

**Josiah Hopkins:
Polk County Abolitionist**

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The success of the Underground Railroad hinged on secrecy, and the punishments threatened under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 ensured that operatives on the Network to Freedom remained nameless to all but their beneficiaries and to each other. The movement of human contraband had to be well-coordinated, conducted quickly and invisibly in order to elude authorities. Typically, no incriminating records or accounts were kept. Those who were sympathetic to the plight of the slaves – but otherwise remained uninvolved, were likely to turn a blind eye to their neighbor’s known or suspected clandestine activities in order to avoid accusations of complicity. Once emancipation had been proclaimed and the Civil War concluded, there really was no need or much incentive for ‘conductors’ to document their illegal activities. Indeed, there was probably more to lose than to be gained considering the hostilities that lingered through the years of Reconstruction.

For these reasons, it is difficult now to reconstruct larger regional or statewide accounts of Underground Railroad activities in Iowa. There is no question that Iowa, a free state on the expanding western frontier, played an important, though frequently unrecognized role in the Underground Railroad story. Until recently this story has survived as a disjointed jumble of isolated anecdotal accounts reported in local histories or newspapers published decades after the fact. Most cannot be substantiated through reliable contemporary documentary sources. Still, through these bits and pieces, many of the otherwise unknown players fade into view for a short time before fading back into obscurity.

Other figures stand apart because of their position within the community, the force of their religious and political convictions, and the zeal to which they dedicated themselves to the cause. They were recognized as abolitionists during their lifetimes and - loved or hated - wore the label proudly, publicly speaking out against slavery and advocating for the preservation of the Union despite rigorous, sometimes threatening opposition. Among them was Josiah Hopkins, a pioneer settler of Polk County and lay minister for the Fort Des Moines Conference of the United Brethren Church. Patriarch of a deeply religious family, Hopkins was not afraid to speak out for what he believed in despite possible consequences. Moreover, he was a man of action, who practiced what he preached. Because of this, his name found its way into the public record more often than other of his comrades, who preferred to maintain a low profile. From these fragments, a fairly comprehensive and credible account of Hopkins’ life, beliefs, and activities can be constructed.

Josiah Hopkins was born in Pickaway County, Ohio in the year 1813^[1]. His father, William Hopkins, was a Delaware native born on or around 7 December 1781^[2]. William's parentage is uncertain. However, it is believed that his father may have been one of three men (William, Robert, and George) named in the 1785 tax roles for Dagsborough Hundred^[3], Sussex County, Delaware. Josiah's mother, Elizabeth Hornback, was born around the year 1790^[4] and was a native of Kentucky. Her parents were John Hornback, born December 1760 in Virginia, and Elizabeth Phebus, born 17 December 1768 in Kentucky^[5]. They were married in Bourbon County, Kentucky on 30 November 1791^[6].

The Hornback and Hopkins families are both represented in the Bourbon County, Kentucky records in the late 18th century. A William Hopkins owned 120 acres of land in Bourbon County in 1793 and later moved to Ohio with his children William and Hannah Hopkins^[7]. No record has been found to establish that the younger William Hopkins mentioned by this source later became the husband of Elizabeth Hornback although the coincidences of place and time are noteworthy.

William Hopkins and Elizabeth Hornback were married in Ross County, Ohio on 28 January 1807^[8]. In addition to Josiah, they had the following children: Ruth^[9], William^[10], Adolphus^[11], George H.B.^[12], and Robert^[13]. Family history researchers suspect the existence of other siblings, but none have yet been confirmed through reliable documentary sources^[14]. William Hopkins appears in the 1810 Tax List for Pickaway County along with George, Isaac, John and Simon Hornback and then again in the 1812 Tax rolls for Pickaway County^[15]. William is listed as a private in Captain David Shelby's Mounted Company of the Ohio Militia, which is believed to have been formed in Ross County and actively served in the War of 1812 from September 4 until October 14, 1812^[16].

William Hopkins is listed as the head of the household in the 1820 Logan County census returns along with three free white males under the ages of 10 (presumably Josiah, William, and Adolphus), one white male between the ages of 10 and 16 (unknown)^[17], one free white male between the ages of 26 and 45 (William), one free white female under the age of 10 (presumably Ruth), and one free white female between the ages of 26 and 45 (Elizabeth). The census returns indicate that two persons within the household were engaged in agriculture. William, Elizabeth, and Josiah Hopkins are all named as members of the Christian Church at Bethel in 1814^[18] and in February of 1821, William Hopkins and David Norton were elected Justices of the Peace for Logan County at Zanesville^[19].

William and Elizabeth Hopkins remained in Ohio until the fall of 1829 when they moved their family west to Carroll County, Indiana near the Tippecanoe River two and a half miles from Pittsburg^[20]. William Hopkins, Samuel Williams, and George Hornback were appointed trustees of the school in section 16, T25N R3E, Carroll County during the February session 1831^[21]. On 8 June 1833, a land patent certificate was issued to William Hopkins for the purchase of 40 acres in Carroll County^[22].

The following year, 21-year-old Josiah Hopkins purchased a 40 acre parcel in Carroll County and then doubled his landholdings in that county with a purchase in 1837^[23]. It was probably around this time that the Hopkins family became allied with the Pierce and Eslick families, also native Kentuckians with strong abolitionist sentiments who had moved to Indiana in 1822. The Hopkins, Pierce, and Eslick families along with the Hornback, Davis, Edwards, Alcorn, Jenkins, and Cox families and others, formed a frontier colony whose members shared similar political and religious views, frequently intermarried, and migrated together from place to place^[24].

Josiah married Mahala Phebus^[25] sometime prior to the 1840 census, which lists him as the head of the household along with one male and one female under the ages of five and one female between the ages of 20 and 30 years^[26]. Mahala and Josiah had eight children according to their son, Silas' biographical sketch^[27].

The Hopkins family moved from Indiana to Missouri in 1840. An account of their move in George Hopkins' biographical sketch states that his father William first settled in Jasper County^[28] in the southwest corner of the state for a short time and then moved east to Taney County, in the Ozark country where he purchased a mill^[29]. Presumably Josiah and his married siblings kept households in close proximity to their parents.

Unfortunately, many of the early records for Taney County have been destroyed over the years so little information survives regarding the Hopkins family's nine-year stay in southern Missouri. One exception is the record of a marriage between Elzy Sheriden and Margaret Chapman solemnized by Josiah Hopkins in Jasper County on 19 January 1845, which demonstrates that Josiah was a practicing clergyman while in Missouri^[30]. On 3 April 1848, Josiah filed a land claim at the General Land Office in Springfield for 40 acres in the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of section 15, T24-R20^[31].

In the late 1840s^[32], Josiah along with his younger brother George and four other companions left Carthage, Missouri on a reconnaissance expedition into Iowa. On the way they passed through Fort Scott in Bourbon County, the unsettled lands of Linn and Miami Counties in eastern Kansas, and then crossed the Missouri River at the newly established settlement of Kansas City. From there they traveled north through Platte City, Missouri along the river to Council Bluffs where they turned east to Fort Des Moines, arriving in time to see the construction of the first frame house^[33].

Of Josiah's return to Missouri, Lydia Eslick-Guthrie's family history states "We are told that he came back to Missouri and pictured the new country of Iowa in such glowing colors that a little band of these friends and relatives decided to leave their pleasant Ozark homes and venture into Iowa." It goes on to say that upon their arrival, Josiah and his brother Dolph (Adolphus) were so impressed with the new country that they wrote to their relatives in the Ozark country describing 'a great body of fertile government land lying north of Fort Des Moines that could be bought for \$1.25 an acre^[34].' The increasing settlement of pro-slavery landholders in the Ozark Region, the growing competition between free and slave labor and the resulting ideological and economic antagonism, along with a desire to acquire good land cheap in a free state were all sufficient motives

for members of fourteen families to migrate from southern Missouri into Polk County in May of 1849^[35].

The north-bound caravan was slowed by wet weather and swollen rivers. Upon reaching Warrensburg, Missouri near the Iowa border it laid over for two weeks before proceeding to Fort Des Moines where high waters had closed the ferry for several days. From Des Moines, they traveled north to the Big Creek settlement near Polk City where many staked claims around Hopkins and Pierce Groves just south of the Boone-Polk County line. In the spring of 1850, a detachment including the families of William Pierce and Dorus Eslick continued north to the northern-most settlement along the Des Moines River at Boone Forks in Webster County^[36].

One of the earliest land entries for Madison Township in Polk County was made to Adolphus Hopkins on March 20, 1849 for 160 acres in section 21^[37]. Josiah made claims of 40 acres in section 6 on April 15, 1853^[38]; 86.99 acres in section 6^[39] and 40 acres in section 18^[40] on September 10, 1853; 40 acres in section 20 on September 15, 1854^[41]; and 160 acres in section 21 on June 21, 1860^[42]. Once settled, brothers Adolphus and William opened a mercantile enterprise in Polk City^[43] and ran it until the former's death in 1859^[44]. Robert, their younger brother, worked for them as a teamster, hauling freight from their suppliers in Keokuk^[45]. He is also credited with assisting in the construction of the Fort Dodge Block house in 1850^[46]. Besides his agricultural pursuits, Josiah owned and operated an inn along the old stage road (Highway 415) between Des Moines and northern Boone County^[47] that was widely known as the 'Twenty-Mile House' so named because of its distance from Fort Des Moines^[48]. Their parents, William and Elizabeth aged 68 and 60, appear in the 1850 Iowa Census in Josiah's household and are listed without occupation.

