

Chapter I

Settlement and Organization of the Area

Many early members of our community arrived by wagons pulled by horses or oxen. Some arrived on foot, walking from the banks of the Mississippi, in about 1850. The railroads had not crossed the Mississippi--this was the frontier and that was the last jumping-off place. The way was hard and long--no roads, and streams and rivers had to be forded. The farther west one proceeded the less civilization. We know there were people here before the settlers arrived, but we have no way of knowing who they were, as they were referred to as squatters, hunters, trappers and explorers. They did not file to enter land and moved on without leaving any record.

The land was open to actual settlement in 1848, and the first certificates of entry issued by the government were issued then. At that time the present county was almost divided into halves along the forty-second parallel. The south half was in the Iowa City Land District and the north half, including Clemons and vicinity, were in the Dubuque Land District.

Minerva Township, legally described as "Township 84 North, Range 20 West of the 5th P.M." was surveyed by Horatio Waldo, deputy surveyor, June 10-17, 1847. (Reported, "wild turkeys are quite plentiful, very few deer or other game.")

Township 85 North, Range 20 West, called Liberty Township was surveyed by Waldo, also, on July 14-20, 1847.

Township 84 North, Range 19 West, called Marietta, was surveyed by Samuel W. Durham, December 10-14, 1846. Described the land as excellent prairie.

Township 85 North, Range 19 West, most of Bangor Township was surveyed by Guy Wells, May 31 - June 7, 1847, and he noted improvements made by Shelton Gaer, James Miller and R. Gaer.

An act of the Iowa Territorial Legislature approved on January 13, 1846, gave the boundaries and name to the area now known as Marshall County. Until the county was formally organized, it was included or administrated by Jasper County, and on April 10, 1848, all of Marshall County was organized as Minerva Creek Township of Jasper County. As noted, the name "Minerva" has been a commonly used name for the area.

The first step in actually forming the government of Marshall County was the appointment of Joseph M.

Ferguson as organizing sheriff by the District Court of Jasper County in the summer of 1849. The duties of the organizing sheriff was to call the first election on August 6, 1849. Ferguson divided the county into the two townships of Minerva and Jefferson. There were 17 men voting in the election in Minerva Township. This probably included about the whole north half of the county. The election was for the first county officers. Three commissioners were elected to office or positions that compare to our County Supervisors. There was no county seat or court house, and the first meeting of commissioners was held in the home of Jesse Amos, a commissioner, located in Section 28, Township 85 North, Range 19 West, in what is now Bangor Township.

The form of county government was changed in 1851 from the commissioner system to the election of one man to run the county called the county judge system and the meetings and proceedings were referred to as "terms". At the October 1852 term, the whole county consisted of three townships, namely, Minerva, Iowa River and Timber Creek. It is interesting that these indicate the importance of water, as all refer to the prominent river and creeks of the county.

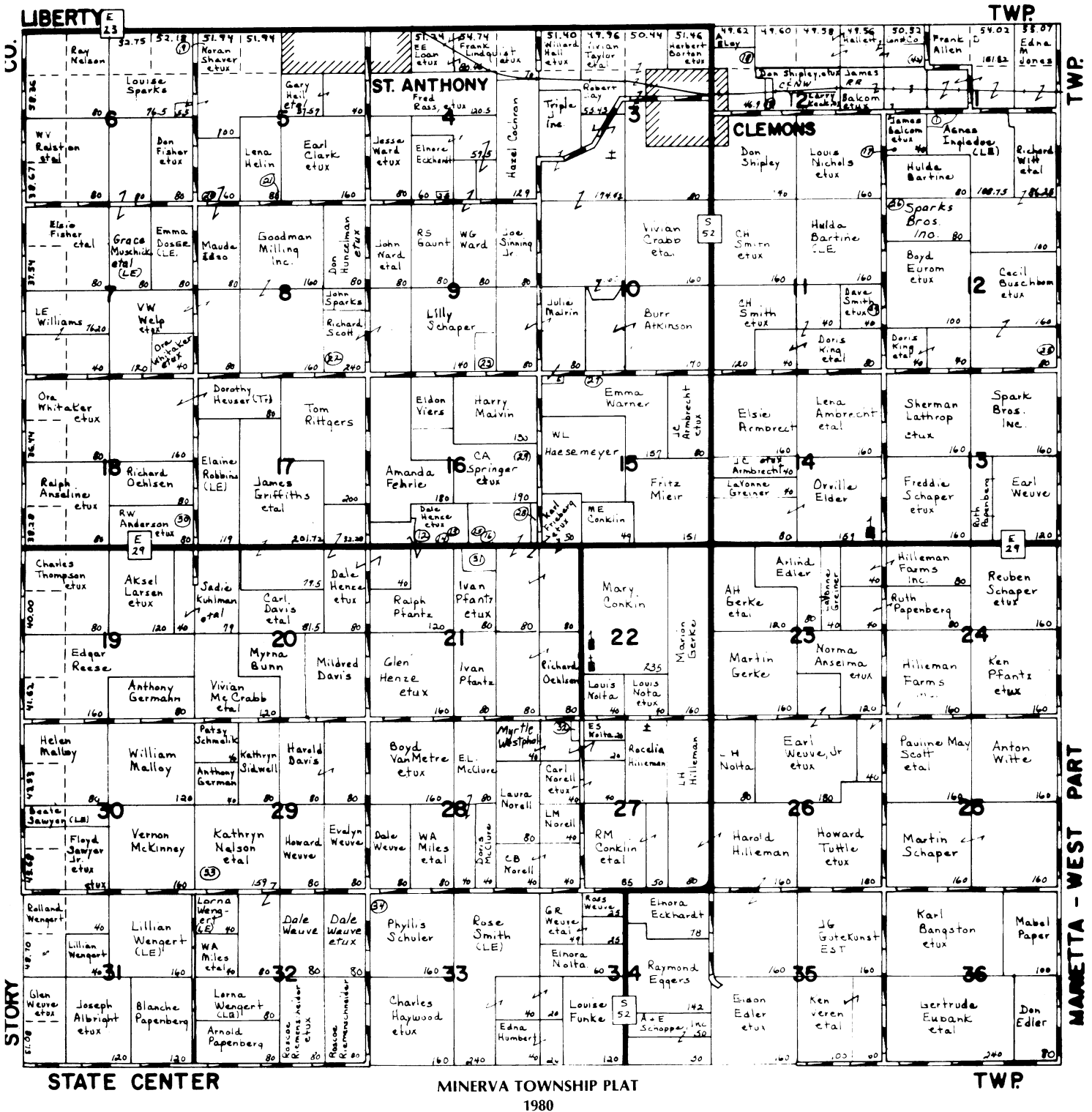
By the October 1852 term, the townships were Iowa, Washington, Marietta, Economy, Jefferson, and Minerva.

At the March 1853 term, new township lines were drawn and what is now Bangor, Liberty, Marietta and Minerva Township and the southwest quarter of the county became Marietta Township.

In March 1855 the county court redrew the township line. Bangor Township was created much as it is now. Marietta Township included most of the present township west of the Iowa River except the south tier of six sections.

Liberty Township included what is now both Minerva and Liberty Townships. And although it does not appear exactly when they were divided, it must have been in 1855, as the April 1855 election reports, the election results from both Liberty and Minerva Townships in the election regarding restraining swine from running at large. (The measure passed that hogs had to be restrained.) It is also interesting to note that at this time references to locations of various things are made to the "Liberty Line" which is the present boundary between Liberty and Minerva Townships.

