

Chapter 10

Memories

Two major fires in Clemons destroyed much of Main Street in the business district. The first fire occurred June 9, 1930. "The State Center Enterprise" described the event in their June 12, 1930 paper.

STATE CENTER ENTERPRISE

June 12, 1930

Clemons Store Burned Down Monday Evening
(Fire occurred June 9, 1930)

Butts' General Merchandise Store
Completely Destroyed by Flames

A fire which for a time threatened to wreck havoc with the business district of Clemons, broke out at about 6:00 o'clock Monday evening in the warehouse of the A. W. Butts' general store. The building and all of its contents were destroyed with a loss estimated at \$15,000 to \$18,000 for the stock of merchandise and from \$2,500 to \$4,500 on the store building. Insurance of \$2,500 was carried on the building and \$10,000 on the stock. The cause of the fire is unknown, but it is thought that it might have been due to electric wiring.

Mr. Butts had locked his store for the evening and had just reached his home when the fire was discovered. In a short time it was apparent that the building could not be saved and the attention of the firemen was turned to saving the adjoining buildings. Fire departments were summoned from neighboring towns and the firemen from St. Anthony and State Center did some very excellent work in protecting neighboring buildings. The New Providence truck arrived in time to also be of service. The Zearing department halted at St. Anthony by motor trouble and was hauled to the scene later. Hubbard also was represented by their truck but it was not found necessary to use their outfit. Help was also sent from Marshalltown, but the first truck sent developed oil trouble, and a second truck sent later arrived after the fire was under control.

Mr. Butts was able to save nothing from his building, which was a two story frame structure, except part of his books and records. The building to the south, occupied by the Boggie Drug store, was badly damaged by the heat and flames and will need an entire new roof. The drug stock was removed when it appeared that this building also was doomed and Mr. Boggie will have considerable loss in his stock from damage and loss. The building on the north, a house and cafe owned by Bob Bryant, was saved after a heroic battle by the St. Anthony and State Center departments at the hot corner, but is, of

course somewhat charred and damaged on the south side.

Men working on the roofs kept water on the fronts of the store buildings across the street from the fire, and these escaped with but slight damage from the terrific heat.

The blaze and smoke could be seen for miles and attracted a large number of people from neighboring towns during the evening. It was nearly 8:00 o'clock before the fire was under control.

THE FIRE OF 1932

The major fire on the east side of Main Street occurred on May 15, 1932.

"One-half of Clemons Business District Wiped Out by Fire". This is the headline in the Marshalltown Times Republican paper on May 16, 1932. The fire started at 1:30 on Sunday morning wiping out one-half of the business district of the town. Loss was estimated at \$25,000 - \$35,000.

Glen Rhodes Restaurant was on the northeast corner of Main. Two persons sleeping on the second floor of the restaurant where the blaze started, narrowly escaped cremation. Awakened by the crackling of fire, they managed to escape by climbing from a window down a lattice work erected for vines. Fire originating in the attic of the restaurant is believed to have been caused by defective wiring.

Four buildings were wiped out in little more than one hour. The blaze gained much headway destroying the building very rapidly. As soon as the alarm sounded the flames were attacking Clair Martin's Produce House adjoining the restaurant. This building was a one story structure veneered with sheet metal.

Next in the path of the fire was E.L. Brackney's Hardware store, a two-story frame building. The last building to fall to the flames was the Town Hall, a one story wooden structure.

By the time the townspeople aroused, the restaurant was doomed and none of the contents, with the exception of a few clothes Mrs. Rhodes and her sister-in law, Mrs. Claude Harrington of Bangor, who were sleeping on the second floor, were trapped in the front rooms because of dense smoke and the flames. They escaped through the window. Mr. Rhodes was in Dike on business and had not returned when the fire

broke out.

Some merchandise was removed from the hardware but most contents were destroyed. The chemical truck was removed from the Town Hall and was used with some effect in preventing the spread of flames to the west side of the street. Buildings on the west were also saved by shifting wind, although all were more or less damaged.

New Providence, State Center, and St. Anthony were called upon for help and all responded by sending fire trucks and men. The volunteer firemen did heroic work in preventing the loss from being far greater.

Losses were partially covered by insurance. Losses were as follows:

Glen Rhodes Cafe, building owned by Mrs. Aaron Brackney, stock by Clair Martin.

E. L. Brackney Hardware was owned by Mrs. Aaron Brackney.

The Town Hall.

Farmer's Hall on the west side of the street.

Spiller Merchantile Company on the west side of street, loss was considerable.

Buildings on the west occupied by the Light Company and barbershop were damaged.

MEMORIES of MARIE and EARL VAN METRE

Our years in Clemons saw many, many changes; The demise of the Roseburrough Blacksmith Shop. The fires that took store buildings down as well as the poultry house and the cafe on the corner. The closing of Grinsted's Garage which later became Martin's Feed Store. The hog buying station owned by Clarence Kirkendall. There was the Drug Store owned by Dr. and Mrs. Wallace Boggie. He was the local veterinarian and Mrs. Boggie ran the store when he was out on calls. Dr. Earl Noble was our beloved family doctor and had his nice little office just north of their home. Mrs. Noble was a busy homemaker and their door was always open to the young people in the community as well as the many friends of all ages. We cannot leave out the Telephone building and some of the people I remember who were operators -- Stella and Henry Bryant, Ruth Dixon Ward, Warren and Bernice Reisinger. There was a harness shop next door run by Harry Grewell. Upstairs was the IOOF and Rebekah Lodges. I remember the meat market operated by Fred Stewart. The hardware store owned and run by Ben Brackney. On the corner where the new P. O. is now was the Brackney Store and operated by Aaron Brackey. There was a round heating stove in the back where young people gathered and solved many

issues of the day. The spot became known as the "Round Table". The Butts General Store was one I especially remember, it seemed they had a little bit of everything. Another of my most memorable times were when we had our meals at Bob and Maude Bryant's Cafe. All the teachers and single working people ate there and many good conversations and story telling were carried on. Back in "those days" the teachers had to be single, were to live in town, and attend church.

On the west edge of town there was the Brackney Elevator operated by Albert Brackney. He and his wife and children lived in the house on the lot west of the elevator. We cannot forget the Depot which was a busy place with the train going through with important material for the stores, elevators, mail, etc. W. J. Paltzer was depot agent for many years and was married to a local girl Thelma Helmcke Paltzer. Trains ran daily and passengers could ride to Marshalltown in the morning and return in the afternoon.

On the east street there was a garage which was owned and run by "Benny" Dunn for many years. Next to it was an oil station operated by Glen Jay. Glen Bartholomew drove the tank wagon.

Another of the outstanding businesses was the Minerva Creamery. The people who worked there and I remember most were Mr. Binkert, Harold (Bill) Everist, Glen Gillett and Sherb Noble. They made the best butter and it was labeled "American Beauty". Farmers from all around sold their cream to the Minerva Valley Creamery. Some of the cream haulers were Alva Kersey, Wayne Elsberry, Lynn Elsberry, Mr. McLane, Merle Grace, and Frank Males. On west and north a little from the Creamery was the Clemons Park. There was a metal arch over the drive entrance and the Minerva Creek ran through the park with a swinging bridge across to the ball diamond. The school had their annual picnic there. Also it was the setting for the big event of the Chautauqua which were attended by large crowds.

There was an elevator and lumber yard (which is still there) next to the hog buying station. Some of the early managers were Lyle Perry, Mr. Darland and Harold Christensen. There no doubt were some others but I don't remember the names. It was one of the busiest places in town, handling all kinds of material for building, feed, coal, etc.

Last but not least the Clemons Church was one of the joys of our lives. When we came to Clemons the people were so friendly, which made it easy for me not to be homesick for my friends in Marshalltown. Earl was active in the Sunday School and taught classes most of the years we were there. I remember the little orchestra that played before Sunday School began. Earl was a member with his saxophone. He also had the IPF group and was on the church board acting as finance chairman. The last few years he served as a deacon. I sang in the choir and was director off and on through the years. We

were fortunate to have Betty Everist as our organist. She was music director at the school and many of her pupils there helped in the choir. Earl also sang and so did our boys and daughter.

EARL and MARIE VAN METRE

A little about Earl and me and our 55 years in Clemons. Earl had worked in Marshalltown at the Iowa Savings Bank after graduating from Clemons in the class of 1919. I graduated from Marshalltown High School, class of 1922 and was employed as secretary for the owner of Levin Dry Goods which was later known as Wiseman-Higgins.