Josiah Hopkins was a natural leader and occupied positions of responsibility within the community. He held a seat on the Polk County Board of Commissioners from 1850 to 1851^[49] and was appointed post-master at Hopkins Grove in 1851^[50]. He was also involved in a "Claims Club", an association of men allied to protect settlers on public land against claim jumpers and land speculators. Goldthwait's *History of Boone County* relates an account of an incident that occurred in 1853, in which Hopkins and another club member conspired to delay a claim jumper at the 'Twenty Mile House' long enough for a legal claim to be filed at the Fort Des Moines Land Office on behalf of the staked occupant^[51]. Goldthwait also names Josiah Hopkins among the leading citizens of the territory who met in January of 1857 to devise a plan to form a new county that would be composed of the following townships: Lincoln and Madison in Polk County; Palestine in Story County; Cass, Douglas and Garden in Boone County; and, Des Moines in Dallas County with Madrid designated as the county seat. George Hornback, believed to be a maternal uncle or cousin of Josiah, was appointed delegate and was commissioned to present the proposal to the legislature in Iowa City. However, inclement weather and difficult travel prevented him from arriving before the session had adjourned and their opportunity was missed^[52].

According to his son's biographical sketch, Josiah received an education at the University of Ohio^[53]. Attempts to locate Josiah in university records have met with little success, so

it is not known if he pursued or received a formal degree or title from that institution upon leaving. Documents associated with his military service and involvement in church government show that he was a literate man given to reasoned oratory. It must be assumed that some if not all of his education was in preparation for his vocation as a circuit preacher.

Other than being an ordained elder in the Methodist Church^[54], little is known of his ministry prior to reaching Iowa. However, once in Iowa he gained a reputation as a spiritual *tour de force* among the frontier communities of central Iowa that were on his circuit. He received his license to preach under the United Brethren discipline at the third Quarterly Conference of the Fort Des Moines Mission held at the Hopkins Grove School house on May 17, 1851^[55] and remained an active participant in the conference meetings and circuit administration until 1860.

Tent meetings held on Hopkins property in Hopkins Grove were an annual occurrence and well attended with Josiah on the bill as a featured speaker. James Adams, a friend and later apologist of Hopkins, provides a vivid account of Hopkins' passionate sermon at a tent meeting in the fall of 1853^[56]. Solemnizing wedding vows and tending to the needs of mourning parishioners were also among his functions as the community spiritual leader. The marriage records of Dallas County note that he performed the second marriage in the county between Hemley Barkurst and Mary Leming^[57]. He is also listed as a witness in the abstract of Charles Roe's will probated in Polk County, Iowa on May 19, 1863^[58] and he served as a guardian for his nieces and nephew in settling the estate of his brother Adolphus^[59].

By all accounts, he was highly respected within his congregation and community. Rev. Adams' reminiscences provide rare insight to Hopkins' moral and political character, which in every respect fits the stereotype of a 'fire-and-brimstone' abolitionist^[60]:

"I considered [him] the best and most useful preacher that the United Brethren ever had in this part of Iowa. He was a good revival preacher. I had a better chance in some respects, to know him than the United Brethren preachers as I belonged to a different church. I was a good deal with him at protracted meetings, political meetings at his house, and other places; and I always found him honest and upright in all his dealings. He was bold to take up and firm to sustain the consecrated and I loved him as a brother. He was an old time abolitionist—an uncompromising Anti-Slavery man."

His position in the community and church provided an ideal platform from which to express his views on morality and politics and to excite followers to his causes. Hopkins proposed the following resolutions at the Second Quarterly Conference of the Fort Des Moines Circuit at the Elliott Grove School House on December 24, 1853^[61].

"Resolved, that the system of American slavery is not only oppressive and cruel in its demand on the slave whom it holds in its grasp – but is as a sin against God and Humanity and has no warrant in the Bible – and should be shut out from all Christian societies... Josiah Hopkins.

And, resolved, that as the time has fully come for decisive action in this distinguished age of progress and improvement on all great moral questions, that we the members of the Des Moines Qr. Con. will not give our support to any man to any political or ecclesiastical officer in any law making department who will not use his utmost influence for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave law, and the prohibiting any more slave territory belonging to the United States... Josiah Hopkins.

Resolved, that we the members Qr. Con. of Des Moines circuit will not give our support to any man for any political or ecclesiastical office who will not give his influence and us all lawful measures to obtain the passage of a law prohibiting the making and vending ardent spirits in Iowa...Josiah Hopkins.”

According to an article in *The Perry Reporter*^[62], Hopkins’ Twenty Mile House served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. The *Madrid Centennial History* also mentions his involvement and that of Alexander and Elizabeth (Eslick) Pierce in conducting fugitive slaves to freedom^[63]. These reports strengthen Adams’ assessment of Hopkins. Since harboring and assisting runaways was illegal and the punishments for those caught were severe, details of these clandestine operations and those involved were not recorded, but survived largely in local memory, which occasionally found their way into human interest columns in local newspapers years afterward.

The proof of his involvement rests entirely with these anecdotal accounts, but when all of the other facts are considered, Josiah Hopkins was the perfect candidate for the job. First and foremost he was religiously, politically, and morally predisposed to assist fugitive slaves; he was educated and charismatic; he most probably formed strong alliances with other abolitionists in Ohio, Indiana, southwestern Missouri, and eastern Kansas; as a U.B. Minister, county official, postmaster, and innkeeper he was well-placed to receive up-to-date intelligence regarding the movement of human contraband through the area; and finally, he was in a position to exploit the logistical advantages offered by his brothers’ mercantile trade for conveying runaway slaves northward under the cover of legitimate business dealings.

Outstanding promissory notes itemized in Adolphus’ probate demonstrate that the Hopkins Brothers had business dealings with William McGavic of McGavic & Chittenden & Co., in Keokuk, who is also reputed to have been a conductor on the underground railroad^[64]. So, Josiah’s younger brother Robert may have carted more than just goods and stores along the Des Moines River between Keokuk and Polk City.

The eastern Kansas farm of Josiah’s brother George may have provided a southern trailhead for an escape route that passed through western Iowa on its way north and east to stops in Fort Des Moines. According to his biographical sketch^[65], George sold his Polk County farm in 1851 and started a mercantile business in Polk City. In 1854, he sold out his business interest in Polk City and moved to Swede Point in Boone County where he built houses until 1857 when he sold his business and moved with one of his brother’s to Bourbon County^[66] in the heart of ‘Bleeding Kansas.’ George was not alone. Other Polk County settlers, with strong anti-slavery sentiments chose to move again as land sales and opportunities opened in Kansas^[67].

The antagonism that existed between pro-and anti-slavery elements in Polk County prior to the war appeared to exist largely on the ideological level and had not escalated to newsworthy acts of physical violence or threats. Nonetheless, tensions continued to grow. Even within the United Brethren fellowship conflicting moods had reached such a state by 1854 that a resolution had to be passed at the December 23 meeting of the Des Moines Conference directing ministers to hold class members accountable for not following the church discipline in the matters of slavery, secrecy, and temperance^[68].

Hopkins was among the first in Polk County to take up arms at the outbreak of the rebellion, recruiting like-minded men from the Polk City area to serve with him. Rev. James Adams recalls,

“He was as active perhaps as any other man in trying to raise men and means to put down the rebellion. He not only urged others to enlist but he enlisted himself in the 10th Iowa Regiment Inf., and was in one of the first battles fought by Gen. Grant on the Miss. River [*sic*]. There he proved himself a brave soldier as he did in every engagement that he was in^[69].

His volunteer enlistment papers were not found among the Iowa Adjutant General’s records. However, a resolution passed by the 4th Quarterly Conference of the United Brethren Church at Hopkins Grove - and indeed his absence from that meeting, suggests that he had enlisted sometime prior to July 6th^[70]. Company A was mustered into service with the rest of the regiment on September 6th. Hopkins received his commission as 2nd Lieutenant in Company A, 10th Regiment, Volunteer Infantry and signed his officer’s loyalty oath in Davenport, Scott County, on September 24, 1861^[71].

After serving only three months of active duty, Lieut. Hopkins wrote to Iowa Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood on January 27, 1862 seeking the Captaincy left vacant by Nathaniel McCalla, who was promoted to the rank of Major on January 25 following the resignation of John C. Bennett^[72]. The letter reads:

Jan. 27th /62

Des Moines

To his Excellency

Governor Kirkwood

Sir

I have information from the 10th Iowa Regt. This evening that Major Bennett has resigned his office, and if his resignation is received that Capt. McCalla of ~~my~~ Co. A will be recommended to the vacancy. He will make a good major doutess.