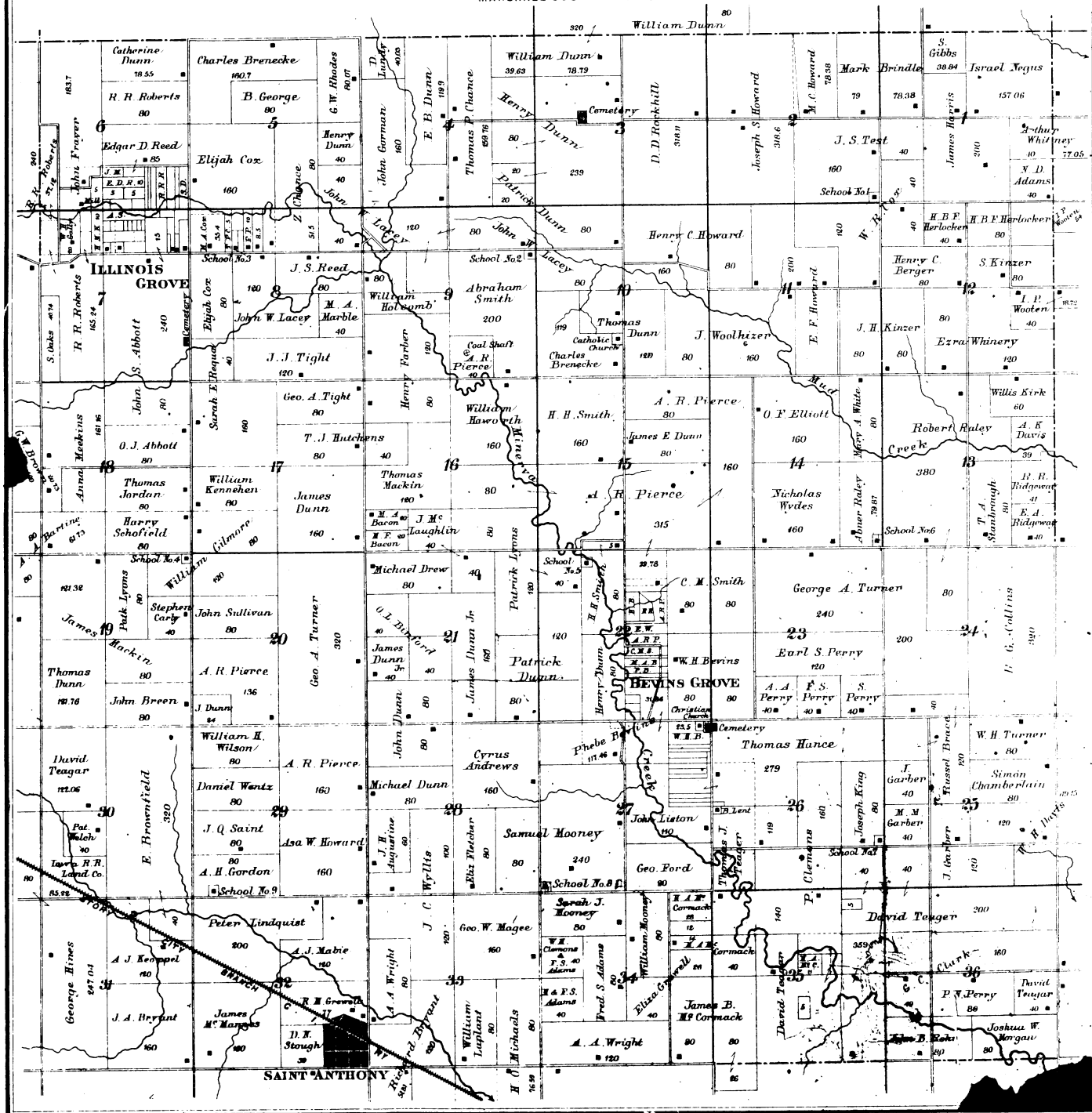
MINERVA



WARNER & FOOTE
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Minneapolis, Minn.

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile

Township 85 North, Range 20 West
of the Fifth Principal Meridian.
MARSHALL COUNTY IOWA.



LIBERTY TOWNSHIP PLAT
1885

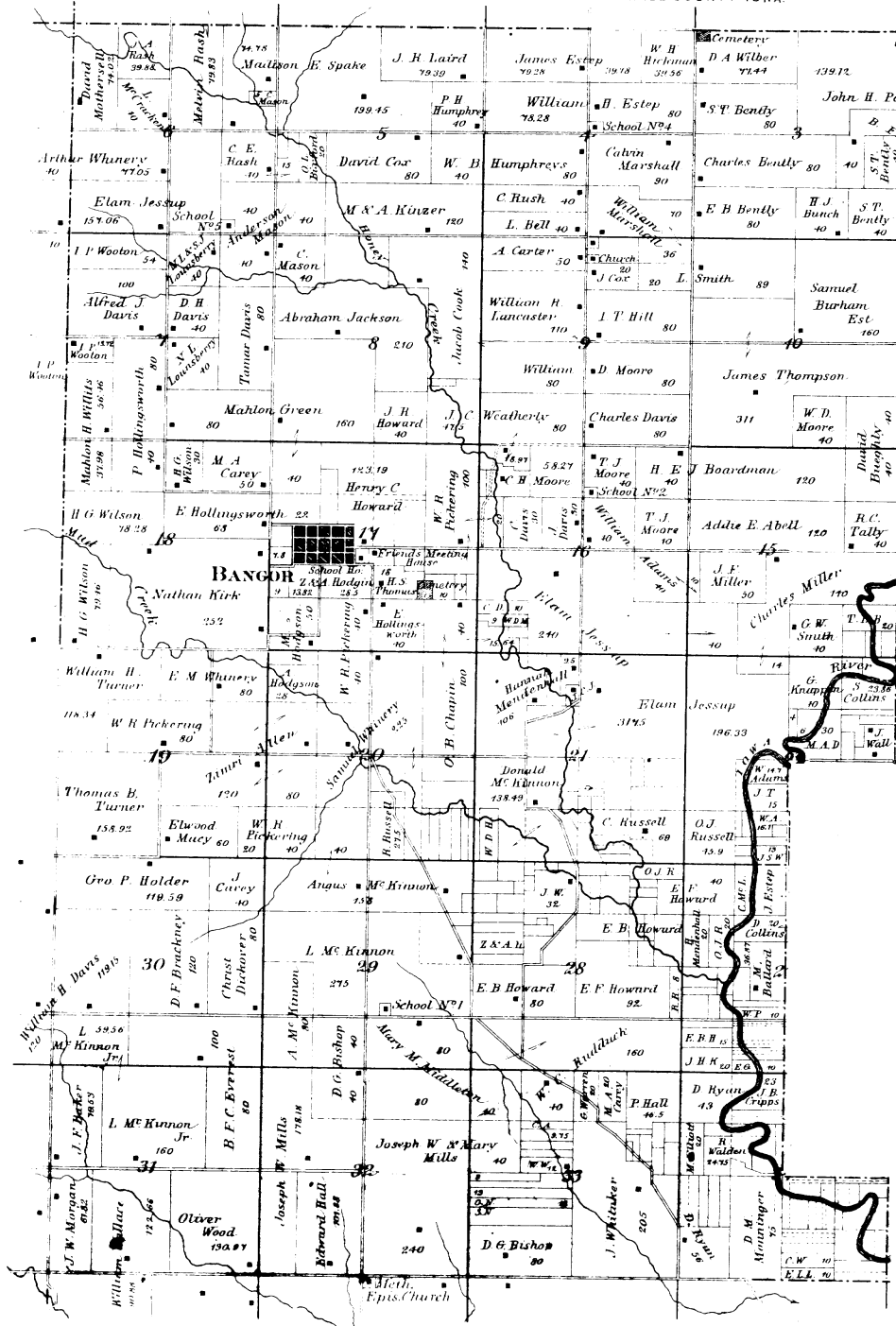




PLAT OF BANGOR

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Minneapolis, Minn.