Earl and I first met at a bob-sled party which happened to end up at my home for oyster stew. A few weeks later Aunt Rosie and I attended a concert at the Methodist Church and there Earl and I saw each other again. Not long after, "Van" (as everyone called him) called me for a date which was the beginning of a long and happy life together. About a year before we were married Earl took a job with the Bank of Clemons. Earl was faithful and drove his Model T to Marshalltown at least once a week to see me. We were married in my home at 8 p.m. on December 31, 1925 by Rev. W. C. Cleworth, the Methodist minister. Our wedding was attended by Dad Van Metre, Daddy DuCane, Aunt Rosie and my brother Raymond from Omaha. Our good friend and neighbor, Mrs. Saegar, prepared and served a very nice lunch afterward. The next morning Earl had to be back at the bank in Clemons because in those days the statements all had to be out on the 1st day of the month. My brother and I took in a movie in the afternoon and a few friends who saw us thought that Ray was my husband.

Earl and his good friend, Herbert Armbrrecht, had both rented a house in Clemons so the townspeople didn't know for sure who was going to live there. In the meantime Earl and I stayed with Dr. and Mrs. Boggie for two weeks. When we moved into our new home, Herbert moved in with us and later was married to one of the school teachers, Edna Collar. We became very good friends and have many happy memories of those years.

Everything went along real well until the crash of 1931. In August the Bank closed and found the employees were out of jobs. We had two little boys, Daddy DuCane and Aunt Rosie living with us. Like everyone else we survived the winter with Earl looking for jobs to no avail.

In December of 1931 the Clemons Postmaster, A. W. Monroe and his wife, who was the clerk, both died within six weeks of each other. The Post Office was located in the corner of a former hotel building which was occupied as a home and also rented out rooms to traveling men and gravel haulers. This is where the Monroes lived. Very soon a Postal exam was held to fill

the vacancy. Earl and I, along with several other people took the exam. Earl was appointed and took the job in February of 1932 and remained until he retired in 1969. This was our first move which happened to be one block up the street. Our farm relatives came with hay racks and teams and moved us. We liked the place so well we stayed there 48 years.

A new Post Office was built across the street where the Brackney Grocery had been. We continued to live in the same home and remodeled the Post Office space into an office for Earl's tax and insurance business. We moved to the Mayflower apartments in Grinnell in April 1980. Again our friends and relatives helped us move but this time it was with a U-Haul, pick-up trucks, and cars.

RUTH BRACKNEY'S MEMORIES

My mother, Martha Jane Everist Brackney, was born on a farm northeast of Clemons now where Leonard Eurom resides. She was born February 14, 1860.

My father, Albert Brackney, was born in Ohio on a farm between Harveysburg and Wilmington on January 20, 1860. He came to Iowa in 1881 with his parents and lived on the farm where Fred Davis lived just across the road from my mother.

They were married on August 21, 1884. They first farmed on a farm south of Minerva. My sisters Mae and Cora Bell (she lived only 3 days) were born there. My brother, Floyd, was born in the house where the Euroms live only a few months before my parents moved to Calhoun County near Fonda where they farmed for five years.

When my parents moved back to Marshall County, they did not have a farm so they moved above the store in Minerva. They lived there only a short time before moving to Clemons.

My father got a job working in the elevator with Seth Gause. He also worked at the hardware store making fence, the kind that had slats put together with wire. Later he bought the elevator, known as Brackney's Elevator for many years.

When they moved to Clemons they lived in the house where Edna Clemons lives. My sister Effie was born there. At this time Clemons was only three blocks long and one block wide. There were no houses south of that street, just corn fields.

When mother was a girl and up to the 1890's there was only timber where our house finally was built. There were celebrations in this grove. That is where Clemons Grove got its name. After my parents were married they were at a celebration in this grove when my mother saw my father plowing across the road. He had entered the

plowing contest and had on his good suit. She was provoked until she heard he had won the plowing match and got \$5.00.

The first church was on the road to St. Anthony on the south side of the road someplace across the road between Joe Griffiths and the Bryant farm. For a long time a little of the foundation could be found. I think Max Proctor probably found it. When that church was closed it was decided to have the church in Clemons in the building that stood where the post office now is.

There was no railroad when my mother was a girl. She remembered when the railroad was built.

The church decided to have a fulltime minister so wanted to use the house where my parents were living so they had to move. They bought the lot where Thelma Paltzer lived. One day my mother was in that corner store and heard lots were going to be sold where the grove was so she went right over to the elevator and told my father about it. He went right away and bought the lot where our house stands.

There were five lots sold in that grove. Our house was the middle, two west and two east. When I was a little girl there were five houses there. John Freese later bought the farm where Bob Jay lived, Roy Davis presently, and wanted to put a house on it. He bought the house just east of our house and sold the lot to Dad.

My brother Floyd was married in 1912 and the house just west was moved on a lot he owned just east of the lumber yard. That house burned when Clair Martin owned it. This house, when it stood west of it became a rent property and occupied by people who stole much from us, so father decided to buy it.

The house where Reisingers live used to be on the lot at the east end of our yard. After the house that was on that corner was moved out in the country, the second house on the north side of the road to Bromley was moved, my father bought the empty lot and moved that last house over on that corner. That left only our home and the one farther west that still stands.

The house where we live was built in 1894. The folks moved into it in October before my sister Eva was born. The east part of the house was added in 1900 after I was born. I was born September 13, 1900.

My father not only had the elevator but he was active in the affairs of the town. He was secretary on the creamery board for years. He was president of the school board when the high school was built in 1912.

It was quite an ordeal to get the school built. Cy Andrews, Tom Turner, and Tom Andrews wanted the school built on some land Cy would give north of Clemons. Their lawyer kept serving injunctions on our school and we were out of school months at a time. The law suit was carried to the State Supreme Court where the suit was thrown out of court. They said of course the school should be built in the town of Clemons and not

out in the country. The high school was built in 1912. When it was built I was in the 5th and 6th grade room.

Uncle Aaron Brackney was secretary of the school board at that time.

The little two room school house just south of the new building was bought and made into a residence. It was moved where Mr. Tuttle now lives. It burned while Charles Beckwith and family lived in it.

When I was a little girl we had a whole block of buildings on Main Street. On the eastside on the corner was a cafe, then a millinery store, hardware, Post Office, Barber shop then the alley. On south was a pool room, saloon, doctor's office (where the telephone was later). A Dr. Turner was doctor until 1905 then Dr. Earl Noble came to town. Then the hotel. In the lower part of the doctor office was a printing shop where the Clemons paper was printed.

On the westside of the street was the corner store, then the meat market where the tavern is now, then a general store and Butt's store on the alley. The next place was the drug store, a house, then the bank and on the corner was my uncle Aaron's carpenter shop and paint shop (Carl Anderson did painting and paper hanging).

On this corner was the church before the new church was built. The materials for the church were bought from my father who had the elevator, lumberyard. He sold coal and cement and all kinds of building materials.

That corner store certainly was a general store. The first owner was Henry Clemons. He had everything to sell; clothes, shoes, yard goods, groceries, jewelry, etc.

The town was Clemons Grove until the First World War then the name of the town was shortened to Clemons. When I was away from home I had to always send a telegram or send my trunk to Clemons Grove and my letters to Clemons. The railroads did not have Clemons listed but they did have Clemons Grove.

When I was growing up there were four trains a day. The morning train went to Marshalltown around 7:30; it was a passenger train. It came back around 11 o'clock, a freight and passenger train. When it came back about 3:30 it was still a freight and passenger train. The evening train came from Marshalltown around 6 o'clock and it was a passenger train. You could go down on the early train, do some shopping and come back before noon or you could stay all day and come back in the evening. On special days like the County Fair or Circus, the train always had extra coaches and they were full.

I can remember people from Marshalltown would come to Clemons once a year in a special coach and have a big picnic in the grove north of the tracks. Their coach would be put off on the side track before noon and taken back in the afternoon. That was long before the grove was made into a park.

I think Bert Pollock was the first banker.

There were seven children in our family. Mae died on September 28, 1905 at age 21. She contracted typhoid fever after attending a church convention some place out of town.

Cora Bell died when she was only three days old.

Floyd was born August 31, 1887, and died March 19, 1953. He attended Cornell College in Mt. Vernon. He painted the 5 by 7 foot corn picture which hangs in the Capital Building in Des Moines. It was painted in 1915 and was taken to San Francisco and was in the Iowa building there during their Worlds Fair. It was brought back to Iowa and was in the Historical Building for a while then taken to the Capitol Building. It was sold to the state in 1939. President Taft had one of his corn pictures.

