

ROBERT E. HARBISON, proprietor of a fine eighty acre fruit and hay ranch, known as Meadow Farm and located some five miles south from Hood River, is one of the leading citizens of the valley. He was born in Warren county, Iowa, on September 30, 1865, the son of Matthew H. and Mary L. (Weir) Harbison, natives of South Carolina. His parents' ancestors were of Scotch-Irish lineage, who came from north Ireland to the colonies prior to the Revolution and were staunch American patriots. Our subject's father was born on May 18, 1833, and his wife was born on August 3, 1833. When they were two years old the two families moved to Indiana, and at Bloomington, in that state, they were married on September 28, 1854. They soon moved to Iowa and when the war broke out the father enlisted in Company C., Thirty-fourth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, on August 13, 1862, under Colonel Clark, and Captain Dan Lyons, and died in service, on January 20, 1863. He is buried in an unknown grave in the national cemetery near Memphis. The mother, still a widow, resides at Tangent, Oregon, with a son. Our subject was raised principally in La Crosse county, Wisconsin, and received a good education from the grades and high schools. When twenty-two he went to California and did various work for two years, then came to the Big Bend country, Washington, where, in 1885, he and his brother, J.S., and Charles Davis, started the town of Almira, then called Davisine. A year later he came thence to Hood River, where his mother bought a quarter section on the east side of the valley. Later she sold one hundred and twenty acres and deeded the remaining forty to our subject and his brother, John S. They erected a saw and grist mill in 1889 and operated the same until 1901 when the brother sold to Mr. Harbison, and he continued the operation of the mill until February, 1903, then sold out to Wilson Fike. Immediately afterward Mr. Harbison purchased the eighty where he now lives, which was a part of what his mother had sold. Mr. Harbison has thirty acres of apple orchard, mostly young trees just beginning to bear, and he has frequently taken prizes at the fairs. He has the famous banana apples, of which there are very few in the state. He has an elegant thirty acre meadow which produces about four tons of hay to the acre annually, it being irrigated from Neal creek.

On January 1, 1887, at Hood River, Mr. Harbison married Miss Lucy Rand, a native of La Crosse county, Wisconsin, and the daughter of Martin V. and Elizabeth (Feak) Rand, natives of Virginia and New York, respectively. The father enlisted in Company E, Second Wisconsin Infantry and served four years in the Civil war, and is now retired, living in University Park, Portland. Mr. Harbison has two brothers, John S., of Tangent, Oregon, and Luther J. at Vacaville, California. Mrs. Harbison has the following brothers and sisters: Jason, Bert, Harvey, Minnie Clelland and Lulu Horning, all of Portland. To Mr. and Mrs. Harbison four children have been born, Blanche, Hester, Ruth and Mary.

Politically, Mr. Harbison is a staunch Republican, although not very active. He and his wife belong to the Congregational church, and Mrs. Harbison is a member of the Women's Relief Corps. They are highly esteemed people and Mr. Harbison is looked up to as one of the enterprising and successful farmers and fruit raisers of the valley.

Every genuine American loves to read accounts of patriotism and brave acts in defense of country. Among other incidents occurring in the Harbison family of earlier generations, we mention the following, which is taken from Elizabeth E. Ellet's "Women of Revolution," now out of print. William Strong, relative on the mother's side to our subject, was a staunch patriot in the time of the Revolution and did all in his power to forward the cause of the struggling colonists. On June 11, 1780, on his own farm, in South Carolina, he was faced by a detachment of British, led by one Huck, and refusing to renounce his loyalty to the colonists and the cause they all loved, he was shot in cold blood.