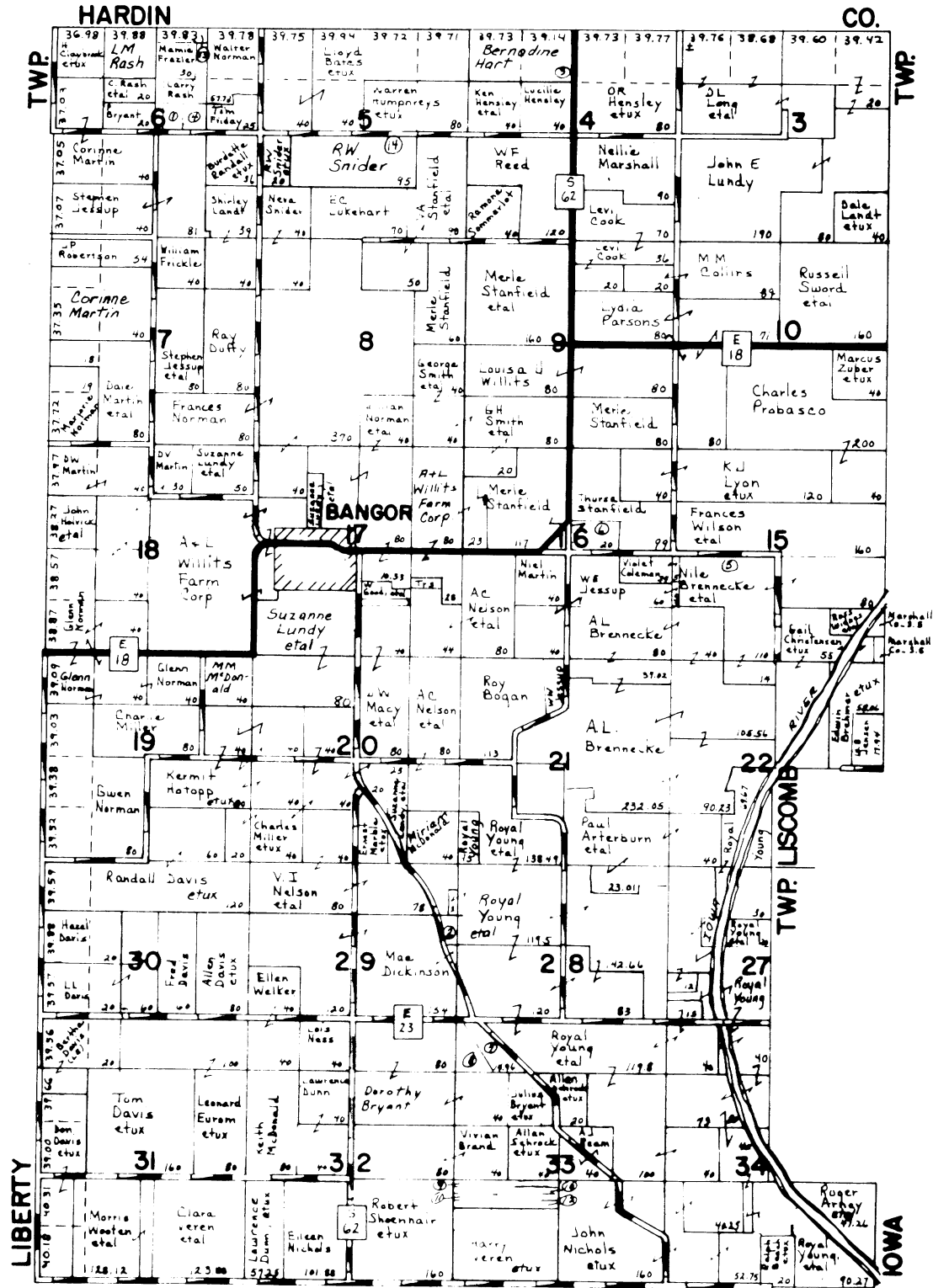
Township 85 North, Range 19 West
of the Fifth Principal Meridian.
MARSHALL COUNTY IOWA.



BANGOR TOWNSHIP PLAT

1885

BANGOR



Nature's Bounty

Because most of the necessities for pioneer life could be obtained from the region along our rivers and streams, the Minerva Creek and valley were very attractive to these settlers. The creek furnished water for both man and beast. The stream also attracted game to hunt and fish to catch, both of which were an important part of their diets.

Along these streams were also timber for fuel and building materials for homesteads and fences. The timber also provided a source of protection from the weather. As the northwest part of Marshall County was settled, it was only practical that the first early settlers located on the various branches of Minerva Creek. The early settlements of Elders Grove or Clemons Grove, Bevins Grove, Illinois Grove, Patterson Grove and French Grove were all along the banks of Minerva Creek.

The early roads leading to these also followed the streams. Later, the railroads followed Minerva Valley from Marshalltown for locating their right of way. This was done to avoid any steep grades and reduce the amount of construction work necessary to grade a rail bed. The Minerva Valley was described as an ideal route for this area by early railroads crossing Iowa.

Minerva Valley is also noted for its deposits of sand and gravel, with several gravel pit operations being opened at different times in the area. Today the Hallett Construction Company gravel pit located a mile east of Clemons at Bromley is still in operation, but there are numerous old abandoned pits located up and down the creek. Most of the operations are located on the south or west side of Minerva Creek.

West of Clemons on Minerva Creek there are also limestone deposits. These have never been quarried but at one time it was considered.

In early days it was believed that there were significant coal deposits in the area. Early promoters had plans for opening mines and building railroads to these "coal fields" but they never developed. There was a coal mine opened in the Mormon Ridge vicinity in very early times. There was also an operating coal mine in Section 9 of Liberty Township.

The timberland remaining today is only a small part of that that existed in the 1850's. When the early settlers arrived the timber probably extended for about a quarter of a mile or more on both sides of Minerva Creek. Many of the fields that today go almost to the creek banks were covered with trees. These timbers contained fine stands of black walnut, butternut or white walnut, hackberry, linden or basswood, burr oak, red oak, white oak, black oak, red elm, ash, boxelder, and some hickory and various species of maple, honey

locust, cherry, plum and red haw. Also, many of these were covered with wild grape vines.

These timbers now are just shadows of their original thick lush growth. First they were used for fuel and building materials and also pastured by livestock which ate the new trees and prevented regrowth. As wood was a valuable commodity in many places, timber lots were sold off to farmers and town people who had no timber of their own. In many cases they served two purposes: the buyer obtained a source of wood and the seller eventually got the land cleared. There were various methods in which these arrangements were made from the actual sale and ownership of land or timber lots to the sale of only cutting rights to the growing timber. Many maps in the County Auditor's office show these timber lots in the areas along the creeks and usually the lots only consisted of two to five acres. These old timber lots are also visible yet today in many places. If you will notice in Section 10 of Minerva Township, which is southwest of Clemons about a mile and a half, on the east side of the road, you will notice long narrow stretches from the road up the hillside between the trees. They appear in alternating bands of trees or timber and then cleared or open land. The clear strips are timber lots that were cut off and the strips with the trees were timber lots that were not cleared. This is only one example but there are numbers of them.

Later, since about the 1940's, much of the timberland was cleared for farmland. The land was suitable for farming, the timber and wood by then were of little value, so the land was cleared by bulldozing or cutting and blasting the trees.

In the 1960's and early 1970's the timbers were dealt another cruel blow--Dutch elm disease and several tornadoes and wind storms. By that time much of the good timber that was left contained stands of elm. During this time period the Dutch elm disease killed almost every elm tree in the area. Much of what the Dutch elm disease didn't get was riddled by storms. In the late 1970's an oak wilt appeared and to date has infected and killed some oak trees, but so far has not been as devastating as the Dutch elm disease.

