, or the union, but to organize a government for themselves." He told Jefferson Davis not to take a stand on the issues presented by John Quitman,

Governor of Mississippi, for disunion and to refuse to recommend Quitman's policy as worthy of public approval. Horatio advised Davis to bide his time and maintain his integrity but be ready to take over when the time was right to defend the South. He warned him to be sure his sources of information were accurate before taking any kind of action. His letter is extremely interesting to read and shows his insight into what happened ten years later. This letter may be found online at Google Books under Horatio J. Harris, Mississippi and scroll down to *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*.

A group of Cuban revolutionaries led by Narcisco Lopez intended to forcibly liberate Cuba from Spanish rule. In 1849, López visited Jefferson Davis, then a U.S. Senator from Mississippi, and asked him to lead his "filibuster" (irregular soldiers who act without authority from their own government and are generally motivated by financial, political ideology or an thrill of adventure) expedition to Cuba. He offered an immediate payment of \$100,000, plus the same amount when Cuba was liberated. Davis turned down the offer, stating that it was inconsistent with his duty as a senator. When asked to recommend someone else, Davis suggested Robert E. Lee, then an army major in Baltimore. López approached Lee, who also declined.

In 1850 Quitman supported the plan to take a filibuster to capture Cuba and make it another slave state to offset the growing power of the northern states. President Franklin Pierce opposed this idea. Then in June 1854 Horatio J. Harris "intimated to one of Quitman's correspondents that he had received instructions about the president's deter-

<b>Horatio J. Harris' Family</b>						
<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Death</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Marriage</u>	<u>Place</u>
Dr. Noah Harris	3-12-1757	Licking Co, OH	1-13-1832	Newark, OH	8-11-1811	Licking Co OH
m. Margaret Peggy Elliot	1-21-1790	Allegany	8-16-1863	Newark, OH	8-11-1811	Licking Co OH
James E. Harris	3-16-1811	Licking Co, OH	7-02-1818	Newark, OH		
Orlando Harris	8-28-1811	Licking Co, OH	8-21-1827	Newark, OH		
<b>Horatio J. Harris</b>	2-04-1815	Licking Co, OH	9-25-1859	Newark, OH		
m. Martha Louise Quarles Davis						
Jefferson Harris	@ 1847	Jackson, MS				
Eliza Harris	1-28-1850	Vicksburg, MS			1-02-1872	
m. Charles Matthias Flanagan					1-02-1872	
Charles M. Flanagan						
Columbia Carroll Flanagan						
Horatio T. Flanagan						
Lucy Flanagan						
Harold Flanagan						
Nellie Flanagan						
Margaret Harris	@1857	Mississippi				
m. Honore P. Jackson						
Jemmings Harris	3-30-1817	Licking Co, OH	10-08-1818	Newark, OH		

mination to prevent any filibuster against Cuba.” At that time Pierce was secretly trying to annex Cuba diplomatically by purchasing it from Spain for \$120 million. But the whole plan failed when a newspaper gained intelligence of it.

Horatio was also a contributor to the Democratic press. He wrote political letters expressing his opinions.

Horatio and his wife left Mississippi and went to visit Margaret Elliot, who we assume was his cousin, in Pataskala, Ohio in 1859 near where he was born. He was ill and passed away on September 25, 1859.

Although no obituary was found for Horatio, a letter from Margaret Elliott to her brother Alexander C. Elliott, tells of his death and relates lots of information about the health and whereabouts of family members. She writes from Pataskala, Ohio, which is between Columbus and Newark in Licking County.

“Pataskala, Oct 8<sup>th</sup>, 1859

“Dear Brother:

“It has been a long time since we heard from you; many changes have taken place since. Our friends here are fast passing the day of all the earth.

“**Horatio Harris** came home on a visit. His health was very poor when he came, but he declined very rapidly afterwards. This climate was so different from Mississippi that he failed so fast that he was unable to return. He lived about two months, - he died two weeks to-day professing the Catholic faith. The funeral service was conducted by the Catholic Priest at the church. His wife overpersuaded [sic] on his death-bed. And Peggy felt very badly about it, - her health is very poor. You need not be surprised at any time to hear of her death.

“Aunt Sarah visited Uncle Cornelius this fall. Uncle Samuel died last spring of typhoid fever, and his wife this fall.