It then leaves his place as Capt. to be filled. I belong to the same Comp and shall ask your Honor to fill the place by promotion. Other applications will no doubt be mad but I shall clame this as a right for myself in the Company [*sic*].

Lt. J. Hopkins.

An obituary published in the *Iowa State Register*^[73] for Private Caswell Murry of Hopkins Grove contains a testimonial by Lieut. Hopkins indicating that he had not received the promotion as of February 1862. And a notice published in the April 18, 1862 edition of the *Davenport Gazette* reports Lieut. Hopkins’ departure from that city the day before with a group of new recruits for the 10th and 8th Regiments^[74], again no change in rank.

In fact, the promotion never came, at least while he served with the 10th. He resigned his commission on June 27, 1862 due to bad health. He returned to Polk County to recover and when sufficiently well he resumed his fight for the Unionist cause.

The nature of Hopkins infirmity is unknown. Brown reports the loss of several local boys from Company A to diseases such as measles, typhoid, and ‘chills’ at about this time. Silas Hopkins’ biographical sketch mentions that his father received ‘a slight wound’ but does not state how he was wounded or when it occurred^[75]. Lieut. Hopkins is listed

among several others in a newspaper advertisement as a reference to the Des Moines firm of Leas & Dickerson, who specialized in ‘bounty, back pay and pensions due relatives of deceased soldiers, and discharged invalid soldiers’^[76]. It is not known whether he himself had employed their services or had only assisted others through in the process using Lea & Dickerson.

President Lincoln’s *Emancipation Proclamation*, which went into effect on January 1, 1863, energized the antislavery element and propelled their cause forward. Abolitionists now positioned their attacks from the moral high ground held not only through Christian righteousness supported by scripture, but also through presidential decree. And because of his hard-cast beliefs that were more often than not followed up with effective action, Josiah Hopkins found himself at the center of controversy and threats.

James Adams recalls^[77],

“Of course the pro-slavery element had not much love for his politics. And when the slave holders undertook to break up the government because they could not carry slavery into territory, then free, he was among the first to advocate resistance with the sword to the slave power. This not only brought down on him the ire of the copper heads but of the non-resistants also.”

On January 19, 1863, meeting was held in Polk City on the subject of Lincoln’s *Emancipation Proclamation*^[78]. James Wilson presided over the meeting, at which ‘great enthusiasm prevailed’, with speeches delivered by local civic, church, and business leaders including Reverend Wilson, Major J.C. Bennett, S.B. Hanna, N.R. Kuntz, Rev. Josiah Hopkins, and Rev. William Filmore. A committee composed of Bennett, Kuntz, and Hanna prepared the following resolution:

“*Enacted.* That the Proclamation of Emancipation issued by President Lincoln on the 1st of January was a Military and governmental necessity: an act of Justice and Humanity; that the Chief Magistrate, in the exercise of [?] conferred upon him as Commander-in-Chief having issued the great Decree of Liberty which strikes a direct blow at the head and heart of Treason, we as loyal citizens tender him our grateful thanks and support, and in the language of the Proclamation, invoke for it the [?] Judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.”

The Unionist Movement that swept across the country in late 1862 and 1863 energized the Republican Party and pulled many of the pro-Union Democrats into the Republican fold. The primary objective of the League was “to discountenance and rebuke by moral and social influences all disloyalty to the Federal Government” and qualification for membership was based on the acceptance of one overarching requirement, that being “unqualified loyalty to the government of the United States, and unwavering support of its efforts for the suppression of the Rebellion”^[79]. The first organized Republican Union League meeting in Iowa was held at Oskaloosa on February 13, 1863. Judge Chester C. Cole, a former member of the Democratic Party, gave the keynote address which he repeated the following day at a meeting in Ottumwa^[80].

James Adams notes that Josiah Hopkins ‘went with General M.M. Crocker into the Union League’ but he does not provide specific details^[81]. However, a letter written by Lieutenant Hopkins to Adjutant General N.B. Baker on March 7th requesting instructions on the treatment of deserters he had apprehended employs strong Unionist language and

suggests that his affiliation was early. His commitment to the preservation of the Union, dedication to precepts set forth in the United States Constitution and law, and the extent to which he is willing to carry out his military duties are all plainly stated in this letter. It reads [*sic*]:

Genl. N.B. Baker

March 7th, 1863

Dear Sir.

Polk City, Iowa

In making arrests, of some deserters from the army in this vicinity, it has made some excitement, a few men that ought, to have more sence, have attempted opposition of the enforcement of the law, & orders to that affect, I wish you would give me some special instructions of this subject for I am determined to obey orders and instructions, & stand by my country whilst her flag can float; when that shall seace to be, - I shall seace to have an existence here, ---

I had on account of bad health to resign my position in the army, by having organized my health, I am now ~~ready~~ abel to do duty in any relation, my country may need me in, if it should be the unthankfull business of returning deserters.

Yours, for a free and full excersise of the Constitution & Laws of these United States
Josiah Hopkins, 2nd Lieut., Co. A. 10th Vol. Inf.

Unfortunately, the deserters are not named and there is no record of General Baker's instructions. However, word of hostilities against Hopkins appears soon after in the Wednesday, April 17, 1863 issue of *The Iowa State Register* which reports an incident that occurred in Boone County between Josiah Hopkins and Dr. Wilson of Swede Point during which a threat of violence was made^[82].

““Curious Isn't It?” If Dr. Wilson of Swede point was satisfied with his conduct toward Lieutenant Hopkins in the recent difficulty in Boone county, how was it that he sent a couple of friends over to the Lieutenant to patch up the matter by explanation and compromise? The Doctor got his foot in it, and became terribly scared. He displayed his Copperheadism to a perilous extent, and was frightened at his own acts. It is not true that he drew his pistol on the Lieutenant; but it is true, as we learn, that he made a motion to that effect, and was restrained by the same sort of impulse which overtook Bob Acres in the celebrated duel in which that individual participated as one of the principals.”

The dustup between Dr. Wilson and Hopkins occurred the same week that a Union meeting was held in Polk City where speeches were made by Major J.C. Bennett, Rev. William Filmer, Hopkins, and others; and Unionist resolutions were adopted. This, along with his arrest of local boys for desertion, most likely formed the basis of the confrontation and later acts of Copperhead terrorism in the county^[83]. Enmity toward Hopkins appears to have intensified afterwards. But un-intimidated, he dug in his heels. This is witnessed in an article published in the Wednesday, May 27, 1863 issue of *The Iowa State Register* which announced a series of Union Meetings around Polk County on Saturday, May 30^[84].

“An old fashioned Union rally will come off on Saturday next at 10 A.M. at Young's school House between Saylorville and Polk City. Lieutenant Josiah Hopkins and others will address the meeting. On the same day at 2 o'clock P.M. a Union meeting will be held in Elliott's Grove at Brazelton's School House, Douglas Township. The Speakers who are posted for the occasion are Lieutenant Hopkins of Madison Township, and Messrs. T.F. Withrow and C.C. Cole. The meetings will be largely attended and much good will be accomplished in behalf of our common country. Patriots roil on the bait. Let the preponderance of Union sentiment in Polk county be felt until every conscious Tory shall writhe and squirm and howl in his great agony.”

The *Iowa State Register* reports the proceedings of the May 30th meeting at Brazelton Schoolhouse, highlighting Hopkins' address to a large audience that had to be moved to a nearby camp ground^[85].

“Lieutenant Hopkins was the first man to engage in the profitable business of crushing out the Snakes. He went at it with a will. His sledge-hammer blows were fast and furious. His address was cordially received. Before he concluded, he set the machinery to work for the organization of an open Union League. At the same time he recommended the Secret League.

On July 1, 1863, the *Register* published a letter under “Local and Miscellaneous News” that announced the formation of a new military company in Polk City during the last week of June. A list of elected officers made up of local recruits is followed by the report^[86],

“Lieut. J. Hopkins, and Major J.C. Bennett made short but telling speeches. Old Madison is thoroughly aroused and will defend herself and not only herself but the State and General Government against any and all enemies. Stick a pin there, will you? We do not mean that the honor of our heroic soldiers and our lamented dead shall be made to blush on the battle field, or our dead made to lie in judgment against us.”

Absence from the official records indicates that, although reported in the news otherwise, this unit did not materialize into a formal company. The reason is unknown. However, news of the recent devastating losses in the eastern theatre may have dampened the enthusiasm of prospective volunteers come enlistment time.

The intensity of the Unionist activities in Polk County between March and June of 1863 – fired by the likes of Josiah Hopkins, John C. Bennett, and Chester C. Cole leading into the State Republican Convention at Des Moines on June 17th provoked a threatening response from the southern sympathizers. An article published in the same issue of the *Register* under the heading A BIT OF COPPERHEAD ATROCITY! details the incident and the nature of the alleged threats^[87].