We have had various accounts of wild life and game in the reported stories listing deer, elk, wild turkey, geese, prairie chicken, quail, rabbit, squirrel, skunk, possum, raccoon, and badger in the area in early days. We know there were buffalo at one time, although no stories or reports mention them. Whether it is true or not, many of the ponds on the well-drained lands were referred to as "buffalo wallows." The pheasant was not native to the area and did not appear until it was introduced, probably in 1920 or earlier.

The streams, according to the old reports, also were well supplied with fish, as references are made to pickerel, trout, pike and catfish. The streams were also trapped for furbearing animals like otter, beaver, mink, muskrat, weasel, skunk, opossum and raccoon. Many streams are still trapped today for mink, beaver and muskrat.

Early accounts also indicate that rattlesnakes were present, but these appear only in the earliest reports. Also, some say references are made to large bull snakes which are still occasionally seen today.

In the last few years we have experienced an increase in the area of game. Deer are more numerous than 20-25 years ago. The fox population has declined somewhat, but in the last five years the coyote has reappeared.

To some extent the other wildlife is still present in the area except the buffalo, elk and prairie chicken have been long gone as no reference since earliest time has been found. It is hoped that the wild turkey will reappear as the Iowa Conservation Commission has restocked them in northeast Iowa and some have been sighted in the Mormon Ridge area in the last year or so.

The streams have silted in and are not as clear, deep and pure as they were and as a consequence, fishing has greatly deteriorated. The draining of the ponds and sloughs, and waterways for farmland has speeded the flow of water and also carried soil into the creek causing the creek to be muddier and shallower than in early times.

The soil of Northwest Marshall County varies depending on which side of Minerva Creek you are on. The western most part next to Story County belongs to the Clarion-Webster Soil Association area and there are rocks in the soil. The rest of the area and most of the rest of Marshall County belongs to the Tama-Muscatine Soil Association area. There are few rocks found in this soil as the glacial material underneath is covered with deep layers of loess, or wind-deposited top soil. The western portion was deposited by a glacier later than the eastern portion and this area was on the edge of the glacier back in the last ice age. Minerva Creek was formed by the run-off of ice melting glacier and the soil types change west of where the branches of Minerva Creek meet in Section 35 of Liberty Township.

Both soil types are extremely productive soils and have given rise to our rich agricultural heritage.

Wild Life

The prairie still had vast herds of deer and elk roaming the territory of Marshall County. Occasional buffalo, vast flocks of wild turkey, and wolves by the hundreds were frequently seen by the settlers. Since quail and prairie chickens were also plentiful, they were trapped, dressed, frozen, and taken by oxen team to Iowa City when grain was transported. All were exchanged for barrels of groceries and bolts of calico. The groceries acquired were sugar, salt, and coffee.

The woods were rich in fruits, nuts, and honey. The full streams and creeks were filled with fish and easily acquired. Many fish caught were three to four feet long. One of the fish stories told of William Clemons' son and Sam Mooney catching 12 pickerel, not measuring less than two feet long. Clemons' son, William James, also accompanied Bert Brackney and Mark McKinnon to the Iowa River and returned home with a wagon load of catfish. Two of the fish weighed over 12 pounds.

The Forces Of Nature

Unfortunately there is little available information about early acts of Mother Nature. Some events were so memorable that references to them come from many sources and are handed down from generation to generation. The biggest, worst, most disastrous and spectacular are remembered and used as comparisons. Only where references in diaries, letters and papers can these occurrences be preserved.

We have only very sketchy details from earliest time. Old histories refer to the first historic flood in Marshall County being in 1851. There is very little known about this as no official records were kept before 1881, but the fact that reference survives indicates it was memorable.

Accordingly many family stories and memories are related about the Great Flood of 1881. From all that appears, it remains as the high water mark of the Minerva Creek in the Clemons Grove vicinity. From old articles it appears that on July 9th and 10th, 1881, the area received in excess of 5 inches of rain over a very large area. I have been unable to determine any other recorded measurements of the rainfall other than that Marshalltown received 11 inches. As the stories go, the south fork and north fork of the South Branch of Minerva Creek met each other at the north end of Main Street in front of the old store building.

Because of the town's location between these two forks of Minerva Creek, the creek has always been a focal point and flooding of surrounding farmland has been a concern, if not, an annual occurrence. On a few other occasions, flood waters have run through part of the town although not to the extent of the 1881 Flood.

The flood of June 12, 1947, was caused by a 4½ inch downpour that sent the creeks on the rampage destroying a bridge over Honey Creek near Bangor and a bridge on Minerva Creek near Illinois Grove and 2 miles north of Clemons.

In 1957, the area north and west of town received 5 or 6 inches of rain in a few hours time and flood waters unable to get through the bridge followed the "new" blacktop road into town. About half or two-thirds of the town was flooded. There was an inch or two of water in the church basement and on the gymnasium floor. It was a Sunday morning and volunteers and members of the fire department spent the day pumping out basements. Following this the county cleaned the dirt from under the bridge south of town and helped increase the flow of the water. This helped prevent further flooding.

The spring of 1960 was an unusually late and wet spring. It rained much of March and April and the "improved" gravel roads became bottomless and about im-

passable. The Iowa River at Marshalltown crested at 17.76 feet - the highest in history.

Many people in the area still remember the wet spots they farmed around that year. There were wet spots on the side of hills that were usually dry and most waterways couldn't be crossed with machinery, even some that were tiled.

On March 18, 1979, an ice jam at the bridge south of town again forced waters of Minerva Creek into the south and east side of town. Flood waters were up to the school house and several homes on the south part of town.

In June 14, 1980, the floodwater of the creek came calling again when at least 4½ inches of rain fell in the area, flooding several houses and surrounding the school house. The flood water deposited a lot of silt and debris on the streets and lawns. Following this the town reconstructed a levee on a strip of ground just north of the bridge that was donated to the town by Mrs. Vivian McCrabb and Mrs. Patsy Schmellik.

Just as too much water is a problem, so is too little. While fresh in our minds is the memory of the drought of 1977. This area in 1977 received about 1/3 the normal rainfall and by July 1977 the area had only received about 12 or 13 inches of rain in the previous year. The drought had actually started the previous June of 1976 but adequate soil moisture provided for a good crop in 1976. Although springs fed the north branch of Minerva Creek in Liberty Township, it never completely stopped flowing, but the South Branch in Section 35 of Liberty Township stopped flowing and dried up for 14 months - from



Drought of 1977 September
E. W. Bartine and Edwin Bartine

June 1976 until August 17, 1977. The drought broke the old timer's saying that "the (Minerva) creek cleans herself (floods) in either January or June".

There were several acres in the area that were not even harvested. On the E.W. Bartine farm in Section 35 and 36 of Liberty Township the average yield for 1977 was 10 bushels of corn per acre. There were about 80 acres of corn that weren't even harvested by him that year. The hot winds of July that year really finished the crops. Where fields were exposed on the south or west to the wind there was very little (maybe 1 -2 bushel per acre) corn and on the north protected slopes there might be 30-40 bushels of corn per acre. These were the average yields for the community. Corn yields ranged from 6 to 60 bushel per acre with a local average of 20.22 bushel per acre. The bean yields were half of normal with an average of 18-20 bushel per acre. This was the most severe drought since 1934.

The drought of 1977 brought back memories of some of the residents of the area. There were a few recollections of the drought of 1894 and stories of farmers cutting trees for stock to eat. The drought of 1894 appears to be one of Marshall County's driest years when only 17.27 inches of rainfall were recorded. The total rainfall for 1977 was not as small as expected as the drought ended August 17, 1977 when rains came, probably 3.5 inches or more and Minerva Creek flooded. In Section 35, Liberty Township, the creek swelled to be a quarter mile wide and ran over the roads near the bridge. The year 1977 has been referred to as the "wettest dry year". The rest of 1977 brought adequate rain and moisture and the subsoil moisture recharged and provided for a large crop in 1978.