Effie was born July 24, 1892, and died July 25, 1914, at age 22. She graduated from college in June and died in July.

Eva was born December 24, 1894 and died January 3, 1978. She was a licensed minister. She married Lester T. Proctor on August 25, 1920. Both attended Palmer College in Albany, Missouri, Defiance College in Defiance, Ohio and Chicago University.

Prudie lived 9 months. She was born in September 1898.

Ruth was born September 13, 1900 and graduated from Clemons High School May 1919. She graduated from Palmer College in Albany, Missouri and Defiance College in June 1924. She also attended Ohio State University one year; University of Iowa one summer; University of Pennsylvania; and Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia for one year. She taught science for 7 years and worked for the Commission for the Blind as a Home Teacher for over 17 years. Ruth is retired and lives in Des Moines.

About some of the buildings. The saloon closed and Al Christensen bought the building and had a shoe repair and harness shop for many years. He later moved the building and remodeled it for their home.

The cafe burned. The hardware store burned and the little Post Office was torn down to keep the fire from spreading. The contents were moved into the store where the drug store had been. Later when Mr. Moore became Post Master and he lived in the hotel, he moved the Post Office to a room in the hotel where it remained until the new post office was built.

The Town Hall is where the post office used to be. The Butts store burned in 1930.

The pool hall has had many businesses in it. A millinery store, butcher shop and cafe. The building that stands between it and the old telephone building was brought from Bromley. It was the general store there.

The house where Freem Perry used to live and I think Rowe lives there now was brought from Bromley. The houses where Fred Davis lives or did and the Spurlin house and the one just north of it were all three brought from St. Anthony.

The house that was where Fred Davis lives was moved out in the country on the Warner farm where I believe Louis Nichols lives. Ruth Moore Wolf and True Wolf lived in it after they were married. I don't think it is still there now.

Clemons had a full time minister, there were lyceum programs in the church every winter and Chautauqua in the park every summer. The park was enjoyed with picnics and baseball games. St. John's Lutheran Church had their annual picnic in the park every year. The park was lighted and men played horseshoe every night.

Bert Roseburrough had the blacksmith shop. I wish it could have been kept as a historic landmark.

Times have changed so much and so have we.

Submitted by
Ruth Brackney

A PERSONAL STORY OF THE WINTER OF '36 As Told By Dorothy Noble Edler

The blizzard of 1935-1936 affected many people in many different ways, but one of the more unique was experienced by Dorothy, daughter of Dr. E. H. Noble of Clemons. She is now the wife of Arlind Edler and they reside in the rural Zearing area. Dorothy awakened on a Sunday morning not feeling well. Her father, brother Sherwood and other men from Clemons, were shoveling snow south of town to open up the roads. The men came home at noon having shoveled 1 mile. Dr. Noble diagnosed Dorothy's illness as appendicitis. He was to go to State Center and assist Dr. Woods with an appendectomy on an Olbrecht boy so it was decided to take Dorothy along. They were able to drive one mile on the shoveled out road. Dr. Noble had put Dorothy's sled in the car and then he and her brother Sherb pulled her about a quarter of a mile on her sled when they were met by Bill Armbrrecht with a bobsled pulled by a team of horses. They stopped at Bill Armbrrecht's (present Sherwood Armbrrecht home) to warm themselves and his wife, Elsie, gave them a feather mattress to put in the bobsled for Dorothy to lay on. She also heated a bunch of bricks to place around her to help keep her warm.

A fresh team of horses was hitched to the bobsled and the journey was resumed through a path of least resistance - zig zagging around the large drifts and cutting fences wherever necessary. Among the fences cut were those belonging to Dorothy's future father-in-law, Bill Edler.

When they got to Wilbert Hilleman's farm, present home of Howard Hilleman, Bill Armbrrecht left his team to rest and borrowed the farmer's team for the final trip into State Center. It took 6½ hours to make the journey from Clemons to State Center.

Meanwhile, Dr. Woods could not wait for Dr. Noble and performed the appendectomy on the Olbrecht boy - the appendix had ruptured.

Dr. Noble was concerned for Dorothy and the danger of infection from an operating table just used for a ruptured appendix - no antibiotics, penicillin or sulfonamides in those days. Out of concern and due caution, it was decided to take Dorothy to a larger hospital. Lee Hilleman, owner of the John Deere Implement store in State Center, took Dorothy and her father by pickup to the Deaconess Hospital (now MACH East) on the old "Lincoln Highway" which ran through Main Street of State Center and was open. She had an emergency appendectomy that same Sunday night performed by Dr. Ralph E. Keyser, a well-known surgeon whose son, Earl, is also a practicing physician and surgeon in Marshalltown to this present day.

Dr. Noble remained at the hospital with Dorothy until the following Wednesday when he got a ride to State Center in a mail Star Route car which delivered mail from Marshalltown to State Center. Here he met Mrs. Noble who had come by bobsled to State Center and she then rode the mail car back to Marshalltown to stay with Dorothy and Dr. Noble was again able to return to Clemons via bobsled.

The next day, Thursday, the road from Clemons to Marshalltown was opened and Dr. Noble brought Dorothy with her mother home from the hospital by way of the Hartland Road (now E-29) - an unheard of occurrence in those days of long convalescence. Dr. Noble feared the roads would again become blocked and they were. Dorothy was brought home and cared for by her mother under the watchful eye of her father. She was in bed for three weeks but lost no school since it was closed six weeks due to the terrible winter of '36.

The winter of 1936 is remembered by many of the area. Articles from the "Marshalltown Times Republican" and personal accounts of Lois Shives relates the severity of the winter.

"CLEMONS WITHOUT TRAIN SERVICE FOR TWO WEEKS"
(February 21, 1936 - from Marshalltown Times Republican)

Clemons has been entirely without train service for more than two weeks and much of the time has been without coal.

The consolidated school and the church have been closed for a month. Several families who have been without fuel have moved in with relatives. Groups of men prevented suffering by forming wood chopping crews.

There was no mail for four days prior to Tuesday



Winter of '36

when a group of men with bobsleds opened a way to State Center to meet the mail carrier and obtain a supply of bread.

The snow plow reached Clemons Wednesday morning from the west with the aid of gangs of shovelers. The road from Clemons to St. Anthony also has been opened.

“SNOWSHOES NEXT, IF POSSIBLE”- Is Doctor’s Intent
(1936 - from Marshalltown Times Republican)

Does anyone know where Dr. E. H. Noble of Clemons can buy or borrow a pair of snowshoes?

After several weeks of hardship in trying to reach patients in town and country, capped by his experience in bringing his daughter to the Deaconess Hospital here Sunday, Dr. Noble thinks he’d like to give “shoes” a try, even though he is inexperienced in their use.

When his daughter became ill Sunday, Dr. Noble started for Marshalltown by way of State Center in a car. He made just one mile. A hand sled was called in to use for a quarter of a mile where contact was made with a farmer friend who put a bobsled and team at the doctor’s disposal. By changing horses three times in the six miles which took four horses to negotiate, State Center was reached where another friend provided a car for the rest of the trip to Marshalltown. The daughter stood the trip well and is making satisfactory progress Dr. Noble reports.

(Thanks to Dora (Mrs. B. B. Dunn) for her scrap book where I obtained the above news articles about our memorable winter of 1935-1936.)

I was attending Iowa State Teachers College (UNI) at Cedar Falls that year and because of the snow, couldn’t get home to my Grandma, Lavina Bartine’s

funeral in January. When I came home in March, my dad, Cy Bartine, and brothers met me in the bobsled on a road north of out farm and then proceeded across fields where the fences had been cut to our farm house.

The heavy snow made hardships for many people. Most farmers at that time used horses, milked cows, raised chickens and butchered their own meat. Very few rural homes were modern. Wood and coal heating stoves were used in many homes.