“We learn that on Monday night last, red flags were placed before the residences or business houses of Major Bennett, N.K. Kuntz, Mr. Crabtree and Lieut. Hopkins, all of Madison Township. It is reported also that flags of a similar description were placed in front of the residences of prominent Union citizens all the way between Polk City and Boonsboro. The flags were punctured with holes, and a note was attached to each, which contained a solemn assurance to the Union men that their days were brief on the earth. We mention these matters, not because we have any idea that the cowardly Copperheads will execute their threats, but because we desire to keep our readers posted with reference to the native meanness of Iowa Tories. The rebels who seek thus to annoy Union citizens, will not stop to perpetrate private assassination if they are able to command a force of 25 men to attack one wounded and defenseless patriot; but their native cowardice will restrain them from committing any act in which their own precious lives will be jeopardized. We trust, however, that Union men everywhere will form efficient defensive organizations. They ought to be in readiness to strike terribly when their lives and property are assailed by these Northern guerrillas.”

The contents of the note left at the Twenty Mile House appears on another page of the same issue under the heading SECESH THREATS^[88]. It reads:

“The following is a verbatim copy of the note pinned to the red flag at Lieut. Hopkins’ house of which we spoke in our issue of Friday. The original is in the hands of Lieut. Hopkins, and the handwriting has been identified as that of a well-known Copperhead in that neighborhood. It is a noticeable fact that the orthography of these scoundrels is generally as bad as their principles.

“Mr. Hopkins we as a bodie of frends to you are putting our selves to the expense of warning you of the disaster that mite befall you this [?] may not prove as a horrid site to you but your wife she may see something in a short time that would make her shed tiers you must not think that you are god of all I wish to god you had of come on when you started to cross the river at the rapids you would not of [?] dr. Wilson of us.”

The company formed in Polk City in late June never materialized as an official unit of the U.S. Army and is not identified in the official records, which suggests that it may have been organized as a home guard to protect local Unionists against threats by local Copperheads.

Josiah Hopkins hosted the traveling evangelist Samuel Heinecke^[89] at his inn north of Polk City on August 9th. The *Daily State Register* reports that Hopkins’ hosted a ‘Union Re-Union’ at his residence in Hopkins Grove on August 20, at which he ‘...addressed the audience on the state of the County’^[90]. Then, nothing is known of his activities for the next nine months. It is assumed that he continued to speak in support of the Union League while tending to his business as innkeeper at Hopkins Grove. Unfortunately, the minutes of the quarterly conferences of the Des Moines Circuit of the United Brethren Church have been lost for the meetings between February 2, 1863 and July 22, 1865 depriving modern research of insights into the activities of church leaders during this time.

Hopkins reenlisted on May 11, 1864^[91] answering the president’s call for more men to serve in 100-day units. He brought with him many men from Polk, Boone and Story Counties including his brother Robert and son Silas^[92]. He was given the rank of captain at the time of his enlistment, but was promoted to staff major in the 44th Volunteer Infantry Regiment on May 31. Hopkins and his Company arrived at Camp Kinsman in Davenport on May 27^[93] where the 44th was mustered on June 13th. Hopkins’ recruits were assigned to Company H. The 44th served as a garrison regiment in Memphis and LaGrange, Tennessee from June to August 1864 and mustered out of service on September 15 at Davenport. The war ended with Lee’s surrender to Grant at Appomattox on April 9, 1865.

It is apparent that Hopkins’ reputation within the community and standing within the church suffered irrevocable damage during the war years. The few remaining records available suggest that his zealous politics ultimately lead to his expulsion from the church and self-imposed exile to Kansas. Reverend Adams intimates^[94]:

“Because of the active part he took in trying to put down the rebellion and save his country from destruction, because he went with Gen. M.M. Crocker into the Union League and because he was a better preacher than they some of his preacher brethren were jealous of him, and tried to break him down and ruin him. I heard a part of the trial after charges were brought against him and I believed then, and I yet believe, that there was more of jealousy and spite connected with the charges than real wrong on his part. For when Josiah was going away he told brother Stephen Brooks that he would be their next victim, and sure enough he was. Josiah had no peace for them,

for they gave him no peace, until he sold out his beautiful home where he had fixed himself to live comfortably and where he was the main pillar in the church; and moved to Kansas where he was unfortunate in his investments and finally he took sick and died...”

Sadly, the proceedings for the Quarterly Conference of the Des Moines Circuit of the United Brethren Church for most of 1863, all of 1864, and the first half of 1865 are lost, so the charges that were brought against him may never be known. But matters must have worsened over the winter and by late spring had reached a head because on May 9, 1865 Josiah and Mahala sold all of their remaining land in Polk County to George Miles for \$6,300^[95]. Then, on July 22, 1865 the 3rd Quarterly Conference of the Des Moines Circuit was held at the Prairie Hill class, and listed among the absentees was Josiah Hopkins. One word follows his name, “removed” and that is the last entry of his name in the church records for Polk County. Their subsequent settlement in Kansas is confirmed in the 1867 census for Osawatomie Township, Miami County, which lists Josiah, Mahala, and son Thomas B.^[96].

During his 1867 tour of the Midwest, Rev. Samuel Heinecke passed through Lecompton, Kansas on November 5, where he learned that Hopkins had died. Heinecke described him as “..a well known and useful minister of the gospel”^[97]. According to his son’s biographical sketch^[98], Josiah’s death occurred in Miami County, Kansas on July 16, 1867. This raises some interesting questions because according to his journal, Heinecke passed through Polk, Story, and Boone County in late September of 1867 and stayed at Josiah’s brother William’s home in Palestine Township, Story County and at his cousin John Hopkins’ place in Swede point. Heinecke also mentions having spent time with John Carr and Alexander Pierce while in the area^[99]. So it seems odd that Josiah’s own kin and life-long friends failed to mention his death to Heinecke only having occurred some two months earlier. Had Josiah’s transgressions – whatever they may have been – been so serious that even his family members had been alienated?

Josiah does not appear in the 1870 census along with his wife and sons Thomas, Silas, and daughter-in-law Candace^[100]. But he is listed among the “Unrecorded Dead” of the Polk County pioneers in Dixon’s *Centennial History of Polk County, Iowa*, who are also memorialized in a long poem by Leonard Brown published in the same volume^[101]. His name also appears among a list of ‘signers’ in an 1874 advertisement for the Polk County Old Settlers Association^[102].

Lydia Eslick-Guthrie reports that Josiah was interred in the United Brethren Church Cemetery at Hopkins Grove^[103]. If this is so, then he rests in an unmarked grave because no stone was discovered in the 2009 survey^[104]. If his body was transported back to Iowa for burial, then it seems more likely that his wife and sons would have had him buried in the family plot at the south burial ground of the Hopkins Grove Cemetery alongside his father William, mother-in-law Barbara Phebus, brother Adolphus, sister-in-law Mary Ann, and their children.

But then maybe the wounds suffered by Josiah, his family, and the Hopkins Grove community were too deep. Having committed his life to the service of God, his Church, and Country, perhaps the ultimate victory for this ‘Christian Patriot’ and ‘Old-time Abolitionist’ was burial in the *free soil* of ‘Bleeding Kansas.’

Notes:

- [1] This date is based on census records and from an entry in the biographical sketch of Josiah's son Silas W. Hopkins, M.D. published in Malcolm G. McGregor's *The Biographical Record of Jasper County Missouri*, (pp.192-193], Lewis Publishing, Chicago, 1901. However, Hopkins' volunteer enlistment papers, completed on May 11, 1864 notes his place of birth as 'Piqua County, Ohio' and states his age as '44 years' placing his date of birth around 1820. The age recorded in the enlistment papers is not consistent with estimates derived from state and federal census records which show him to have been between seven and ten years older. He is described as having gray eyes, light hair, a dark complexion, and was 5 feet 10 inches in height.
- [2] William Hopkins place of birth is taken from the 1850 federal census for Polk County, Iowa (Dwelling 645, line 25). His date of birth is calculated from his date of death (7 August 1855) and his age at death (73 years and 8 months) found on his grave marker at Hopkins Grove Cemetery as reported by Daniel K. Higginbottom, *Gone But Not Forgotten. The Hopkins Grove Cemetery Union Township, Polk County, Iowa. Part I: The South Burial Ground*, p. 66, State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, 2007. See also Iowa Pioneer File at the Iowa Genealogical Society, Des Moines. The following account of William Hopkins' sickness and death appears in James Adams' 1881 reminiscences published in Corinne Allen Helms (ed.), *Hopkins Grove Evangelical United Brethren Church Centennial History, 1851-1951*, pp. 12-14, Madrid, Iowa, 1951. "My wife's father, Old Judge Provolt, told me, I think it was the next day, that he had known father Hopkins for forty years, and he was always happy. They lived neighbors in Ohio. He was converted when he was about 22 years old. For some near 50 years he had professed the blessing of entire sanctification or perfect love; and I believe he enjoyed it in its fullness. He believed in, and strongly advocated the doctrine of holiness, that the blood of Jesus Christ was sufficient to cleanse from all sin. And he believed in it as a second and distinct blessing. He did not accept the doctrine that we are wholly sanctified when we are converted. About a year after that camp meeting (fall 1853) he exchanged earth with all its toils, labors and sufferings, for heaven with all its glories. About five minutes before he died while his children were standing around his bed he looked up at them smiling, and heaven beaming in his countenance and said, "Well children I always thought when I come to die that there would be a cold river to cross, but there's no stream here," and he quietly and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.
- John Bard, one of his neighbors who had always been skeptical in experimental religion, doubting its reality, a very strong Universalist, and believed in doing his religion, and a very honest, straight, forward upright man., Was very much interested in Old Father Hopkins. He had all confidence in him and was anxious to see how he would come out in the end. Bard said to him that he did not think there was anyone but what dreaded death, when it come to the test, that there was always a shrinking back. Says Father Hopkins, "There's where you are greatly mistaken, Mr. Bard." "Why," said Mr. Bard – "I have always dreaded death. Have you no fears of death?" "No indeed," said he, "I am just waiting and anxious to go home. What have I to fear? I am fully prepared to go." Mr. Bard had so much confidence in the good old man that he could not doubt it. He stayed right by him to the last. He was standing at the foot of the bed when he so calmly and peacefully left the world and when all was over Mr. Bard turned and walked slowly away and said, "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his." Mr. Bard, I think, never doubted the divine reality of religion afterward. Living as he did, only a little over a mile from me, I frequently saw him and talked with him, and I never afterward heard him express a doubt as to its reality." Coincidentally, the epitaph on William Hopkins' headstone reads "Let Me Die the Death of the Righteous."
- [3] J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware. 1609—1888. Volume II*. Philadelphia, L.J. Richards, 1888.
- [4] Elizabeth Hornback Hopkins place and date of birth are derived from the 1850 federal census for Polk County, Iowa (Dwelling 645, line 26). A listing on Find-A-Grave for Elizabeth's brother