“Stephen Williams lost his oldest daughter about two weeks ago. She was about ten years old. She suffered long and much; her suffering beggars description. Her disease was typhoid fever. Two weeks before she died, her face commenced to mortify, and when she died her face was all decayed. Oh, she was the most shocking sight anyone ever witnessed. I was there a great deal of my time, - her parents could not take care of her. Abbie was a dear little girl, - a great favorite of mine. It is not often a parent is glad to see a child die, but they had to come to that. They could not help but feel a relief when her suffering was over. Catherine Dinsmore has been at the Williams this summer.

She requested when I wrote you to say for her that she wished you much success in the great and good cause.

“Robert’s family are well. Jane works on at the same old rate. Kate thinks herself quite a young lady. She thinks too that she knows it all a good deal like Frank. Sammy is a good little boy, and as are the others. Little Robert is the youngest, - he is about four years old, and very bright. Katy is still living, and as great a boss as ever. Frank is clerking in a dry goods store in Pataskala, which sets him up very much in his own estimation.

“Mary Ann, after John died, commenced keeping boarders, and continued to do so until this fall, but times are so hard this fall that she could not keep even, - so she has rented part of her house, and takes in work. George Shurtz’s wife is dead. Jeannette keeps house. Mary Ann does their washing and all the work she can get, and then gets along poor enough. John is old enough to maintain her, but is very indolent, - does nothing scarcely. He has partly learned the carpenter trade, but is so indolent that everyone gets tired of him. Mary Jane was married to William Switzer last spring. She was here a year with Samuel. Reuben is coming here to live next week. Sammy is a very bright child, but will need very good training. Mary Ann lacks government. She cannot govern herself. I feel very sorry for her. Samuel helped her a little, and I do when I teach, but my health was so poor last winter that I did not teach this summer. I taught last winter on Billy Wilburn’s district. I met a great many there that knew you. Augustus Stewart sent to school to me. One third of my scholars were Vanattas, - it was a pretty rough place, but they were very clever to me. I was sick there and shall never forget their kindness. Miss Barrick taught there this summer, - Margaret’s cousin I believe.

“Aunt Sarah’s family are well. Theophilus Little farms her farm, or by the way, keeps dairy, - sells milk in town. William is in Kansas. Waldo is in Cannonsburg, Pa., attending school Margaret is at her \_\_\_ Buel’s in Lexington, KY, visiting.

“I believe I have written all that will interest you. Samuel wants you to write to him, and I want you to answer this as soon as you possibly can. Don’t wait a year, - I may not be here a month. I think some of teaching this winter.

“I want to know all about the children, - what their names are, - for I only remember George. I suppose he is large enough to go to school, and the next one too perhaps. I would like to see you and very much indeed, but I am too poor, and am afraid never will be able to come. I thought certain I should come when \_\_\_ Fleek went home. Give my very best love to Margaret and children. I wish you God speed in the good work. I want you to write all about

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your family, and what success you have had, for I feel very much interested. I hope the Lord may prosper you and yours. You have my best wish, which is all with my prayers in your behalf I can give.

“Your affectionate sister,  
“Margaret Elliott  
“I wish Margaret to write me too.”

Following the Catholic funeral service for Horatio, he was laid to rest in Plot:Section 6 of Cedar Hill Cemetery, Newark, Licking County, Ohio. He was only 44 years of age but had lived life to the fullest. In *Our Pioneers* it says, “He was a young man of much promise, and would, undoubtedly, have reached higher positions and greater distinction had his life and health been preserved.”

After Hora-



### HARRIS MONUMENT

### SECTION 6 CEDAR HILL CEMETERY

### NEWARK OHIO

#### Horatio J.

Born Feb 4, 1815  
Died Sep 25, 1859

#### Orlando

Born Aug 28, 1812  
Died Aug 21, 1827

#### James E.

Born Mar 16, 1811  
Died Jul 2, 1818

#### Jemmings

Born Mar 20, 1817  
Died Oct 8, 1818

### Children of Dr. Noah & M.E. Harris

Photo courtesy of  
Nancy Ann Buckanan

tio’s death, Mary Louise, his wife, became an invalid and suffered greatly. In his will, Joseph Davis bequeathed his “adopted daughter” \$1,000. Many people assumed that she was Joseph’s niece or near relation.

Mary Louise Quarles Davis Harris died on May 25, 1889, 30 years after her husband. She had requested to be buried “beside her loved ones resting“ at Hurricane. Following her funeral at St. Paul’s Catholic Church in Vicksburg, her remains were accompanied down the river by friends and relatives aboard the steamer *Goldman* to Davis Island and there she was laid to rest.

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