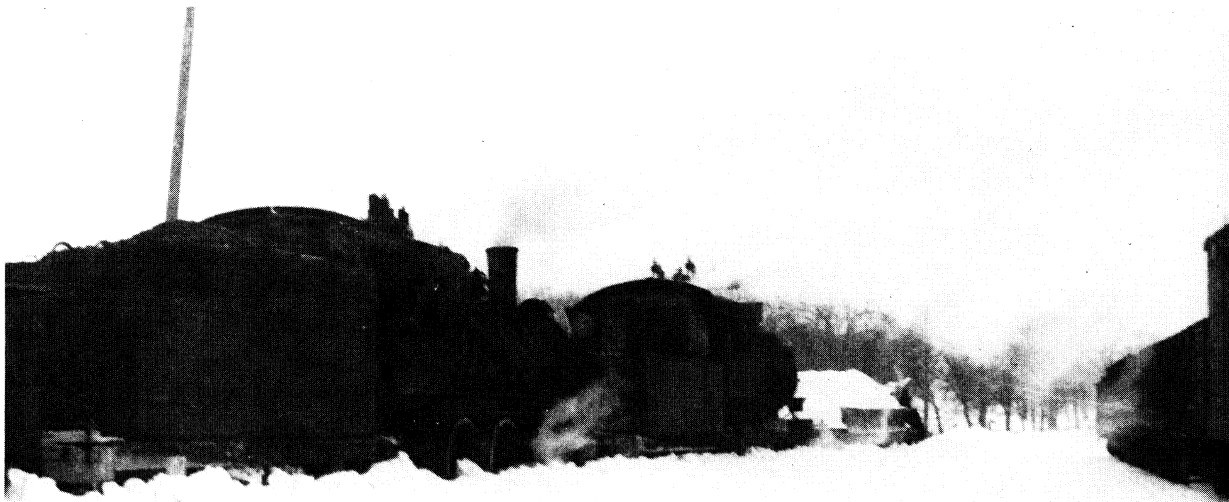
MARSHALLTOWN TIMES REBUPLICAN, January 8, 1982
(On the Winter of 1935-1936 - Sue Roe reports)

Sherb Noble, now of Kankekee, Illinois, was 28 and living in Clemons. and he remembers being snowbound for 18 days. He said men met at the City Hall every night to decide wether to shovel snow or cut wood for fuel the next day.

The cold started January 18th and never relented until February 22nd. It was the most prolonged period of cold weather ever recorded. A state-wide average of only 5.7 degrees compared to a 24 degree normal February. State Climatologist, Paul Waite, says those were the days before the discovery of wind chill, but he estimates it would have been 60-80 degrees below zero -
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Lyle Perry, a former Clemons resident, who now resides with his wife Irma at the Villa de Sol, Marshalltown, tells of time the gang had shoveled to the first bridge south of Clemons and Dr. Noble brought a cream can full of coffee to the workers, and by the time they got it, it was frozen!!!!

Hopefully, our Winter of 1982 isn’t a repeat!!!!!!!



Winter of '36 - Train

MEMORIES OF CLEMONS

As Told By Constance Lundin

Around 1880, west of the present creamery sat a little yellow house belonging to Oscar and Anna Lundin. Oscar was a meat cutter and the slaughter house was located north, down the hill from the yellow house and east of the Clemons park with a drain running into a cesspool.

East and south of the slaughter house, Fred Clemons had an ice house. They cut blocks of ice in January and February out of Minerva Creek, packed it in straw and stored it in the ice house, furnishing the Clemons residents with needed supply of ice. The building was about 14 ft. high and about 15x30 ft. wide and long with very thick walls.

In later years, Oscar and the family moved into the living quarters above the meat market. This building was originally built by William M. Clemons as a boarding house. The uptown shop served sandwiches and coffee. Oscar also made summer deliveries of meat and ice in the country. For this purpose he built a crisscross double boarded box for better insulation and packed it with ice. He had it set on a spring wagon and the farm women would phone in their order. He would start out early in the morning and would be met by the lady of the house, her dress covered by a big apron, and watched as he would cut off roasts or steaks with a huge steak knife and weigh the meat on a hanging scale. Roasts and steaks

weigh the meat on a hanging scale. Roasts and steaks were 20-25¢ a pound, but sometimes he would have a special of 3 pounds of steak for 25¢.

Oscar bought cattle from area farmers and Connie remembers occasionally helping drive critters into town for butchering. He also bought butchered beef in quarters and halves from Britten's packing plant in Marshalltown. He ordered processed meat of wieners, bologna and other cured meat and occasional special orders of mutton as well - all of which were shipped by a freight train which ran two times a day both ways between Story City and Marshalltown. He also



Pulling Ice from the Minerva Creek



Loading Ice

brought cured meat from Armour in Chicago and Cudahy in Omaha. Oscar rendered lard and sold it to the local people and did custom butchering for area farmers.

Oscar had the first telephone in the town of Clemons and was on a party line with 8 country women. Such a thrill for those ladies to have a phone. One day Oscar wanted to order some meat from Britten's in Marshalltown and several ladies were visiting on the party line. Everytime he lifted the receiver, he'd hear about their chickens and how many eggs they were laying and how their gardens were doing and on and on and on. Finally, Oscar broke in on the conversation, "Ladies, could I please have the line for a few minutes to place an order to Britten's and then you can have it again?", but they just kept talking. Finally, in exasperation, Oscar put in a general ring which was one big long ring to be used only for emergencies. The following conversation ensued:

Oscar: Attention, please.

Lady: What for?

Oscar: Strong man wanted.

Lady: What for?

Oscar: To beat the whey out of bullfrogs.

Click, click, click went the receivers and Oscar finally got his line. The phone was in his butcher shop and used for business only. Oscar's daughters were never allowed to use it for visiting. Later they had a phone put in their living quarters.

Anna Kindley Lundin, Oscar's wife, was the daughter of a Quaker minister at the Bangor and Honey Creek churches. Their oldest son, Wade, would someday be Connie's husband. He was probably born in the yellow house, since he was born September 26, 1881. A daughter, Lavada, married Clayton Jackman, who was the first buttermaker to put Clemons on the map. After graduating from Ames, he came directly to Clemons as manager of the newly built creamery in 1909. His butter was rated among the best in the state of Iowa. Wade told Connie about the rows of test tubes Clayton used to test cream samples from each farmer. Mr. Jackman was very particular about his butter making and nothing was



Ice Wagon

wasted. The buttermilk was sold and even the butter washings were saved. Farmers brought barrels to the creamery and took home the butter washings and buttermilk in which they soaked oats and used as "slop" for their hogs. Other children were Worth, Lovera and Ralph. Three weeks after a youngest son was born, March 3, 1906, Anna died from "milk leg" or phlebitis.

Anna was the first teacher at the new clapboard school Magee south and west of town. She, as well as the children of Clemons, all walked to the Magee School, since one was not built in town until 1895. She also taught the first Sunday School in Clemons in a small building between the old bank building and Brackney's grocery store on the west side of the street. She had 35 boy's and some of them were Vern and Fred Clemons, Bill D. Clemons, Bernard Grewell and her own sons, Wade and Worth. After Anna's death, Mrs. Grewell, a Catholic lady who couldn't get to the St. Anthony Church, said Anna could do more with her boy than anyone could and he'd do anything for her. Mrs. Grewell said it was through Anna's influence that helped her son to become an upstanding citizen. This class of 35 boys gave Anna a strawberry designed glass fruit bowl with six saucers as a gift of appreciation. Each boy, including Wade and Worth, contributed 25¢ and the dishes are in Lavada Jackman and Lundin families to this day.

Connie related about the time that Anna's brother, Ed Kindley, who was a lecturer and superintendent of schools at Davenport came to Clemons for a visit. He told about a committee gathering donations to build a church in Clemons and would Anna give it a name. Since she was the only Quaker and there were more from other Christian faiths, she thought others should decide the name. However, she would help get the church started and help any way she could. The Clemons Christian Church was completed and dedicated October 15, 1899.

Anna was always ready to extend a helping hand to anyone who was down and out. One such person was a Carl Andeson who came from Norway when he was 16. To pay his way, he was indentured to the ship's captain where he learned to drink and became an alcoholic.

Connie heard him tell about his conversion in the Clemons church. He got so drunk some Saturday nights he'd fall in the gutter beside the wooden sidewalks and would still be there on Sunday morning. The ladies on their way to church would pull their long skirts tight around them to avoid him. But Anna would stop, talk to him, help him up on his feet, tell him to get cleaned up, sobered up and come to church. "She stayed by me until I quit drinking", Carl told Connie and through Anna he joined the Clemons church and became the church sexton. He was a painter and paper hanger by trade and later married Esta Zerbe and lived in Cora Shimel's (d. 8/29/1981) house. They had a son, Eugene, adopted another son, and Mrs. Anderson had a daughter from her first marriage.

Connie tells another little anecdote about Anna. Some of the young men of Clemons loved to play the game of "Sheephead". Four of these young men ordered a pony keg of beer which came up on the evening train to Clemons. Someone tipped Anna off so when the train came in, Anna was waiting - hatchet in hand. When the brakeman sat the keg down, Anna broke the head with her hatchet, tipped the keg over, and the brew trickled down along the tracks. The four sheephead players waiting for their refreshments stood watching - speechless.