- James Hornback cites her date of birth as 3 December 1790. See also Iowa Pioneer File at the Iowa Genealogical Society, Des Moines.
- [5] McGregor [*op. cit.*] notes that Elizabeth Hopkins was an aunt of Judge John Hornback (1827 – 1899, born Champaign, Ohio).
- [6] “Bourbon County Marriages 1786-1800”, in *Register of the Kentucky State Historical Society*, Jan. 1924, Vol. 22(64): p. 56.
- [7] Georgia G. Wisda, *Gosney Family Records, 1740-1940, and Related Families*, p.228, Higginson Book Company, 1997.
- [8] *Ross County, Ohio Marriage Records 1798-1849* (p.115).
- [9] Ruth Hopkins (b. 24 April 1815—d. 18 April 1893) married James Jenkins (b. d.) on 22 December 1839 in Ruth Slevin (compiler), *Carroll County Indiana Marriage Records 1828-1850* (p.14). Cenotaph marker at Mount Hope Cemetery, Madrid, Boone County, Iowa. Ruth’s kinship is established in her death notice which appeared in the April 26, 1893 issue of the *Boone County Democrat* (Vol.26, No.13: p.3), which states “Robert Hopkins received a summons from Colo of the death of his sister, Mrs. Jenkins. Her remains arrived here on the Thursday noon train. Mrs. Jenkins and her husband, James Jenkins, who still survives her, were among the first settlers in Madrid. Their home was on South State Street, now owned by C.W. Halsey. The deceased was 79 years of age and leaves a large circle of relatives and friends. The funeral services were held at the Baptist church at 2 p.m. and the remains were interred in the Hopkins cemetery.”
- [10] William H.B. Hopkins (b.18 June 1818—d. 22 September 1877) was married to Phebie Phebus (b. 12 March 1818 – d. 28 February 1888) and both are buried at Walnut Grove Cemetery, Story County, Iowa.
- [11] Adolphus Hopkins (b. 1 August 1820—d.8 January 1859) was married to Mary Ann (b.ca. 1825 –d. ca. May 1871. After Adolphus’ death she remarried Robert Wilson in Polk County, Iowa on 22 October 1862). Adolphus and Mary Ann Hopkins Wilson are buried at Hopkins Grove, Polk County, Iowa, see Higginbottom 2007, *op. cit.*, pp.64-65; Daniel K. Higginbottom (comp.) *Adolphus Hopkins (1820-1859: Probate Documents Submitted to the Circuit Court of Polk County, Iowa by Josiah Hopkins, Executor and William B. Hopkins, Executor*, Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, 2006, Des Moines; and, Iowa Pioneer file at the Iowa Genealogical Society, Des Moines.
- [12] George Hornback Hopkins (b. 12 April 1825, Ross County, Ohio – d. 21 February 1903, Prescott, Linn County, Kansas) married Martha Dension on 27 December 1846 in Missouri. See William Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, p. 1098, A.T. Andreas, Chicago, 1883. Both are buried at Fairview Cemetery near Fulton, Bourbon County, Kansas (Find a Grave memorial #40416066). George’s military service at Fort Scott, Kansas is mentioned in his nephew’s (C.W. Hopkins) biographical sketch, see volume 2 of Benjamin F. Reed’s, *History of Kossuth County* (1913), p. 343.
- [13] Robert Hopkins (b. 8 December 1833—d. 3 August 1897) married Catherine Roe (b. 17 May 1835—d. 4 October 1883) on 2 June 1853 in Polk County, Iowa (*Polk County, Iowa Marriages*, Book 1, p.170). Both are buried in the old burial ground at Hopkins Grove Cemetery (see Higginbottom 2007, *op. cit.*, p.90). A brief account of Robert’s life is provided in the biographical sketch of his son’s (C.W. Hopkins) biographical sketch, see Reed, 1913, *op. cit.*, p.343. Mention is also made of Josiah as the landlord of the “Twenty Mile House” and being commission as Major during the Civil War.
- [14] Other siblings of Josiah Hopkins suspected by family history researchers include Eliza Ann, who married Henry Fisher on 17 March 1842; Hester Ann, who married Peter Mann (or Mason) on 18 August 1842; and Mary Jane, who married Jacob Bringoff in Jasper County, Missouri on 5 February 1844 (see Lydia B. Perry, *Jasper County, Missouri Marriage Records*, 1942, compiled by Elizabeth Prather Ellsbery, Chillicothe, 1962 pp. 3, 9, 16). Jacob and Mary Jane relocated to Camp Township, Polk County sometime between 1856 and 1860. It is interesting to note that the 1850 Missouri census lists Jacob Bringhoff and his brother Abraham as slave owners. Salina Jane Hopkins, who married Dr. John Goodloe Hanna may also have been one of Josiah’s sister.
- [15] T.L.C. Genealogy, *The 1812 Census of Ohio: A State-Wide Index of Taxpayers*, p. 93, 1992, Miami Beach, Florida. Other entries for the name ‘Hopkins’ in the 1812 tax roles are: Archibald (Clermont Co.), Benjamin (Geauga), Benjamin (Warren), Daniel (Geague), James (Warren), John (Geauga), Joseph (Fayette), Joseph H. (Warren Trumbull), Moses (Ross), Nathaniel (Hubbard Trumbull), Robert (Ross), Samuel (Pickaway), and William (Clermont).
- [16] *Roster of Ohio Soldiers in the War of 1812*, Adjutant General of Ohio, 1910, p.160. William’s War veteran status is confirmed in his Polk County, Iowa estate probate. A affidavit filed on 25 May

1858 states: “The undersigned administrator of the estate of William Hopkins deceased late of Polk County Iowa would represent to your honor that the only property belonging to said estate is a government land warrant issued to said William Hopkins during his lifetime for one hundred & twenty acres of land, dated April 10th 1856 number sixty five thousand four hundred & nine (65409) worth \$150. And that all the heirs of said estate are of age and desire that said warrant be sold to George H.B. Hopkins, who has already contracted with & paid said heirs therefore. Your petitioner would therefore pray that your honor order & decree the said warrant to be sold by your petitioner (administrator as aforesaid) at private sale for one hundred & fifty dollars, and that said administrator be empowered & authorized to assign the same according to law. J.H. Gray, Administrator, of the estate of Wm. Hopkins, Polk Co., IA.” William’s bounty land was patented in Kansas (120 acres in W1/2 of NW1/4 and NE1/4 of NW1/4 of Sec. 35, T22-R24) by George who later transferred ownership to Mountford A. Jones on 1 April 1861 (Warrant No. 65409, Bureau of Land Management).

