

MRS. JAMES HARLAN (nee ANN ELIZA PECK)



Born: 1824 in Maysville, Mason Co., KY

Died: Sep. 4, 1884 in Fort Monroe, Hampton City, VA

Appointment(s):

American Missionary Association
(AMA)

One of original 'Gideonites'

1st SC Colored Vols – Military Camp
Hilton Head, SC
Apr. 1862

Mitchelville – Hilton Head, SC
Fall 1862

1824-1884

Ann Eliza Peck was one of five daughters born in 1824 in Maysville, Mason County, Kentucky to James Peck (1800-1832) and Eunice Knight. She was orphaned as a young teenager and lived with an uncle in Indiana.¹ Ann Eliza Peck attended Miss Larabee's School in 1841 where she met her future husband, James Harlan (1820-1899).² They were married on November 9, 1845 in Greencastle, Indiana.³ The couple moved to Iowa City, Iowa in March 1846 where Mr. Harlan was the Principal of Iowa City College.⁴ Mr. Harlan was appointed as the first Superintendent of Public Instruction of Iowa in 1847.⁵ James and Ann Eliza moved to Washington, D.C. when James was elected as a US Senator from Iowa in March 1855 and he was re-elected

¹ DePauw University Archives. *DePauw's Lincoln*. "James and Eliza Peck Harlan".
https://library.depauw.edu/librar/archives/lincoln/documents/ann_eliza_peck_harlan.asp.

² Ibid..

³ Brigham, Johnson. *James Harlan*. Iowa Biographical Series, Benjamin P. Shambaugh, ed. State Historical Society of Iowa City, IA, 1913, p36.
https://archive.org/stream/jamesharlan00inbrig/jamesharlan00inbrig_.djvu.txt

- Parish, John C ed *The Palimpsest*, Vol III, # 4, Apr 1922. "The Wedding of James Harlan", pp 4-8.

⁴ Hudson, David; Marvin Bergman and Loren Horton, eds. "Harlan, James (August 26, 1820 – October 5, 1899)" in *The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa* University of Iowa Press, 2009, p213
<https://www.ui.press.lib.uiowa.edu/bdi/DetailsPage.aspx?id=156>.

⁵ Ibid, p 214.

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twice to serve until 1873.⁶ He voted for the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution to abolish slavery. President Lincoln appointed him as Secretary of the Interior in March 1861 and after Lincoln's assassination, he served in President Johnson's cabinet just over one year before he resigned due to his opposition to Johnson's views about Reconstruction and Negro suffrage.⁷ Their only daughter, Mary, married Robert Todd Lincoln, President Lincoln's son.⁸ Ann Eliza and her husband, Senator James Harlan lived in Iowa 1860-1870 while he was a US Senator.

Mrs. Harlan was one of the original 'Gideonites' who travelled to Port Royal on April 17, 1862 on the first steamship 'Atlantic' of teachers and administrators appointed by the American Missionary Association.⁹ She was the only wife of a U.S Senator in the group. She worked first in the military camp on Hilton Head Island for the soldiers of the 1st SC Regiment Colored Volunteers and then assisted the teachers in Mitchellville.¹⁰ Mrs. Harlan responded to a survey by Rev. French of the American Missionary Association in March 1865 by letting him know that his idea to bring ladies to the Sea Islands to teach freedmen seemed to be a great success.

Women of the right character could and doubtless will be very useful to the poor people around Port Royal. But they should be selected with care...preference should be given to ladies of maturity, of strong practical common sense, rather than exquisite literary tastes.¹¹

U.S. Senator James Harlan and his wife were both involved in service to the freedmen of South Carolina. Before that, they had been instrumental in establishing an orphanage in Washington, D.C. after hundreds of freedmen's children had been left behind when the contraband families in D.C. had been transferred to a location in

⁶ Brigham, p 92

⁷ Aldrich, Charles, ed. State Historical Society of Iowa. "Annals of Iowa", Vol VIII, third series, Oct 1896, p 473

-.Brigham, pp 192, 199-200.

⁸ Hudson, p 214.

-.Aldrich, Vol IV, third series, Oct 1896, p 148.

https://archive.org/stream/indexannalsofiowa00statuoft/indexannalsofiowa00statuoft_djvu.txt

⁹ Harlan, James Mrs. [Letter dated March 31, 1862 to NFRA] in ⁹National Freedmen's Relief Association: By-Laws and Minutes, 1862-1868". Boston Public Library: Continental Monthly 1. June 1862, p 728.

- Walker, Susan. Journal of Miss Susan Walker March 3rd to June 6, 1862. Henry N.Sherwood, ed. Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio. Quarterly Publication 7, 1912, p 48.

¹⁰Aldrich, Vol II, p 491.

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Arlington Heights by the U.S. War Department.¹² Mrs. Harlan served on the Board of Managers of the National Colored Home for Orphans in 1862-1863.¹³ The Home was incorporated by an Act of Congress on February 16, 1863. Ann Eliza Peck Harlan died September 4, 1884 at the Hygeia Hotel in Fort Monroe, Hampton City, Virginia where she was visiting her daughter Mary and Robert Todd Lincoln but her body was taken back to Iowa where she was buried in Forrest Hill Cemetery, Block 3, Lot 35, Space E-3, in Mount Pleasant, Henry County, Iowa¹⁴. The one-time home of Ann Eliza and Sen. James Harlan at 101 W. Broad Street in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa is now the Harlan-Lincoln museum.

¹² Hudson, p 213.

¹³ DePauw University Archives.

¹⁴ Findagrave.com Memorial ID #33612643 created 7 Feb 2009 by Steven Tynan and maintained by Just-Us-Relatives. Portrait photo added 19 Jun 2017 by PJB; tombstone photo contributed 1 Nov 2009 by MR and DA Gates.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33612643>.

- *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 6 Sep 1884, p4.
- *Evening Star* newspaper. Washington, DC: 5 Sep 1884 [Obituary].