A few years after Anna's death, Oscar married a widow by the name of May Forrestal Estes about 1910. She was born in Illinois and when she was 10 years old she came to live in the "Cap" Anson home where she was raised by this well-known family of earlier Marshalltown days. She helped herd cattle south of Anson Street - she was also a very pretty and obedient girl. "Cap" thought so highly of her - he named May Street in her honor. May was a milliner and dressmaker by trade and had a small shop in Clemons on the west side of the street. She had customers come from Marshalltown on the train to have her make their dresses. She also sewed wedding, graduation and other special occasion gowns and made beautiful hats.

Now about Connie - she was born August 29, 1893, to John and Eleanor Flowers of rural Zeoring. She attended the Varnum county school in Lincoln Township, Story County, Iowa. After finishing 8th grade, Connie started to high school at Nevada, but due to the distance, her parents transferred her to Clemons when the new high school was built in 1912. During her sophomore year, she worked for room and board in the Floyd Brackney home. Mr. Brackney was an artist and had gained both national and state fame for his painting "Corn" which was painted for the Worlds Fair in San Francisco in 1914. The picture was painted in Clemons at his home depicting corn spilled out of a basket and is now displayed at the Capital Building in Des Moines. Floyd's father, Bert, owned the elevator in Clemons.

As a high school junior, Connie worked for her room and board in the home of Oscar and May Lundin and this is when Connie met her future husband, Wade.

Wade first worked for his father, then went to South Dakota and worked for his uncle who had a dray line. The Capital Building was being constructed at Pierre and Wade was hauling the columns for the edifice when he received word his mother was dying after Ralph was born. He arrived home shortly before her death. He then stayed home and again helped his father in the shop and this is what he was doing when Connie started boarding with them.



WADE LUNDIN

Wade was also one of two cream haulers for the creamery. His route was west and southwest of town. Oscar would always tell Wade, "You set the time to go to bed but I set the time to get up" and that time was 4:00 a.m. First the horses were fed and then hitched to the wagon in which the cream was hauled. The farmers kept the cream cans in well pits, or pit coolers which could be raised when needed by wheel cranks or in coolers through which water was pumped from the windmill into the cooling box which drained into tanks for drinking water for cattle.

Following her junior year in May 1914, as soon as school was out, Connie went to work for Fred and Bertha Weuve of rural Colo for \$3.75 a week doing general housework. Her dad sold a big load of corn for \$30 and that, with her earnings from the Weuve's, paid her tuition to the Teacher's Institute at Cedar Falls for the summer session starting June. She boarded in an apartment with a Swedish girl who was lots of fun and a Norwegian girl who was very strict and stern. They each paid \$2.50 a week rent. After classes, a professor's wife hired Connie for 10¢ an hour for 3 hours every day to dust the stairs and landings of a very enormous house which was a very boring chore.

Connie returned to Clemons for her senior year the fall of 1914, again boarding at the Oscar Lundin home. Some of the students she remembers in high school are Eva and Ruth Brackney, Candace Smith and

twin Cady, their sister Emma, Willie Armbricht, Carmie Wantz and a Moore girl. The superintendent was a Mr. Ernst. When the school day was over, Connie, Stella Mooney, and "Shirt" Gertie Brackney (they nicknamed her "Shirt" because she couldn't keep her blouse tucked in place) went to the post office to sort the evening mail which came on the 6:00 p.m. train from Marshalltown just for the fun of it. The post office was kept open until 8:00 p.m. Mr. Dixon, the postmaster, usually made himself scarce when his volunteer help arrived.

While on his route, Wade would sometimes get orders for meat from women who did not have telephones. He would usually finish his route by 9:30 or 10:00 a.m. - change clothing and then help his father in the meat market and relay his meat orders to his father for the day of his meat and ice deliveries.

Connie would have graduated in the fall semester but lacked one credit to get a signed diploma. The superintendent wanted her to continue on to college and specialize in History and English in which she excelled but was unable to go due to lack of funds.

She also wanted to get married, so she quit school and on December 29, 1914, Connie Flowers and Wade Lundin spoke their wedding vows. Their first home was in the present Cora Shimel's house and they paid \$15 a month rent. Bert Roseburrough was their next door neighbor to the north. He was a blacksmith and his shop was west of the Brackney grocery store, present site of the post office. West of the blacksmith shop was the home of Willett and Nina Moore which has had extensive remodeling and is the residence of Bruce and Mary Lang Reisinger and family.

South of the stock yards was a big red building owned by Oscar Lundin and was used as a livery stable and for storage. This later on became the site of the Farmers Coop building in 1919. Next to Oscar's butcher shop on the south was Henry Butt's grocery store. Henry had 2 children, a boy and a girl, Adele, about 16 years old. One time when Mrs. Butt's was ill during the winter, Henry needed clean shirts and his long underwear and Adele's mother told her to do the laundry on the old crank washing machine. Adele knew her mother starched clothing and starched her father's underwear and hung them outside to dry in the cold. She thought they were frozen stiff but instead, they were starched stiff.

South of Aaron Brackney's store across the street was the home of Frank Foster, a painter and carpenter.

Abner Grewell had a dray line and was also foreman on the railroad between Clemons and Story City. His son-in-law, Bert Mitchell, worked on the dray line, hauling and delivering freight to and from the train. At times, he also drove a horse and buggy for Dr. E. H. Noble. One time, early in the spring when the creeks were out of their banks, Dr. Noble had to pay a sick call to Joe Hall's father east and north of town. When he got

to the bridge, he rode his horse "Ole Babe" across with water to his knees holding his doctor's bag up high, keeping his medical supplies out of reach from the flood waters.

Theodore Helmcke was one of the first owners of an automobile in the Clemons areas. The family was preparing to leave for a trip to Denver when Annabelle, who was about 7 years old, started crying and said she didn't want to go. When questioned "why"? she told her parents she wouldn't go until she kissed her Sunday School teacher first. Connie had 7 little girls in her Sunday School class and Annabelle was among them. So her parents brought her down to kiss her Sunday School teacher, then she was perfectly content and away they went. Annabelle married Charles D. Norris. Her sister Wanda Helmcke married Harte Ross. Another sister, Thelma married Bill Paltzer who was depot agent in Clemons for many years and lived in the first house south across the street from the present new post office. A third sister, Elsie married Raymond Bryant, who was an excellent plasterer in the Clemons area.

In the fall of 1915, Connie taught in a country school SE of Marshalltown boarding with a school board member.

About 1916, due to health reasons, Oscar wished to dissolve the family business with his 2 sons, Wade and Worth, and retire. Wade had rheumatic heart fever when he was 21 and Dr. Noble told him to get outdoors more. Wade went to work for Thomas Warner on the farm east of town. Bob and Maude Bryant eventually bought out the meat market and converted it into a restaurant. This property now belongs to Jerry and Doris Votruba. After retirement, Oscar and May eventually moved to Pecquot, Minnesota, where their younger son Worth had moved. later, they moved to Donathan, Missouri, where Oscar died in his 70's around 1931. Oscar is buried in the Clemons Cemetery.

About 1919, Wade and Connie moved to Bangor where Wade worked for a John Reno. About 1928, they moved back to Clemons and worked for Fred Clemons living in his tenant house now owned by Kenneth and Florence Lewis.

In 1932, they moved to Marshalltown and Wade worked at a consumer's meat market but had to quit due to poor health. About 1935, Connie went to work as head cook and assistant manager in Ford Hopkin's Tea Room which had just opened. It also was a drugstore and Connie worked here until the early forties.

Wade died March, 1946. Connie and Wade had 2 sons; Beryl, born February 20, 1916, and Bern Milo, born October, 1918.

Beryl worked for a fiber glass company in Arlington, Indiana, and Bern Milo was a foreman at Cabot Corporation in Kokomo, Indiana, which makes castings and ship products to Fisher Controls in Marshalltown. Both are now retired. Connie has 5

grandchildren, all college graduates and presently resides in Marshalltown.

Connie is one of the few remaining individuals who has direct contact with the entire century of Clemons from its beginning through her husband's family.