The year 1934 has also been long remembered as a drought year. The crops in that year were reported to have been reduced to about one fourth to one third, with yields for corn at that time running about 40-50 bushels per acre, the corn yields that year were cut to 10 to 15 bushels per acre.

Winter storms have also been of particular note. Early recollections and stories indicate that the winter of 1854-55 was an unusually mild winter and the weather was pleasant enough for regular work outdoors. Early settlers thought the winter were not going to be too bad and were taken by surprise the next year when blizzards set in.

Probably the most talked about and the measuring stick for winter was the winter of 1936. The records indicate this to be one of the worst in many peoples memories. From January 18th the temperature dropped to zero or below for 36 consecutive days, being the longest and coldest period of cold. Then on February 8th a blizzard set in that completely immobilized the county. Everything was closed. The schools were not open for about 6 weeks.

The Armistice Day blizzard of November 11, 1940, has also been etched on the memories of many residents. The fall of 1940 had been mild until November 11 when the blizzard blew in with snow, winds and cold temperatures. It caught residents by surprise and unprepared for winter with crops in the fields and livestock and poultry outside. It also caught many hunters as pheasant season traditionally opened Armistice Day.

Most recently on April 8, 1973, a Sunday, a spring snow squall started late in the morning. What everyone



The Winter of '36!

laughed at turned into a raging blizzard. Many papers described it as the worst since records began being kept in 1881. Marshalltown reported 7.5 inches of snow with 65 mile per hour winds. Places across Iowa reported more amounts between that and 18 inches of wet snow. Traffic was stalled. Most rural roads were not open until Thursday. The storm caught everyone unprepared as it was spring. Much livestock was lost as the snow was wet and froze over their faces. As it was April many baby pigs, lambs and calves died from the cold and being suffocated by the snow.

March has always had a reputation for snow storms - especially during the state basketball tournaments. It also provides the basic ingredients for ice storms. On March 27, 1975, Good Friday, just such an ice storm coated the area and a large portion of Iowa. It started raining and the temperature started to fall. Many highline wires exceeded 2 inches in diameter. The storm also brought strong high winds. The tree limbs, the telephone lines, electric highlines, the fence wires and utility poles snapped. The roads were deeply coated with ice. The weight from the ice and the high winds brought the utility poles crashing down by the hundreds and for miles. North of St. Anthony on the blacktop road there wasn't a single standing pole for over 2 miles.

Work crews were brought in from all over Iowa and some from out of state. They worked continuously for days getting the electricity and telephone system working. Most people in the county were without electricity for a day or two and many for 4 or 5 days. Many churches had to call off Easter Services - a truly memorable Easter weekend.

The state of Iowa is noted for cyclones and tornadoes. Early reports from members of the Sam Mooney family indicate a cyclone struck July 27, 1896, in Section 35 and 36, Liberty Township, tearing the roof from the old brick house that still stands there and occupied now by Mr. and Mrs. E.W. Bartine and Edwin. The cyclone traveled northeast from there and destroyed the barn on the Oliver McCormack farm.

After a very hot, humid Memorial Day, May 30, 1959, another cyclone, following almost the same path as the one of 1896 struck the area at 2:00 a.m. on May 31, 1959. The storm's path, about 1/8 mile wide, began west of St. Anthony striking the Noran Shaver farm destroying a barn and many trees, the C.F. Johnson farm where Lavern German lived destroying several trees, on to C.R. Bartine farm in Section 35 where the wind cut a swath through the timber that looked like the first trip of lawn mowing across a lawn, then to Section 36 where numerous trees in the windbreak were destroyed, roofs were damaged and newspapers were drawn from under linoleum in the house occupied by the Wilmer Hausers. Across the road at the then resident of E.W. Bartine a barn was destroyed and many other buildings were damaged. On east the storm damaged buildings and blew down a barn on the Fred Davis farm. The newspaper account listed 7 barns being damaged.

On April 23, 1961, at 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning as Sunday school was beginning at the Clemons Church, a severe wind storm took aim at the town of Clemons. Coming over the hill from the southwest, the storm moved across town tearing the roof off and damaging a house owned by Al Berry in the southwest corner of town and leaving considerable trees and debris behind. The newspaper accounts describe the storm as destroying dozens of barns in a strip 3 miles wide from west of St. Anthony to Dysart, Iowa.

More recently, on July 8, 1971, at 2:30 a.m. a tornado struck Clemons doing considerable damage. Many streets were blocked with debris and fallen trees. The south end of the lumberyard at Clemons Grain & Lumber Co. was ripped off as well as a large portion of roof of the E.T. Van Metre residence on Main Street. The storm proceeded on east from town towards Minerva. Many trees and several farm buildings were destroyed on the Donald Bartine farm.

Near Minerva, two barns and a silo were destroyed on the Louis Goecke farms. Closer to Minerva, two barns as well as several trees were destroyed on the Clifford Nichols farm. At the Robert Veren farm a large limb was blown into the house and two silos blown down. A barn was destroyed at the Lynn Elsberry farm and several buildings were damaged or destroyed on Frank Humphreys place.

The weather provides many spectacular elements with most drastic effects. Looking back at the few events listed it makes one wonder at the magnitude of some of these events. The fact that old stories remain and the occurrences are used as points of reference indicates how really significant they must have been to endure. If only we had some pictures of the flood of 1881 and the drought of 1894. Hopefully we have helped to preserve these memorable acts of Mother Nature.



Winter of 1982

P.S.

One of the memorable storms of the area will be the winter of January 1982. Within a week of the completion of the above article, one of the worst periods of winter weather set in on the area. On Sunday, January 3, 1982, the weather turned cold and it began to snow, and by Monday, January 4, it had snowed about 6 or 7 inches and the roads were slick. During the week it snowed a light snow of an inch or so, two or three times. By Friday, January 8, the weather had turned cold, -17°.

Saturday, January 9, it was still in the morning. The wind came up gradually all day and switched to the northwest and the temperature rose to 0° and then started to drop. By 7:00 p.m. that night the wind had reached about 35 to 40 mph and the temperature was about -15° F and still dropping. Visibility was zero because of blowing snow and all traffic in Iowa came to a complete stop. Motorists were stranded wherever they were. During the night the temperature dropped to -25° and the wind continued to blow without let-up producing a wind chill factor of -70° to -80°.

Sunday morning, January 9, 1982, was cold and the wind continued to blow. The highways were blocked by snow and the combination of cold and wind had packed the snow drifts hard. Almost all roads were blocked. The blacktop to State Center was blocked and so was E-29. Sunday the high was -5° and the wind continued to blow hard (about 35 to 40 mph) well into the night when the temperature again dropped to -10°.

Monday morning the storm was over but the cold temperature continued and the job of digging out began. Because of the cold temperature and hard packed snow, the process took all week. The roads were all open in a day or two but they were just passable but not cleared back.

The temperature most of the week was below zero. By Friday, January 15, the weather forecasters were forecasting a return of the wind and colder temperatures. All the schools let out by noon and many businesses closed early. Everyone headed home. At 1:30 p.m. the storm arrived, the temperature was 10° then, but by 5:00 p.m. was -10°. The wind picked up and by dark the visibility was zero and all traffic had stopped. The wind was blowing about 30 to 35 mph by then and continued all night while the thermometer dropped to -17° producing a wind chill factor of -50° to -60°.

Saturday the wind continued to blow until mid-afternoon and the high for the day was -12°.

