

Harriet J. (Russell) Crandall

1813-1903



Harriet was born in Hoosick, New York. She married John Riggs Crandall at age 22. They lived in Pekin, Illinois before moving to Peoria Illinois. During the winter of 1848 John heard the siren song of the gold rush in California and helped organized a group called the Peoria Pioneers and headed for California.

After a trying journey, John arrived and spent some time in the Nevada City area. In 1851 he sent for Harriet. She made the journey with a young niece via the Isthmus of Panama. She managed to bring a pump organ along with them.

Harriet quickly settled in to the life of a pioneer wife, at first she tended to the needs of miners at the Miner's Hotel: cooking and cleaning. When they moved into Auburn, she was very influential in establishing the first church in town. She, and the few women in town, literally marched from one saloon to the next to gather funds to pay for the church.

She remained devoted to the local church for the rest of her life, leaving a bequest to them upon her death. She is credited with being an agriculturist of the first realm and won many prizes at the State Fairs for her fruit.

K & M database, findagrave, Crandall file at Archives, Dec. 9, 1903, May 30, 1952.

Photo courtesy of Placer County Museum