"SIZE OF A DIME - HEART OF A DOLLAR"

Describes Clemons so Well

I cannot go back to the 1880's and describe some big historical event, but history is in the making all of the time and is part of everyone's life and everyone's memory. My first introduction to Clemons was in the summer of 1926. I married into the Sparrow family on March 10, 1926. A short time later I learned to drive our Model T Ford. In the summer of that year my husband said to me, "You take this part for the binder to Mr. Roseborrough at Clemons; then go to the Brackney elevator and pay for the seed I bought". He told me how to get to Clemons. We lived 4½ miles west of St. Anthony. I found Mr. Roseborrough's blacksmith shop right behind Helen's store and the elevator nearby. Later in the summer, my parents, from Eagle Grove, came to visit me. I wanted to show them my driving ability and that I knew my way around. So I took them to St. Anthony to see the very good hardware store where we had bought (on a special order) my all enamel copper-clad wood and coal range. My husband told me I could have any kind of stove I wanted. He knew more about housekeeping than I did. That stove was my constant companion for the next 20 years.

After my parents and I explored St. Anthony we drove on to Clemons where I pointed out the blacksmith shop and the elevator. I couldn't point out anything else because I didn't know that much. But the town impressed me. It was so clean, so orderly, and so quiet. Later I learned that there were grocery stores, a bank building, a tavern, a telephone office, a post office, a school house, a gas station, a feed business, a lumber yard and the railroad depot, and perhaps more.

On March 30, 1927, Mary was born. She was on a formula and one item of the formula I could not buy in Zeiring, so I found it in the store at Clemons. I wasn't brave enough to drive to Marshalltown yet.

In the spring of 1926, Ora and I began living on the Sparrow farm. Ora was born on that farm in July, 1900, and Mary was born there also on March 30, 1927. On the Jack Abbot farm just north of the Sparrow farm Cy Bartine's family had been living, but that spring they moved. The Sparrow's knew them very well, but I didn't meet them till after I married Carl Ingledue and went to live on the Ingledue farm. In the 1800's the Frank Tucker farm was part of the Ingledue land and so was the farm

where Joan Witt and family now live.

Carl's father, Will Ingledue, (when he was a very young man) went to the then "far west" and worked on a real ranch as a "riding-roping" cowboy. When he came back from the west he began to farm, but his health was not good and his family of seven boys and one daughter had to help a lot. They built a tile factory and got the clay from the clay deposit on the farm. The factory was about where the railroad crosses the gravel pit road. Bits and pieces of it can still be found on the farm now occupied by the Dick Bartine family. The Mason City Tile Factory began to undersell the small factories till it put them out of business. When the tile factory was running, Carl's job was to fire and time the baking process. It was a man's job, hot and exhausting, and Carl was only 15 years old.

Carl's mother told him that she remembered when the Indians were friendly; there never were any troubles she said. Indians sometimes went into homes. If they saw food in plain sight they wanted it, but there was no trouble. Carl's mother's name was Mary Monrow and she was from Kansas.

Carl told me that remains of an old stagecoach road could be seen even now. It is along the south side of the ditch or creek bank where it intersects the blacktop road just north of Clemons. It comes to the blacktop near the north bridge. Another section of this early-day road is along the creek bank way back in the field north of where Webb's used to live.

The towns of Bromley and Clemons are so closely woven together that in some respects it would be the same. Bromley is the oldest, but when the railroad came through, they located the train depot at Clemons. Right then the town of Bromley began to fade away. We have a picture of the depot at Bromley. Numerous buildings were moved to Clemons. The big building on Main Street (which was VanMetre's home and Post Office) was the hotel at Bromley before it got moved to Clemons. Numerous houses were moved and some store buildings were moved. Bromley had a two-story building. The first floor was a store and the second floor was a dance hall. We still find limestone foundation stones. Some buildings on our farm were from Bromley, but not the barn. Our house, which Rosalie occupies, is the only Bromley building left and on the original foundation. Out corn crib and machine shed were both Bromley buildings. Tom Ingledue built a house in Clemons and so did Uncle Marsh Ingledue.

When I was growing up in Eagle Grove, we used to visit my grandmother and other relatives in Hubbard. One of my aunts had two brothers who were pharmacists. They had the drug store in Clemons. One brother's name was Herb Hough. They had a nephew who used to visit in the summer.

In the early days of Clemons, recreation was different than now. They played baseball a lot against numerous teams, and I think even Marshalltown. They even played on Sunday which some folks thought was

very sinful. Carl said he had thrown so many baseballs he had thrown his arm away. We had a collection of 15 or 20 bats in our washhouse. I thought ball bats were all alike, but these were all different. Sometimes Carl and I and our Sparrow/Ingledue kids played a ball game between the house and barn. I guess I was the umpire as I am afraid of balls and bats and I don't know how to throw. The game did not last long.

When the Fourth of July came, most people went to a celebration. If it was too far away for a horse and buggy, there was usually an excursion train. So the Story City Branch Railroad would run a special train on the morning of July 4th and stop at every town on the line. There was always a good turn out and the train always brought everybody back. It was a well advertised event and everyone had to buy a ticket. The trains were full and often standing room only. I never rode on one of these trains, but I've watched them load and unload.

Carl's father was one of a family of seven brothers. Carl was also one of seven brothers and one sister. Carl's family consisted of Will, Earl, Carl, John, Tom, Blain, Denver, and Phoebe. They all lived in or near Clemons at one time. Will, Earl, Carl and John all farmed; Tom was a plumber when he lived in Clemons. Blain ran the big drag line at the Marshalltown gravel pit. Denver died when he was 21, and Phoebe married John Clark. Carl also ran the big steam engine for a thrashing ring and for silo filing. He did this for about 30 years.

When I came to Clemons in 1943 our country was at war. We had ration stamps for many things and some things you couldn't get at all. Our house needed some repair work. Mr. Shimel came out to do the repair work. Then he asked if he could plant potatoes between our driveway and the railroad track. He planted the potatoes; they did well, so we all had potatoes from a victory garden to help the war effort. Mrs. Shimel came to our house every year to help me feed the thrashers.

Every organization was trying to do something for the war effort. Different groups were taking food to the soldiers on the troop trains which were going through Marshalltown almost daily. The time came for the Clemons 4-H Club to take their turn. Mary had baked a big Angel Food Cake for the occasion. She rode with some one else to the depot. Well, she and the other girls did get on the train long enough to see their food offerings disappear faster than you could believe. The anticipated moment had come and gone so fast it didn't seem real, but it was for the war effort and they had done their good deed for the day.

For the war effort, very short clothes were promoted; patterns that took the least material were to be used and plain printed cotton cloth was almost impossible to get. This war was fought in the hot climates of the world so lots of cotton was used. Accidentally, or on purpose, somebody began to put ground feed into sacks of printed cotton cloth. These sacks were not as good as the cloth we had been used to, but they were all we had and everybody used them. I made dresses,

blouses and pajamas for Jane, Sue and Rosalie, and curtains, pillow slips and bed sheets for the house. Mary made herself a real cute two-piece shorts outfit. It wasn't quite a bikini, but almost. When it was finished she tried it on to show us all what she had made out of a feed sack. We all thought it was very attractive; then Carl said, "Are you sure you used a whole sack for that - I thought it must be a half a sack".

When Rosalie was almost ready to be born, Carl and I went to Marshalltown to shop for infant clothes. I had given away all I had. We went to several stores to get diapers, but nobody seemed to have any. Finally, we found a few, but not enough and Carl said, "Well, we have a lot of gunny sacks if we can't get any more diapers".

We used kerosene lamps for light even if the electric high lines was only one-half mile away. The line was not finished till the war was over. It seemed wonderful to have electricity again. Gas was rationed and the approved car speed was 35 miles per hour.

For the next eight summers we went back to Clemons and lived on the farm. When Rosalie was 14 Carl died and after that we no longer lived on the farm summers. Our whole family has enjoyed living near Clemons. We enjoy having all our family together in one church.

Mary and Austin graduated from Clemons High School. Jane, Sue and Rosalie all attended grade school at Clemons and later finished high school at Jewell. Jane played in the Clemons School band. In the summer the school band played concerts on Main Street once a week. The old 1890-style band stand was in use then. It was beautiful and quaint. On concert nights I could just barely see the top of Jane's head as she sat in the band stand.

Submitted by:
Agnes Ingledue

LUNDIN — MEMORIES

Oscar Lee and Anna Krindley Lundin lived in a small yellow house about ½ block northwest of the site-to-be of the creamery in the early 1880's. Here my father, Wade, was born September 28, 1883. As a young man, Oscar operated a slaughter house north of the dwelling with a pit to catch the refuse.