- [17] This entry suggests that there may have been a sibling older than Josiah.
- [18] O.L. Baskin Company, *History of Logan County and Ohio*, p. 555. Chicago, 1880, noting that ‘The large majority of these [congregants] came from near Cane Ridge, Kentucky, and some from North Carolina.’ Cane Ridge, located near Paris in Bourbon County, was the site of widely attended evangelical meeting in 1801. The ideological evolution set in motion by this meeting, considered a landmark event of the Second Great Awakening of the American Restoration Movement, spread north out of Kentucky into Ohio and Pennsylvania and then westward as new territory was opened to settlement.
- [19] *Ibid.*, p.395.
- [20] Cutler 1883, *op. cit.*, p.1098.
- [21] James Hervey Stewart, *Recollections of the Early Settlement of Carroll County, Indiana*, p. 243, Cincinnati, Hitchcock and Walden, 1872.
- [22] Certificate No. 16494 for the sale of 40 acres in ‘the South West quarter of the North east quarter of Section 14, in township twenty five north of range three west, in the district of lands subject to sale at Crawfordsville Indiana.’
- [23] Certificate No. 20271 for the sale of 40 acres in ‘the north west quarter of the south west quarter of section fourteen, in Township twenty five north of Range three west in the district of lands subject to the sale at Crawfordsville, Indiana’, 21 October 1834; and Certificate No.25236 for the purchase of 40 acres in ‘the South West quarter of the South West quarter of Section fourteen, in Township Twenty five North, of Ranges three West, in the District of lands subject to sale at Crawfordsville Indiana’, 18 March 1837.
- [24] The story regarding the relationship between the Hopkins, Pierce, and Eslick families and how they came to settle in Iowa is recounted in a 21-part series entitled “Eslick-Pierce Family History” by Lydia Eslick-Guthrie and published in the *Lehigh Valley Argus* between August 20, 1931 and May 19, 1932. The series also appears in its entirety in Jacqueline R. Burt’s *Eslick-Pierce Family History* (2nd edition), Baltimore, Gateway Press, 1990, pp. 5-32.
- [25] Many family history researchers cite 10 March 1834 as the date of their marriage based on an entry on page 35 of the Grooms Book (1) of Carroll County Marriage records (see Slevin, *op. cit.*, p. 14) for *Mahala Philips* and *Joseph Hopkins*. However, the biographical sketch of their son, Silas W. Hopkins, found in McGregor (1901, *op. cit.*, p. 192) identifies his mother as Mahala Phebus, daughter John Phebus and Barbara Steward, and not as Mahala Philips. Barbara Phebus (b. ca. 1781—d. 13 February 1863) is buried with the Hopkins family in the south burial ground at Hopkins Grove Cemetery (see Higginbottom 2007, *op. cit.*, p.62). While it is possible that transcription error could account for the wrong names in the entry, it is presumptive and reckless to accept this date for Josiah Hopkins and Mahala Phebus without supporting documentation, of which none has been found.
- [26] *1840 U.S. Census – Carroll County, Indiana*, p.845.
- [27] McGregor 1901, *op. cit.*, p. 192. The 1850 Polk County census, *op. cit.*, identifies only three children in the Josiah and Mahala’s household, those being Thomas B., aged seven; Silas W., aged five; and Albert A., aged two. All three were born in Missouri. The two children listed in the Indiana census are not listed. The 1856 Special Census for Madison Township, Polk County, Iowa only lists these three children (pp. 322-23, Dwelling 19, family 19).
- [28] Members of the Hornback family, including Josiah’s uncle James and cousin John, moved from Indiana to what would become Jasper County, Missouri in October of 1838. See McGregor, 1901,

- op. cit.*, p. 62. It seems reasonable that the Hopkins family migration from Indiana was prompted by positive reports from Elizabeth's family.
- [29] Cutler, 1883, *op. cit.*, p. 1098.
- [30] <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~rslewis/marriage/bka/bka26.htm>. "State of Missouri// County of Jasper "I Josiah Hopkins a Minister of the Gospel do hereby testify that I united in Matrimony on the 19th of January 1845 Elzy Sheridan & Margaret Chapman both of the county & state aforesaid Given under my hand this 20th day of January 1845. Josiah Hopkins"/"Filed for records on the 11th day of February AD 1845 and truly recorded on the 14th of said month. Ellwood B. James, Clerk."
- [31] Bureau of Land Management, Certificate No. 7890.
- [32] George H.B. Hopkins' biographical sketch places Josiah's vanguard expedition into Iowa in September of 1849 (see Cutler 1883, *op. cit.*, 1098) while Lydia Eslick-Guthrie tentatively dates it to 1847 (see Burt 1990, *op. cit.*, p.16). According to the 1856 Census for Polk County (*op. cit.*), Josiah and his family had been resident in the state for eight years, which supports Eslick-Guthrie's earlier date.
- [33] Cutler, 1883, *op. cit.*, p. 1089.
- [34] Burt 1990, *op. cit.*, 15-16.
- [35] Burt 1990, *op. cit.*, 18. Among the 1849 party were William Pierce and wife Permelia Eslick; Andrew Scribner and wife Mary; Lazarus Wright and wife Sallie Pierce, Richard Pierce and wife Elizabeth LeMar; Alexander Pierce and wife Elizabeth Eslick; Theodorus (Dorus) Eslick and wife Martha Pierce; Samuel Eslick and wife Nancy Pierce; Thomas Pierce and wife Frankie Jones; John Eslick and wife Ms. Jenkins; Beaden Eslick and wife Mary Wright; Tom Naly; Andy Howard; Brink Scribner; and Carter Wright with wife Dinah Pierce. Absence of the Hopkins family members from the 1849 wagon train supports their having moved the year before.
- [36] West of modern-day Stratford.
- [37] A.A. Reems, "Land Entries. Polk County, Iowa. Taken from The Books of Original Entry. In the Office of County Recorder", 1943. Typescript on file at the State Historical Society Library, Des Moines. Issued through Certificate No. 24929. This parcel was among those lands subject to dispute surrounding the Des Moines River Navigation Improvement Land Grant (see Ward Crowley, "Des Moines River Land Grants," Spring 1993, *Hawkeye Heritage*, pp. 4-25 for records taken from *The Executive Documents of the Senate of the United States fro the Second Session of the Fifty-Third Congress, 1893-94, Volume 5*. Government Printing Office, 1895).
- [38] Northwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section six in township eighty one north of range twenty five west. Issued under Military warrant No. 26027 in favor of Samuel J. Vepar, private in Captain Crawford's Company. Missouri Militia, Black Hawk War. Iowa City General Land Office.
- [39] North fractional half of the southwest quarter of section 6 in Township eight one north of Range Twenty five west. Issued under Military Warrant No. 11128 in favor of Mary Hardison, widow of William Hardison deceased. Private in Captain Hussey's Company. Third Regiment North Carolina Militia. War of 1812. Iowa City General Land Office
- [40] Northeast quarter of the southwest fractional quarter of section 18 in township eighty one north of range twenty five west. Issued under Military Warrant No. 13939 in favor of Townley Rigg, private in Captain Debell's Company, sixteenth regiment, Virginia Militia. War of 1812. Iowa City General Land Office.
- [41] The southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of section 20 in township eighty one north of range twenty five. Purchased outright under Fort Des Moines General Land Office Certificate No. 2399.
- [42] Northwest quarter of section 21 in township eighty on north of range twenty five west. Issued under Military Warrant No. 1292 in favor of John H. Smithson, Laborer in Lieutenant Scott's Company, United States Ordnance Corps, Florida War. Fort Des Moines General Land Office. This parcel was among those lands subject to dispute surrounding the Des Moines River Navigation Improvement Land Grant (see Ward Crowley 1993, *op. cit.*, p. 8).
- [43] See Higginbottom 2006, *op. cit.*; and, 2007, *op. cit.*, p.5.
- [44] A published notice of Adolphus' death appeared on page 88 of the February 2, 1859 issue of the *Religious Telescope* (Dayton, Ohio). "I wish to say through the *Telescope*, as we have many friends in Ohio and Indiana, that my brother, Adolphus Hopkins closed his earthly pilgrimage in full view of his heavenly inheritance, Jan. 8th, 1859. He met the last enemy with Christian fortitude, and held a contest with him for three days, then fell, but conquered. Yours in the Lord. J. Hopkins, Polk City, Iowa, Jan. 20, 1859.