These were only two bad storms of several this winter. Back on December 18, 1981, a Sunday ice storm occurred at about 4:30 p.m. and continued until midnight. By 5:00 p.m. that night almost all the roads in Iowa were impossible due to ice. Highway 30 and Interstate 35 and 80 were barricaded by the Highway Patrol.

The next weekend, about 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 27, 1981, another ice storm snarled traffic and highways became impossible.

On January 3, 1982, our first real snow storm occurred and this stopped traffic again.

On January 22, 1982, a snow, sleet and ice storm again struck and most of the state's activity came to a halt, with schools and businesses closed. About 6 or 7 inches of heavy sleet-snow fell and 25 mph winds drifted in the already drifted roads.

January 27, 1982, the temperature reached 35°, the first time since January 1, 1982, that the temperature rose to freezing or above. On January 29, another 5 inches of snow fell making roads slick again as the snow was mixed with rain and very wet.

Settlement

The settlement of the Clemons area began in 1851 with the arrival of Robert Elder and his family. The settlement was known as Elders Grove. Mr. Elder had come to the area a time earlier with a Mr. Patterson. They were interested in the area so returned to their Greensburg, Indiana, home and returned with Mr. Elder's family and William McCormack. The land settled by the Elder family was granted to him by the government for services from the Mexican War that his father served. He settled on the hill over-looking the present site of Clemons.

Mr. Patterson settled in the area west of Clemons and it was called Patterson Grove.

In 1853, Robert Elder's brother-in-law, William M. Clemons, from Decatur County, Indiana, made a trip to Iowa for the purpose of surveying the land with the prospect of making his future home on the prairie. No land suited William with the exception of that on which his wife's brother had built his home. He made many offers. Finally Robert Elder agreed to let him have the land at \$10.00 an acre when surrounding land could have been purchased for \$1.25 an acre from the government. But William was satisfied and returned to Indiana to prepare to move his family to their wilderness home.

After personal tragic loss of family members, Robert Elder sent the following letter to his father in Indiana.

August the 2 1854
Martial County, Iowa

father i set down with a hevly hart to let you no sum-thing about my troubles i left your hous on monday and tusday morning we reacht davenport on tusday eavning we started for home on the stage at iowa city i was taken unwel on friday we reacht home on saterday i went to marietta on sunday i was taken bad with the colra and sent for the doctor and he staid with me until monday evning tusday the doctor came back and i was but very little beter but he se-

ceeded in getting the puking and purging stoped and the cramps and i supose i was beter of corse but i didnt no but very little that weak father i cant tel you any thing a bout any sufering atal but father i was onley sufering with sickness but that is nuthing to the (suffering?) of my companion i am now ablt to walk to her grave and morne the los with my little children

on friday folowing Jane was taken with the colra and she lasted onley about eight owers father i cant tel you but very little a bout hir sickness i was so bad that i new but little a bout any thing but when she was bueried i had come to my right mind she was put in the cofin and was brot to my bedside she loke very naterl o i dont se how i can live my trobles is more than i can baer i think it wil not be til i wil see her again and what will be come of my little children i dont now. Mr. daken has the colra very bad but he is sed to bee beter and hopes of his recovery at this time our children was well when we got home mary had had a desperate face hr jaw ris and broke and is running yet the doctor ses that it wil not get wel soon James is laid up with sumthing the mater with one of his legs the leders is drawd so that he cant scareley can walk any the rest of the children is wel

father rite soon and let me no how you air and al my brothers and sisters til them to rite to me for i ant able to rite to them tel father and mother madee that i wil rite as soon as i get a litl stronger and a little more composed

so r o more at present but remains yours truly

Robert R elder
to James elder

rite in haste

In 1854, the William M. Clemons family gave up their Indiana home and moved westward to Iowa. The journey was made in a schooner covered wagon drawn by three yoke of oxen. This wagon was later used as a grain bin.

Upon the Clemons' arrival at their new home, Robert Elder took his family and moved to Liberty Township and then to Clay County, Kansas. He and a son, John later took part in the Civil War. Elder was married twice. The first wife, Nancy Jane, died while he lived at Elder's Grove. One of his children was the first person to be buried in 1852 in what is now the Clemons Cemetery and his wife being the second in 1854. Thus in 1852, this cemetery began its existence. Their tombstones are still visible today in the center of the cemetery under the big trees.

The Elders left behind a double log cabin and a log barn built one story high covered with poles and slough grass. A grove surrounded their pioneer home on three sides. A main traveled stage coach ran east and west past the house almost at the doorway. This road carried most of the travel in the pioneer days.

The Clemons family lived in the log cabin upon their arrival. There was also a store in the grove which was the only one west of Minerva in the county in 1854.

In 1856, the Clemons family erected a very stylish brick home on the picturesque hillside spot overlooking



Old Clemons House
Sketch by Edna Sheldahl

the valley. The bricks were brought from William Mooney's farm. This house still stands today and is owned by John and Lorraine Davis.

Within a short time, the home was known as the "travelers inn" as many pioneers lodged overnight when traveling the only stage coach trail west of Marietta. The home was considered a hotel and was known among travelers and teamsters as the "Clemons Stand". It was the first accomodations to be opened west of Marietta. Much food was consumed by the many travelers. It has been recorded that as many as 13 hogs and several sheep were slaughtered at one time. The butchering and washing was done down by the creek. The family made their own tallow candles and spun their own yarn for blankets, material, and various other garments.



William M. and Nancy Elder Clemons

Crops

The first year of farming for the pioneers produced crops of sodcorn and wheat. From this, the family ground their own wheat into flour at Iowa City. This was the closest mill and trade center.

Planting the crops began by breaking up the soil with a walking single plow pulled by an oxen. The corn was first dropped by hand but later dropped by a hand lever. William Clemons later purchased the first two row planter to be used in this area. This also brought a change from the oxen to horses.

Soil in the area was very rich and raised good crops. By the late 1800's the farms showed the prosperity and hard work the area farmers had worked so hard for.

Surroundings

At this time Iowa was principally prairie with groves here and there with one settler to each. They soon acquired names of the settlers. The grove where the Clemons family was settled was known as Elder's Grove, after Robert Elder, the first settler in the area. Other close settlements were Illinois Grove, Bevins Grove, French Grove and Patterson Grove.

The timber in Marshall County in the early pioneer days was considered very valuable. It was supposed that one third of the farm of the settler should be woodlands in order to provide against a dearth of fencing timber and fuel. This theory was not proven. The prairie lands constantly increased in value, while woodlands held but an unsteady market value. The farmers found that fencing could be made faster and cheaper with wire. By 1878 fuel from wood was inexhaustable.

At the time of the 1875 census, there was 15,687 acres of native timber in Marshall County, plus 5,526 acres that had been planted to trees since the region was settled. The total acres of timber in Marshall County was 21,213 acres, exclusive of shade trees and orchards.

The soil in the area was rich and on high ground, all that practical farmers could desire. By the late 1800's, Minerva Township was considered one of the best agricultural areas in the region. There was little wasteland. By 1900, the pioneer families had built attractive and prosperous farms. The 1907 atlas states the farmers at this time were "wide awake and up to date".

Minerva Creek and Linn Creek are the two principal creeks in the Clemons area. Minerva Creek is made of a number of small streams rising in the extreme north-western and western parts of the county. It was known as a beautiful stream entering the Iowa River in the south-eastern corner of Marietta Township. The Little Minerva enters it about one mile from its mouth. The main stream of the Minerva Creek is about 10 miles in length.

Here ensues a historical descriptive article of William M. Clemons, the founder of Clemons Grove, taken FROM "THE MARSHALL REPUBLICAN", April 9, 1874.

Wm. M. Clemons:

This gentlemen whose name heads this item is a old and respected citizen of Minerva Township, Marshall County, an honorable neighbor, and sucessful farmer.