Behind the northeast restaurant was a livery stable which Oscar operated. A building stands in this lot but is not the same. My Dad told this story on himself. He had gone out to the stable to get a team ready and while currying the horses, one crowded him against the stall wall. He rapped it on the head with the currycomb, stunning it. He entered the restaurant and told his father, "You'd better come out here, I just knocked a

horse down with the currycomb". And every man in the room trooped out to see this "never before heard of spectacle".

The second child born to Anna and Oscar was a daughter, Levada. Reaching adulthood she married George Clayton Jackman and graduated from Iowa State College. He was the first buttermaker at the creamery. The Jackmans headed north to Fort McLeod, Alberta where they took up wheat and beef ranching.

My grandmother, Anna, died from "milk fever" after the birth of her fifth child about 1906. Oscar then married the widow of Richard Forrestal, who was one of the men who rode with "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Her name was May Anson.

My mother, unable to afford the silk dresses and taffetas of the girls at Zearing came to Clemons and stayed with Oscar and May while attending high school.

At age 21, my father, Wade Lundin, went to Fort Pierre, South Dakota where a brother of his mother owned a dray line. Dad took up a homestead near the little town. About 1912 he disposed of his claim and returned to this area.

Submitted by
Beryl Lundin

In 1851 Robert R. Elder came to the present site of Clemons from Indiana. His homestead became known as "Elder Grove", after purchase by Willaim M. Clemons the name was changed to "Clemons Grove".

William M. Clemons, born in Kentucky, moved with his parents when 2 years old to Indiana. He married Nancy Elder, sister of Robert, in 1840 when she was 20 years old and he 25.

In the fall of 1854 William M. Clemons, his wife Nancy, and six children, followed Robert Elder to Marshall County, Iowa. They came in an oxen drawn schooner covered wagon since there wasn't a mile of railroad in the state at that time.

It was an age of wolves, wild hogs, rattlesnakes, prairie chickens, quail and unsettled Indians. Pike as long as 3 feet and with a head big enough to fit over a fence post was taken from the Minerva Creek which runs through the present Clemons Park.

In December 1854 William M. Clemons bought out Robert R. Elder obtaining 352 acres for a little less than \$10.00 an acre. This included the present site of the town of Clemons.

William James, son of Wm. M. Williams, a babe in arms when the family first saw Iowa prairie, was the last

survivor of this Pioneer family, having passed away just this June 1938. In Iowa three sons had been added to the family roster.

When a boy of 10, William James helped plow with walking plows and dropped corn by hand on the ground on which the town of Clemons now stands.

During these early years it was necessary to go by wagon to Iowa City for staple supplies. The family trapped prairie chickens and quail and packed these wild game birds in barrels for market. They spun and wove their own linens and clothing materials for years, then on trips to Iowa City would bring back goods by the bolts, sugar and dried fruits by the barrel.

At Minerva Creek 13 hogs at a time were butchered besides beef and sheep, as their home (by the hand homemade red brick house still standing on the hilltop in 1982 overlooking the town from the west) was a stopping place for travelers enroute west and for settlers driving their stock to eastern markets believed to be the Iowa towns on the Mississippi River.

By 1878 William M. owned 656 acres of land. Later on he owned 1,200 acres.

In 1882 he was largely instrumental in obtaining a grant to establish the town of Clemons and built several homes and store buildings in it.

February 4, 1890 the Minerva Valley Creamery Co. was incorporated at Clemons Grove with the following officers: B. F. Nichols, President; A. A. Bartine, Vice President; S. M. Gause, Secretary, and George W. Magee, Treasurer.

Source: As written by Rose B. and Helen I. Clemons in brief in 1938.

BEAUTIFUL SORRELS

As Told By Lloyd and Hazel Davis & Burr Atkinson

In the early '30's, horses were still the main source of energy used for pulling machinery on the farms. About 1930, five men in the Clemons area purchased a pedigreed stallion for breeding purposes for \$750 from an association in Haverhill. He had a lofty pedigreed title on his papers, but to his owners he was simply known as Dugan. The owners of this beautiful creature, a dark sorrel with white mane and tail, were three brothers, Lloyd, Fred and Roy Davis, Tom Davis, a neighbor not related to the 3 brothers, and Burr Atkinson. Burr was a brother-in-law to the 3 brothers having married their sister Neva.

Dugan was quartered at the Lloyd Davis farm in Bangor Township, Section 30.

Will Kersey, who lived in Clemons, was hired to drive a 2-wheeled horse cart, leading the stallion to the farms where the mares were to be serviced, but never

more than 2 a day. There were many horses in the county and there was a great demand for the stallion. Sometimes the driver was so far from home with Dugan he would stay overnite with the farm family.

The owners had a long wait for their money since the charge per mare was "fifteen dollars for a live colt to be able to stand and suck". The gestation period for a colt is 11 months. Dugan died from a "knot in his intestines" and a second pedigreed stallion was purchased for \$1,000. This one, by the name of King, was also a beautiful, dark sorrel with white mane and tail. He was purchased in Sibley, Iowa, and an Orlan Whitmore from Union was hired to lead this stallion. About 1935, King developed sleeping sickness which killed many horses about this time and the stallion was among its victims. No more stallions were purchased as horse drawn machinery was gradually being phased out by the rapidly approaching machine age of tractors and self-propelled equipment.

AS MY FATHER TOLD ME. . . .

By John Garwood

Grandfather Asa Garwood came out from Columbiana, Ohio, in 1856 to explore the country for a new farm site. His choice eventually was an eighty in Section 32 of Bangor Township in Marshall County. This land was located on the southwest corner of the road intersection one mile west of the crest of Mormon Ridge on what is now called the Indian Bridge Road. He was the first private owner of the farm having purchased it from the railroad company which was part of the tract given to the railroad by the government as a subsidy.

In 1858, the family, five sons and two daughters, came by covered wagons to the farm. My father, ten at the time, the youngest member, took turns riding and walking the distance. The crossing into Iowa was made by ferry on the Mississippi River at Dubuque. The farm buildings on the farm were located in the center of the eighty and remained so until in recent years when they were removed. I visited the farm when the buildings were still there and noted that the rafters in several of the buildings were hewn out of native lumber and instead of nails, wooden pegs were used in the construction.

As a small lad I recall my father telling me about the Mesquawkie Indians camping along the river near what is now Indian Bridge. Johnny Green was the chief. Dad played with the Indian kids and learned to talk their language. Many times the squaws would come up to Garwood farm bringing with them prairie chickens to trade for grandmother's Plymouth Rocks. Horse racing was a favorite sport of the early day pioneers and the road on the crest of Mormon Ridge was the popular course.

When the Garwood family came to Bangor Township and until mills were built along the Iowa River, grain

was taken overland to be ground. Dad made one such trip.

Grandmother Garwood also owned a small tract of land purchased from the railroads which included the south end of Mormon Ridge along Minerva Creek. The family also owned wood lots, three of them on in the heavy timber north of the road leading from the south end of Mormon Ridge to Minerva, which supplied them with fuel to heat their home and for cooking.

The small band of Mormons who wintered on the ridge were there some eight or ten years before the Garwoods and numerous other settlers from Ohio arrived. Stories of their encampment were varied and father said the exact location of where they stayed and where if any, there was a burial ground was never determined.

Prior to 1921, when the Iowa River was turned into a straight channel, the land west of Indian Bridge and to the south was a large swamp, housing the bird and wild-life of the area. It terminated in a body of water at the foot of the ridge called Mormon Lake - a portion of which still remains.

There were several instances of reports coming in from the north that the Sioux and other Indians were on the war path. Twice, when such reports were received, neighbors gathered at the Garwood homestead which was in the open, but nothing happened. They were either idle talk or any attacks did not materialize.

When the Civil War began, father was the baby of the family and he remained at home while his four brothers took up arms for the North.

I recall father telling me of fishing the Iowa River, Honey and Minerva Creeks to supplement the family larder. Prairie chickens were plentiful but grandmother Garwood preferred her Plymouth Rocks for the table. As a small boy, my father took me by carriage up to visit the old homestead. He pointed out at the foot of a hill, west of the ridge, what was at one time a buffalo wallow. They were gone before the settlers arrived but the kids in his day had found the bones and skulls of the critters that had died there.

Horse thieves were a problem for the early settlers and there were several bands from Hardin County that had made inroads on the farm stock in Bangor Township. Farmers banded together for the protection of their livestock, but no captures were ever made locally.

Checking historical records one finds that in Bangor Township, Columbiana County, Ohio, attracted many early settlers with New York State and North Carolina running second.