- [45] Reed 1913, *op. cit.*, p.343.
- [46] "Fort Dodge Block House", excerpted from the *Madrid Correspondence Boone Democrat* and published in *The Daily Iowa Capital*, p. 4, July 17, 1897.
- [47] For more on the Old State Road see "The First "State" Road", *The Chief-Reporter*, Thursday, October 27, 1898, Vol.25(33), Perry, Iowa, which numbers Josiah Hopkins place as one of two hotels along the route; and, Inez E. Kirkpatrick, *Stagecoach Trails in Iowa*, pp. 130-149, Crete, Nebraska, J-B Publishing Company, 1975.
- [48] For naming of the 'Twenty-Mile House' see an article in *The Perry Reporter*, p. 6, Thursday, November 10, 1892.
- [49] J.M. Dixon, *Centennial History of Polk County, Iowa*, pp. 95-96. Des Moines, State Register Print, 1876.
- [50] United States Department of State, *Register of all Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and naval, in the Service of the United States, on the Thirtieth September 1851*, Gideon and company, Washington.
- [51] Nathan E. Goldthwait, *History of Boone County Iowa*, 2 volumes, pp. 153-159. Chicago, Pioneer Publishing Co., 1914.
- [52] *Ibid.*, pp. 244-245. Representatives named are Phillip Snyder, Judah Leaming, John Breakfield and O.D. Smalley, of Dallas County; M. Keith, Jacob Rohr, Josiah Hopkins, Alexander Pierce, Joseph Meader and William Roe, of Polk County, and John F. Hopkins, C.J. Cassel, George Hornback, Benjamin Williams, John Bilsland, Isaac Murphy, William Harlow, Eric Dalander, John Dalander, Swaim Dalander, Peter Anderson and John Anderson, of Boone County.
- [53] McGregor, 1901 *op. cit.*, p.192.
- [54] See the minutes from the 3rd Quarterly Conference of the Fort Des Moines Mission held at the Hopkins Grove school house on May 17, 1851 (ms., p.4). Daniel K. Higginbottom (compiler) n.d. *Records of the Fort Des Moines-Hopkins Grove Circuit of the United Brethren Church 1850-1877*, in preparation. Iowa State Historic Preservation Office.
- [55] *Ibid.*, (ms., p.4). The Reverend Daniel Berger also notes in his *History of the United Brethren in Christ* (Dayton, United Brethren Publishing/W.J. Shuey, 1897, page 495) that Hopkins was elected a Trustee of Western College in Linn, County in 1856 during its construction.
- [56] Corinne Allen Helms (ed.), 1951, *op. cit.*, pp.12-13. "Brother Josiah Hopkins preached the crowning sermon of that camp meeting. His text was Isa. 35: 8, 9, 10. 'And a highway shall be there, and away, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those, the way bearing men, though books shall not ever be therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go thereon. It shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'" His father, over 80 years old was sick, and crippled up with rheumatism so that he could not walk. They brought him there in a wagon and carried him in the Preacher's tent and laid him on the bed. He had his cane in his hand although he couldn't walk with it. It was on Sabbath at 11 o'clock. Josiah made a very powerful prayer – full of the Holy Ghost and faith; and then he took his text; and as he advanced he carried the entire congregation with him and held them spell bound along the Highway of Holiness. The redeemed were not afraid to follow him, for he kept all the lions, ravenous beasts and every unclean thing out of the way; and when he had showed that it was a Highway – a Holy way – a happy, plain and perfectly sage way; then with all the redeemed and ransomed of the Lord, he started for Mount Zion, the city of the Living god, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, joy and gladness filling their hearts; and sorrow and sighing fleeing away before them." O never shall I forget that sermon. It was full of power and the Holy Ghost. And it cut its way to the hearts of sinners. When Josiah was on his way to Zion with all the ransomed of the Lord, we could hear Old Father Hopkins, back in the preachers tent, very weak, at first, saying, Glory! Glory! Glory Hallelujah Glory to Heaven's King! And about the time Josiah had landed us all safe within the vail, and sorrow and sighing had all fled away, here came old Father Hopkins out of the tent, swinging his cane high in the air; and shouting "Glory" and "Hallelujah" at the top of his voice, and he went all over that camp ground, just like a little boy, nimble as the deer upon the prairie, and his shouts could be heard afar."
- [57] *The Perry Bulletin*, Thursday, February 27, 1896, p. 5. "Cupid's Record. A Book That Tells of the Little Fellow's Antics in the Good Old Count of Dallas."
- [58] Will Book No. 1, Polk County, Iowa. On file at the State Historical Society of Iowa

- [59] Daniel K. Higginbottom 2006, *op. cit.*
- [60] Corinne Allen Helms (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 14. For more on Hopkins' character see footnote 93, below.
- [61] Higginbottom, n.d., *op. cit.*, (ms. Pp. 15-18). Similar resolutions were adopted at a meeting held at Polk City on January 20, 1855. An article published in the *National Era*, on Thursday, April 5, 1855, Vol. IX, (431), p.5, col. 7, under the heading ORGANIZING IN IOWA reports, "An Anti-Slavery Convention was held at Polk City, Polk county, Iowa, January 20, 1855. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. H.P. Kennard and Josiah Hopkins, on the evils arising from American Slavery, and the following resolutions were adopted: Resolved, that we, as Christians and citizens are morally and politically bound to vote for no man who is in favor of the perpetuation and extension of the system of American Slavery. That the good of the people and the safety of this nation demands a concentrated political League of Freedom, to administer the affairs of this Government in accordance with the principles set forth by the patriotic founders of this Republic. That the act commonly known as the Fugitive Slave Act is unconstitutional, and is an aggression on the rights of the People of the free States of this Union. That the Nebraska and Kansas bill, as passed at the last session of Congress, is a violation of plighted faith between the North and South, and an iniquitous and successful attempt to extend the area of human Slavery. That the proceedings of this meeting be prepared by a committee of three and forwarded to the *Iowa True Democrat* and *National Era* for publication."
- [62] *Op. cit.*, 1892, page 6. "From 1855 to 1861, it [20 Mile House] was a station of what was known in the days of slavery as the under ground railroad. This railroad consisted of stations only, and the man who kept one had to understand his business for it was a dangerous venture. The object of the underground railroad was to assist fugitive slaves in escaping from their masters to the populous cities of the north and to Canada. The slaves were conveyed from station to another in the night and were secreted in the day time. It is said by those who ought to know that many a slave in the act of escaping from the oppression of his Missouri master found a hearty welcome under the roof of the twenty mile house."
- [63] Madrid Centennial Committee, *Madrid Iowa 1883 – 1983*, p. 467. Madrid, Iowa. See also Roxana Currie's introduction (pp. xiv-xv) in the 2002 edition of *American Patriotism or Memoirs of "Common Men*, Camp Pope Bookshop, Iowa City.
- [64] See Higginbottom 2006, *op. cit.*, p. [i], Docs. 031a, 032a, 036a-b, 037a-b, 038a-b, 039a-b, 040a-b, 041a-b, 042a-b, 043a-b, 045a-b, 046a-b, 047a-b, and 048a-b,.
- [65] Cutler 1883, *op. cit.*, p.1098. "During the troubles that followed between the Pro-slavery and Free-State men, Mr. Hopkins was in active sympathy with the Free-State men. He lived neighbor to Hedrick at the time the latter was called from the bedside of his wife, who was supposed to be dying, to the door, and shot dead, as detailed in the county history. After the killing of Hedrick and Denton, on account of the threats of the Pro-slavery men that the Free-State men should raise no crops, nor stay upon their claims, Mr. Hopkins and his neighbor Denison, rode out among the citizens and suggested the organization of a protective society. Accordingly, a meeting was called to meet at Osage City. A large crowd collected and organized by the election of Squire Jewell, Chairman. Mr. Hopkins, Jewell and Denison were chosen a committee to draft resolutions and by-laws to govern the association. At a second meeting held three days later at the same place, James Montgomery was present, but declined to speak or to define his position until the citizens had defined theirs. The resolutions prepared by the committee were submitted to the meeting, only the third eliciting any discussion. It was as follows: "That we, the members of this organization pledge ourselves to protect all good citizens in their rights of life and property, irrespective of politics." A long and heated discussion followed on this resolution, the question being on striking the phrase, "*irrespective of politics.*" When, at length the resolution was adopted as originally reported, Montgomery arose and said: "I am now with you, and will be to the end."
- [66] Believed to be the brother of his wife, Martha Denison.
- [67] Stephen G. Elliott, one of the members of the Fort Des Moines Conference of the United Brethren Church during the early-to mid-1850s also moved to Kansas and was a member of the Kansas Territory House in 1860 when critical votes regarding slavery were made. Elliott may also have played a part in the transport of slaves northward into the Polk City area. See Gary L. Cheatham, "Kansas Shall Not Have the Right to Legislate Slavery Out, Slavery and the 1860 Antislavery Law", in *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 23 (Autumn 2000): 154-171.
- [68] Higginbottom, n.d., *op. cit.*, (ms. Pp. 22-23). "Preamble. Where as some of our Circuit preachers have been opposed when undertaking to lecture from that portion of discipline which refers to

slavery, seccry [sic], and intemperance. Therefore, resolved that whereas it is the Spirit of discipline that the Preachers should lecture from discipline and enforce it and that any person or persons opposing them is chargeable and answerable to the Class to which they belong.” Minutes from the second conference 23 December 1854, Polk City. Josiah Hopkins *was not* in attendance at this meeting.