The subject of this sketch was born June 21, 1815 and will be consequently 59 years old on the 21st of June next. He was born near Covington, Kentucky, in Kenton County. His father Wm. Clemons and mother whose maiden name was Mathews moved with their family in 1817 to Jefferson Co., Indiana where they improved two farms, but moved again in 1825, this time settling in Decatur County, Indiana. In 1840 William Jr. married Miss Nancy Elder whose father had formerly lived in Washington County, Kentucky, but some time previously removed to Decatur County, Indiana. On September 4th, 1854 the subject of this sketch started from old Decatur with his family for Iowa, and arrived in Marshall County October 4th of the same year being just four weeks on the road. On the farm where he now lives he unloaded his goods to stay on the 6th day of October 1854 hence the gentleman has resided on the same spot for about twenty years.

A beautiful natural setting, took it's name by which has gone to the present day. The farm of Mr. Clemons has been producing in more than one way. Twelve children have been born unto him. Six girls, five of whom are still living. Some of them married having families growing up around them. Out of the six boys four are still living and at home. Mr. Clemons has raised 19 crops in this county and has never failed to have a pretty good one, always having plenty from crop to crop. Mr. Clemons gives it as his opinion that if any person will stay out of debt, raise and grow all kinds of grain and stock he needs, sell that which brings the best price first, keeping the balance till a living price can be realized, is bound to prosper in the worlds goods. His advice is not to run all to corn or oats as is the practice with some, but grow a variety, also raise some stock and when a living price cannot be obtained for grain, feed it and you will scarcely ever fail to make money. Mr. Clemons has been industrious and frugal, has a splendid well improved farm, a large bank barn, a commodious brick house, a good bearing orchard, and stock growing up around him and is now in his old days is prepared to take comfort. He has held several offices of trust in the township in which he resided, Justice of the Peace, Postmaster, and several times supervisor. He is a man of good mind, clear views, and is ever ready to impart to his neighbors any information in his position for the common good.

PIONEER DAYS AS RELATED BY W.J. CLEMONS

William M. Clemons was born June 21, 1815 in Bourbon County, Kentucky. In 1817 he moved with his parents to Jefferson County, Indiana. In 1825, at the age of 10 his parents changed their residence to Decatur County, Indiana.

On January 16, 1840, at the age of 25, William M. Clemons married Nancy Elder who was born July 7, 1820 in Washington County, Kentucky.

In 1853, William M. Clemons made a trip to Iowa for the purpose of surveying the land with the prospect of making his future home here on the prairie. Robert Elder had proceeded him by two years and had settled on the hill overlooking the present site of Clemons. No land suited William with the exception of that on which his wife's brother had built his home. He made many offers. Finally Robert Elder agreed to let him have the land at \$10.00 per acre when any around could have been purchased for \$1.25 an acre from the government. But William was satisfied and returned to Indiana to prepare to move his family to their wilderness home.

In 1854, the William M. Clemons family of eight, since there were now five girls, (Mary, Sarah, Jane, Emma, and Elizabeth) and one boy one and a half years old who was his father's namesake, gave up their home in Indiana to move westward. Tom Clemons, a cousin of William M.'s, came along to look over the new land.

The journey was made in a schooner covered wagon with the sides in a bow shape higher at the front and back drawn by three yoke of oxen. The back end was hinged to let down and a tar bucket hung underneath to grease the linch pin axles. The tar bucket held its place under the rear axles. At that time iron linch pins were used to hold the wheels in place. This wagon was later used as a grain bin. The Mississippi was crossed in flat ferry boats at Muscatine. Two of the oxen were named Bally and Curley and these two helped for a few years to break the road at the old homestead at Clemons. All streams had to be forded so the trip was slow as they often waited for waters to go down.

Upon the family's arrival at their new home, Robert Elder took his family and left for Clay County, Kansas, being a pioneer of that section. He and a son, John, later took part in the Civil War. Robert Elder was married twice, the first wife, Nancy Jane, having died while he still resided in Iowa. One of his children was the first person to be buried in what is now the Clemons Cemetery, his wife being the second. Thus did this cemetery begin its existence.

The Elders left behind them a double log cabin and a log barn built one story high covered with poles and slough grass. A grove surrounded this pioneer home on three sides. A main traveled road ran east and west past the house almost at the doorway. This road carried most of the travel in those pioneer days. William McCormack welcomed the newcomers.

At this time Iowa was principally prairie with groves here and there with about one settler to each. These soon acquired names, usually that of the settler. Of course, the one in which the Clemons family was settled was by this time known as Elder Grove. Others of close proximity were Illinois, Bevins, French and Patterson.

The nearest post office, at this time was Iowa City from where all provisions must be brought, and the round trip for the rest of supplies consumed a week. It was not long, however, before these sturdy pioneers were to find that nature was going to be of great assistance to them, and that all of their food was not to be hauled from Iowa City.

The woods abounded in wild fruits, nuts and honey. The streams were filled with fish which could be taken with scarcely any trouble. But these were not the only things that made up the larder of the pioneer. When the first snow fell, elk and deer made their appearance. Wild turkeys were found to be abundant. Prairie chickens, quails, and timber pheasants were also plentiful.

Such things as sugar, salt, coffee and material to be made into clothing had to be purchased in Iowa City. In the winter these trips were of course made by sled. Hogs were often butchered, frozen and taken by sled to exchange for necessities. They had to haul their grain and barter produce to Iowa City. Grandfather Clemons would bring back grain sacks of dried fruits and bolts of calico. All the women had dresses alike but there was harmony anyway.

Many fish stories of those days included a pike 4 feet long caught by transients and the head left over a regular fence post. The Minerva creek had plenty of water and fish. William James Clemons and Sam Mooney speared through the ice 12 pickerel, all at least 2 feet long, up the creek near the bluff. William James Clemons, Bert Brackney, Mack McKinnon and others went to the Iowa River returning home with a wagon load of catfish, two of which weighed 12 pounds each. They got so many William James Clemons had a wash tub full which lasted a week or more. The minister came and stayed with them until they were all gone.

The coon chase was exciting. He was found eating where the hogs had been butchered along the creek. William James Clemons, Jay Gaunt, Orren Gaunt, and Tom Jones gave chase. William James Clemons said to father William Mathis Clemons "leave the dogs at the house so we can have some fun." Jay Gaunt climbed the tree where the raccoon stuck his head right out his hole in Jay's face. The boy almost fell from fright but held on and the coon jumped to another tree and on to the creek which was open in the center with ice on each side. Orren Gaunt found a long pole and finally stunned and hooked him out of the water. The elder Clemons was so excited with fear that they would lose the animal that he yelled in anger at his son, William James Clemons, "Have fun, Billy, have fun." They ate the coon.

Within the next two years (after arrival) several Indian neighbors joined the settler's here. Perlunzo Clemons, better known as "Uncle Doc" came in 1856 with his wife Ellen Smith Clemons and family of six, Mary Ellen, Belle, Sarah, Nancy Jane, William H. and Nora Alice.

The first year the principal crop was sod corn. Then oxen were used to break up the soil and wheat became one of the chief crops. From this the family made all their own flour and meal. Corn was plowed with a walking single shovel plow. It was first chopped by hand. Later it was chopped by a hand lever. Hay and grain were first scythed. A combined reaper and mower were used later. For a time the grain was cut with a reaper and bound by hand. William James Clemons, plowed over the town site with a one horse double shovel plow. By this time they had exchanged the oxen for horses. Before the change, however, William James Clemons, had the opportunity of making a yoke and breaking a pair of calves.

Many transients going through the county, prospecting, moving, or driving stock made the William M. Clemons home their stopping place for refreshment or lodging overnight. They were welcome as long as the flour held out.