MEMORIES OF HARLEY BENSKIN

While barnstorming in 1921, I flew over the small town of Clemons in an aeroplane. A newly mowed hay field was south of the town, so I landed. An Indian man was the first person to meet me. He was an Indian Medicine man. He had a tent and each night he would show silent movies. After each reel he would sell his medicine of wonders made from roots and herbs. They were bottled and labled in Cedar Rapids. He was nearly out so I flew with him for a new supply.



Remember when the plane landed South of Clemons in the 20's? Harley Benskin was the pilot.

The next day the clouds were very low and I gave many people of Clemons their first ride to the clouds for \$5.00. The next day I was giving a very good-looking young girl a ride when motor trouble developed and we had to land. Thirty years later I discovered she had become our neighbor, Mrs. Barney (Mildred) Arney.

Submitted By
Harley, R. Benskin
Laurel, Iowa

TRANSPLANT OF HOMES AND BUILDINGS

Clemons Grove was platted October 27, 1882. Since that time many buildings have been moved into Clemons from Bromley, other country points and within the town.

The square house on the former Sanders farm, now the Larry Keck farm and in Section 2, Minerva Township, just east of Clemons originally was located on the corner diagonally from the Edna Clemons' home. The location would have been Lot 1 on Minerva Ave. and Maple St.

The present house on the location mentioned above, now owned by Earl and Irma Roe, was moved

from Bromley by Freeman Perry, who was married to Emma Brackney. This building was the former post office building in Bromley.

A small house on the west side of the road across from the Boyd Eurom farm, Section 2, Minerva Township and owned by Ken Stewart, originally was in Clemons across the street from the Bertha Davis residence. This location is Lot 3, Block 4, 2nd addition on Ash St. The Lew Brackney family lived there.

The former Harry Grewell house, Lot 1, Block 4, 3rd addition on Ash St. originally located on the Leonard Otto house site, was moved to State Center in the 1940's. Next door to it in State Center is the former Herb Armbrrecht house, which originally was on the Dr. Sheldahl house site. This location is Lot 2, Block 3, 2nd addition on Main Street.

The Jeffrey Muschick home, Lot 8, Block 2, 3rd addition on Main St. was built over from the original bank building. Al Christensen formerly lived in this home.

The original school house was built over into the house formerly on the Howard Tuttle site, Lot 2, Block 3, 3rd addition on Main St. That house was destroyed by fire in the early 1940's and rebuilt by Charles and Ethel Beckwith.

Three houses originally on Almarth Acre lots, northwest of business district, were moved off by Albert Brackney to provide more room for his family's needs and to reduce pilfering by residents from his adjacent business, Brackney Elevator. This move was in the early 1900's.

The Warren Reisinger house, Lot 8, Block 3, original addition on Market Ave. and Ash St., originally was on the corner diagonally across the street from its present location (on Almarth Acres). The large square house that is on the farm, Section 1, Minerva Township now owned by Jon Mulder, east of Clemons originally had been on the Reisinger corner. The lady who lived there around 1900 relaxed by smoking a corncob pipe. Max Proctor remembers this from family memories.

The house on the Roy Davis farm just west of Clemons, Section 4, Minerva Township, originally was located where the right part of drive circles at Armarth Acres.

The Claire Martin house, destroyed by fire in the early 60's and just east of the Clemons Grain and Supply and Market Ave., was the first house in town to have a fireplace. Floyd Brackney lived there. The original part of the house had formerly been between the present Vannordstrand and Joe Arnold houses on Almarth Acres.

The Roseborough Blacksmith Shop located on the back of Lot 12, Block 3, original platt on Minerva Ave., is possibly the oldest building in town. It is now

located on property owned by Marcia Pritchett, Lot 6, Block 1, original platt on Bevins St. and Minerva Ave. on property owned by Marcia Pritchett, Lot 6, Block 1, original platt on Bevins St. and Minerva Ave.

The Lodge Hall, Lot 9, Block 3, original platt on Main St. originally was the Bromley General Store. This building is now "Warren's Place" and owned by Warren Reisinger.

The house where Marlys Davis lives, Lot 7, Block 1, first addition on Bromley Ave. and Maple St., was moved to the country on the Warner farm now owned by Louis and Marie Nichols. True and Ruth Moore Wolf lived there. It was the tenant house. Later it was moved to Marshalltown on Summit St. just east of the viaduct. It was destroyed in 1978. The house now owned by Marlys Davis was moved from the Busse farm.

Don Spurlin's home was moved from the Cecil Bushbom farm. His home is located on Bevin's St.

Verl Shipley's home, to the north of Don Spurlin, was moved from St. Anthony just west of the Mackin Grain Elevator.

The Bromley Elevator was moved to Clemons via rail and located on the northwest part of town. It was to be known as the new Brackney Elevator operated by Albert Brackney. These buildings and other buildings of Brackney Elevator are no longer there. This move was made in the early 1900's.

CATTLE DRIVES

In earlier days it was a common sight to see farmers driving stock to town to be shipped out on the railroad.

There were many cattle feeders in this area who purchased western cattle and had them shipped to



The train, stockyards and Clemons Grain and Lumber Co. (left) in the 1930's.

Clemons where they were unloaded at the stockyard. The cattle were then driven through town to the farmers' lots to be fattened. Occasionally these cattle were rather wild and hard to control, cutting across lawns, through fences or under clothes lines, much to the displeasure of town residents.



Sidewalk Superintendents!

“OUT ON THE TOWN”

The traditional nights to go to town were Wednesday and Saturday nights. That was also a busy night for the barber, as the men came to town, many would stop to get a haircut. It was usually a long wait. They would stop and get their place in line and then go play pool or cards at the pool hall until their turn arrived. The barber spent many late nights giving haircuts while others enjoyed the show or movie or a game of pool. Many times he didn't finish until after midnight.

Up until about 1940 the barber shop also maintained facilities for men to take a bath. As most farms did not have indoor plumbing, the facilities for baths were limited and many hired men used the barber's facilities to take a hot bath and clean up.

SLEDDING

How many remember the Saturday, Sunday and nights after school spent sledding on the Clemons hill north or west of town? During the winter the area west of town in front of the old Clemons house where the John Davis live now, or in the timber pasture (or what used to be timber pasture) on the north side of the road by the house was a popular place to go sledding by area youngsters. It was not an uncommon sight to see 10 or 12 kids there. Occasionally, a school or church group held sledding parties on the hill.

SKATING PARTIES

Another popular event was ice skating parties. Minerva Creek has provided a popular place to ice skate since early times. The creek in the park or behind the creamery dam or north and east of Minerva in Nichols timber were all popular spots (NW¼ NE¼, Section 4,

Marietta Township) and many skating parties were held there.

PICNICKING

For many years the Bartine family has had a picnic grounds on the SW¼ NE¼, Sec. 35, Liberty Township. This has been a popular spot for picnics for many years. The Bartine family used to hold numerous Sunday picnics there every summer and when they weren't there, others used it. Many school and youth groups have used the grounds through the years. The old fireplace has provided many enjoyable hours of picnicking and visiting around the fireside.

THE ROOSTER'S CROW

Before 1940 it was not uncommon for residents of town to be awakened by crowing of roosters. Prior to the coming of the automobile, most residences in town consisted of a lot with a house and barn and chicken house in the area near the alley. These barns and sheds were used to keep the horse and buggy. It was also not uncommon for the residents to keep a cow and a few chickens. Vacant lots were almost all used to graze horses or cows.

MILLS

It does not appear that Minerva Creek ever had a mill or saw mill located on it driven by water power except early accounts indicate a Dr. Hixson built and operated a flouring mill in an earlier day near the south of Minerva Creek. The accounts state the mill was not too successful and was discontinued soon after being started.

OUT OF THE MUD

On August 14, 1924, five miles of the Eldora-Colfax trail (old stagecoach route) was to be graveled from Bevins Grove corner to the Hardin County line. This was made possible by the enterprising businessmen of Clemons who raised over \$1000 to pay for part of the cost, with the township and farmers paying the balance. The gravel came from the Moore-Eldridge Gravel pit at Clemons. The Hartland road (now E-29) was already graveled at this time.



L-R

Bob Sledding - 1933

Sherb Noble, Hube Christensen, Kermit Shaw (H. S. Coach), Ms. Brandstrom (school teacher), ? school teacher, Helen Brachney, Gene Beckwith, Ms. Snead (music teacher), Roland Camp, Katherine Hiatt, Dorothy Noble, Bert Meier (driver).