- [69] Corinne Allen Helms (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- [70] Higginbottom, n.d., *op. cit.*, (ms. Pp. 56-57). 4th Quarterly Conference, Hopkins Grove. July 6, 1861. “Whereas our discipline condemns the spirit that leads men to voluntarily engage in ware. And, whereas some our Br., have volunteered and joined the army. And while we believe the discipline is found in the word of God, yet in review of the following reasons we feel it to be our duty as Christians to be particularly mild and lenient in carrying out the discipline on this point.
- 1st – Because the present war is for the purpose of putting down the most wicked contumacious and fratricidal insurrection that is to be found in national history;
- 2nd – Because some think the language of the Discipline indefinite and suppose it to be admonitory.
- Now, in view of the forcible bearing of all these mitigating circumstances upon these brethren who have felt it to be their duty to volunteer and we not knowing what course the Annual. Conf. may pursue in the administration of the discipline upon this point.
- Therefore, resolved, that in the examination of character we will suspend action upon this point until our next annual conference to which we refer the case for discussion.
- Resolved also, that while our prayers ascend for Zion, we will also pray for the protection of those our or brethren who have volunteered to maintain the national government of our beloved country. And also that God would so rule the events of the present conflict that it may result in the establishment of the glorious principals of national policy set forth in the declaration of independence of which our nation banner is the emblem. Vis. That all men are created equal and have certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”
- [71] Iowa Adjutant General’s Records, file for 10th Regiment Volunteer Infantry, Co. A., on file at the State Historical Society, Des Moines. See also Leonard Brown, *American Patriotism: or, Memoirs of “Common Men”*. Redhead and Wellslager, Des Moines, 1869; and, Adjutant General of Iowa, *Roster and Register of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion, Volume II*. Des Moines, Emory English, 1911.
- [72] *Ibid*. John Cook Bennett was a high-ranking official in the Mormon Church at Nauvoo before being formally expelled and ostracized from the community in 1842 on numerous charges including attempted murder and sexual depravity. For more on Bennett, see Andrew F. Smith’s well-researched biography *Saintly Scoundrel: the Life and Times of John Cook Bennett*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1993.
- [73] “Another Soldier Dead”, *Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, February 19, 1862. “Caswell Murray, a private in the Polk City Company, started for his home from Bird’s Point some two or three weeks alone. He was sick at the time of starting, and was under the care of Joshua Henderson and John Stevens. He stopped at Brooklyn, and growing rapidly worse, he died shortly after his arrival. His body was placed neatly in a coffin, and was brought to Des Moines by the Western Stage Company. His wife and brother met the stage just this side of Newton. Private Murray was an exemplary man and a good soldier. Lieutenant Hopkins speaks in the highest terms of him. He left a wife and six children. He left a wife and six children. One of his brothers is in the Polk City Company, and another lives at Hopkins Grove whither the body was taken.” See also Higginbottom 2007, *op cit.* page 207.
- [74] “More Recruits”. *The Davenport Daily Gazette*, Friday, April 18, 1862, vol. VIII(161). “Thirty-nine recruits for the Tenth regiment, and four for the Eight, left yesterday on the steamer Wm. L. Ewing for the South, under charge of Lieut. Hopkins. The Eighth will sadly need men to fill its badly thinned ranks.” Hopkins published an estray notice in the *Iowa State Register* on Wednesday, April 2, 1862 (page 3) indicating that he had arrived back in the Polk City area in February. The article in the *Davenport Gazette* confirms that the purpose of his visit was to recruit more troops.
- [75] McGregor, *op cit.*, p. 192.
- [76] “Leas & Dickerson, Licensed Government Claim Agents”, paid advertisement in *Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, February 18, 1863, p. 4.
- [77] Corinne Allen Helms (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- [78] “Ratification Meeting at Polk City” in *The Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, January 4, 1863: p.3.

- [79] *Chronicle of the Union League of Philadelphia 1862 to 1902*. Philadelphia, Privately printed for the League, 1902. The Union League of Philadelphia was one of the first in the country to organize under formal articles (adopted on December 27, 1862) and it provided an exemplar to other associations that formed immediately after.
- [80] Olynthus B. Clark, *The Politics of Iowa During the Civil War and Reconstruction*. Iowa City, Clio Pres, 1911, pp. 176-178. The Ottumwa meeting was followed by meetings in Bloomfield on February 21, Muscatine on February 28, Keokuk on March 2, Indianola on March 3, Burlington on March 6, and Clarinda on March 13. Edward H. Stiles includes an autobiography of Coles in *Recollections and Sketches of Notable Lawyers and Public Men of Early Iowa*, Des Moines, Homestead, 1916, pp. 4762-481.
- [81] Iowa Adjutant General's Records, file for 10th Regiment Volunteer Infantry, Co. A., on file at the State Historical Society, Des Moines.
- [82] "Curious, isn't it?" in *The Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, April 17, 1863, Vol. VIII(11): p.3., Des Moines. The reporter's mention of 'Bob Acres' is in reference to the fictitious character in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's comedy *The Rivals*.
- [83] "Union Meeting At Polk City", in *The Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, April 22, 1863.
- [84] "Union Meetings!", in *The Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, May 27, 1863. Vol. VIII(17): p. 5.
- [85] "Union Meeting At Brazelton", in *The Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, June 17, 1863. Vol. VIII(?); p. 3. It is believed that the Brazelton Schoolhouse was located in section 32, of Douglas Township (T81N-R23W) near the Greenwood Friends Cemetery. The rest of the article reports: "Stephen Brooks then took the stand. He stated that he lived down in the lesser Dixie, situated in the South-east corner of Delaware Township, where the far-scented Cops can smell a "nigger" forty miles on a dead level. His speech was full of music and merriment. He was followed by Rev. J.F. Wilson, a foreigner, who made some telling hits in favor of his adopted country. After a brief class-meeting the audience adjourned with three cheers for the Union, and three groans for Copperheads and other Traitors!"
- [86] "Correspondence of the Register", in *The Iowa State Register*, Wednesday, July 1, 1863.
- [87] *Ibid.*, p. 2. Accounts such as this, written in a politically charged time, can be heavily biased and may not present a true or accurate rendering of the events as they took place. Rival, partisan newspapers of the time are rife with journalistic 'thrust and parry', that portray their compatriots as champions of the cause and innocent victims to the aggressions of their vilified antagonists.
- [88] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- [89] Samuel Heinecke, *Genealogy from Adam to Christ; with the Genealogy of Adam Heineck and Henry VanDersaal from 1747 to 1803. To Which is Added, A Brief Account of the Author's Travels as an Evangelist*, p. 87. Philadelphia, Collins, 1869.
- [90] "Union Re Union", in the *Daily State Register*, Tuesday, August 25, 1863, p.3.
- [90] Iowa Adjutant General's Records, file for 44th Regiment Volunteer Infantry, Co. H., on file at the State Historical Society, Des Moines.
- [91] *Roster and Register of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion, Volume V*. Des Moines, Emory English, 1911, pp., 203-288.
- [92] *Iowa State Register*, Tuesday, May 31, 1864, p.3. "Captain Josiah Hopkins of this country, formerly of the 10th Iowa Infantry, has been commissioned Major of the 44th Regiment. We take this to be a good appointment. The Major is a working patriot. By the way, the Davenport *Gazette* persists in the statement that the Company which Major Hopkins raised for the Hundred-Day service, hails from Boone and Story counties. It is true that a portion of the men are from those counties; but Polk county had the honor to contribute largely to the organization of the company. Dallas county is also represented in it. We make these remarks, not to take away any glory which legitimately belongs to our sister counties, but to correct an error which does injustice to our own county." And Wednesday, June 1, 1864, p. 2. "Capt. Hopkins' Company, made up of enlistments from Polk, Boone, and Story Counties arrived at Davenport on Friday Last.
- [93] Corinne Allen Helms (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- [94] Polk County Land Transfers, Book S. p. 516. Microfilm POL-67 (1013167). State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines. "...the west half 1/2 of the north west quarter (1/4) of section twenty one(21) less 20 acres and the south east quarter (1/4) of the north east quarter of section twenty (20) all in township eighty one (81) north, Range twenty five west of the fifth P meridian containing one hundred and eighty (180) acres situated in Polk County and State of Iowa." The Friday, June 30, 1865 issue of the *Iowa State Register* [Vol. 4(140): p.1] reports: "Maj. Josiah Hopkins of Madison

Township, whilom of the 10th Infantry, has sold his splendid farm, and is about to remove to Lecompton, Kansas. A gentleman from Ashtabula county, Ohio, offered him \$35 per acre, and he sold out. We regret much to part with the Major. He has been a resident of the county for many years. During the war he very zealously and successfully contributed his -----ce, means, and military serves to the support of the Government. In the ranks, on the stump, and at the ballot box, he discharged his duty in a manner befitting a Christian patriot. In Lecompton he has purchased property from the last "Democrat" in that region; and the late owner will retire from the town on the advent of the Major and his family."

- [95] "Index of Names, Miami County Census 1867: Osawatomie Township". *Miami County Genealogy Society Quarterly*, Volume 5 (1990): pp. 11-12. Is it merely a coincident that Josiah and his family moved to the same location in 'Bloody' Kansas, where John Brown, only 11 years earlier, had entrenched against pro-slavery forces and where some of Brown's relatives still lived? Had the two become acquainted while Brown travelled through Iowa rallying support for his attack on Harper's Ferry?
- [96] Heinecke, *op cit.*, p.171.
- [97] McGregor, *op cit.*, p. 192.
- [98] Heinecke, *op cit.*, p.168.
- [99] *United States Census for Kansas 1870*. Osawatomie Township, pp. 24-25. Households 172 and 175.
- [100] Dixon, *op cit.*, p. 96, and pp. 73-85.
- [101] Mrs. Netti Sanford *Pioneer Life in Iowa: Early Sketches of Polk County, from 1842 to 1860*. Newton, Iowa Chas. A. Clark, 1874. Endpaper.
- [102] Burt, *op cit.*, p. 16.
- [103] Daniel K. Higginbottom, *Gone But Not Forgotten. The Hopkins Grove Cemetery Complex Union Township, Polk County, Iowa. The United Brethren Cemetery. Part IIIa*. Des Moines, State Historic Preservation Office, 2009.