About the time of the Civil War it was decided to have a brick house built and also a frame barn. William Mooney's farm yielded material for bricks as did the side hill below the site of the house. It was erected and still stands today.

A trip was made back to Indiana at this period of history (about 1863 or 1864), but with horses taking about three weeks to complete by covered wagon. The farm had been rented to George Bryant. There were eleven who made the journey. William M. and Nancy, their children Sarah (Mooney) with her child (Nancy Ellen Mooney Gause), Jane, Emma, Elizabeth, William James, John, Henry, and Abraham Lincoln Clemons. Mary Susan had married John Gaunt and was living in Indiana at this time. The older William Clemons, father of William Mathis Clemons, was also living then in Indiana, but sick in bed with rheumatism which kept him down for 13 years. A tent was used at night and feed for the horses and straw for bedding was purchased along the way by the ropeful. The summer was spent among their old friends and they returned in the fall to take up their duties once more.

There was an occasional Indian scare. One day in 1864 while the head of the family was away in Iowa City, William James Clemons, about 10 or 11 years old, happened to be out in the yard and he discovered a band of Indians about 200 strong coming from the east. They were strung out for a mile coming toward the house in all their feathers and war paint, yelling and whooping as they passed the homestead. First one Indian, then another would yell. This yelling being kept up all along the line.

They were riding ponies though some were walking. They came nearer and nearer. Of course William James was frightened and ran into the house to tell his mother and sisters to pile up all the flat irons and wedges so they could put up a little resistance anyway. But his excitement was for nothing for the Indians passed by, still yelling and proceeding on up the road.

Water for house use was hauled for years from the creek on a log sledge. It was not uncommon to butcher 13 hogs or more at one time for their large family's needs. Wild fowl, sheep and cattle were added to the larder for a family of 9 children, 2 or 3 hired men and all the transients who stopped there as at a hotel. It was a stopping place for people traveling through the county. One day man gave William James a big red apple which was a treat as they had not gotten an orchard to bear.

The butchering was done down by the creek where there was plenty of water to work with. Two or three iron kettles were used in which to heat the water. The family made their own tallow candles which were still in use when the first church was built across the creek on a high bluff overlooking what is now the ball diamond (in 1929).

They spun their own yarns weaving blankets, yardage for skirts, socks, etc.

The stock was watered at the creek in the park. High waters drowned 100 of their 112 sheep at one time.

The first school house was of log, built a mile south of the creek. William James remembered Mrs. Ebenezer Wantz as his teacher. A brick building later replaced the log one in which Jess Everist "licked 'em comin' and goin' ". Most every boy plays hookey but William James claims he didn't, giving the reason that he was watched too closely at home, but he made this remark, "If he did play hookey he never told his folks for what would have meant a double dose." It was no uncommon thing for rattlesnakes to crawl through the windows. Spelling schools were quite the thing in those days, after which the boys indulged in horse racing.

About the year 1878 William M. Clemons had accumulated 656 acres of land. He said in later years that "if he had his life to live over he'd surely make more money than he did. Buy more land at \$1.25 an acre I suppose."

He (William M.) thought the valley just below his home was an ideal place for a town but didn't take any action along that line until 1882 when the town was founded. He had to pay the railroad to put its depot there. Land for depot, yards, and the right of way through the town had to be allowed. The town site was surveyed into lots. William M. Clemons wanted it called Minerva but the people of the neighborhood insisted it be called "Clemons". This small Marshall County village is 16 miles northwest of the County seat, Marshalltown, Iowa.

Dr. Miller and Perlunzo Clemons were among the first to settle here. William M. Clemons, himself, built

nine buildings among which were the Brackney elevator, Drugstore, Meat market, blacksmith shop, corner grocery and four homes.

The church was moved to town and located on Main Street, the building once long occupied by Aaron Brackney (now the location of the post office). A peculiar thing about this church was a partition that ran down the middle separating the men from the women. A minister could be hired for \$100.00 a year. William M. and Nancy Jane Clemons did much financially for the early churches, the colored windows on the west side of the present church being paid for by them.

Grandmother Nancy Clemons was a very quiet, hard working woman while William James says there is a family trait on his father's side of loud voice and harsh demands for any wish by the man. William M. Clemons used to call his youngest son home from the village from his own home yard on the hill. Mrs. William James Clemons said she believed people could hear old grandfather Clemons in Indiana.

William M. Clemons was feeble for a few years before he died at 84 years of age in the spring of 1900. Nancy also died in 1900. Both are buried in Clemons Cemetery.

The daily routine and sometimes tragic events in the life of a pioneer is expressed in William M. Clemons' Diary Excerpts from September 1872 — March and April 1873

Sept. 3, 1872 - 65 above zero, cloudy, wind S.W. Wm J. plowed & John & Henry helped S. Mooney thrash ½ day each.

Sept. 4, 1872 - 68 above zero, cloudy, wind South, Wm J. plowed & John helped Sam finish thrashing & I went to State Center & Henry got up the turkeys.

Sept. 5, 1872 - 72 above zero, clear, wind south. 3 oldest bouys gone to the county fair - 3 day - it is said to be very poor. I & Nancy & Link at holme.

Sept. 7, 1872 - 68 above zero, cloudy & rained considerable last night about enough to lay the dust. Bouys plowed & I went to State Center.

Sept. 8, 1872 - 62 above zero, cloudy & rained right Smart & rained off and on all day. Sam & Sarah here. Bouys at sunday school.

Sept. 8, 1872 - 61 above zero, cloudy, & rained a schotchmans mist all night. I started to the fair & staid at A. Clemons.

Sept. 10, 1872 - 67 above zero, rather cloudy, wind from the South. I & Arch went over to Marshalltown & (*) the train.

Sept. 11, 1872 - 61 above zero, cloudy & rained last night, wind from the south, I was at the State fair today.

Sept. 12, 1872 - 52 above zero, clear, and wind from the West. I bought a bull at the State Fair name Bismark.

Sept. 13, 1872 - 50 above zero, clear, wind from the South West. A fire at Cedar Rapids the Star Waggon Factory at 3 Ave.

Sept. 14, 1872 - 48 above zero, I started from Cedar Rapids at one A.M. & got State Center at 5 P.M. & holme at 8 P.M. All well.

Sept. 15, 1872 - 54 above zero. I staid at holme all day & S. Mooney come in evening on their way to Kansas the Camolites had meeting 3 or 4 days.

Sept. 16, 1872 - 46 above zero. I & John & Henry went after Bismark to State Center & got him holme all right & Sam & Sarah started to Kansas.

Sept. 17, 1872 - 50 above zero, Wind S.W. I notified the hands to work the roads & Wm J & John plowed sod, about half done on the south field.

Sept. 18, 1872 - 50 above zero, clear, I & E. Rockhill went to Marshalltown & had to pay \$11 dollars to herbert after paying it to the court 17 months ago.

Sept. 19, 1872 - 50 above zero, clear, I was at Marshalltown and bought a watch price \$25.00 and come holme with Alexander and his intended wife.

Sept. 20, 1872 - 50 above zero, clear, I & J.M. Gaunt & L. Deal & John Blackburn worked on the road at bridge N.W. & bouys plowed and will soon be dun.

Sept. 21, 1872 - 57 above zero Cloudy wind N.E. I & Maple worked some & I left him & I taken to work, thrashed G.W. Magees timothy seed 8½ bushels & none of mine.

Sept. 22, 1872 - 44 above zero, cloudy, wind N.W. Aib & Jane & family here. No meeting (church). William J. went to State Center. Mary White has bin here one week today.

Sept. 23, 1872 - 61 above zero, cloudy wind S.W. rained a little before day. Thrashed 15¾ bushels of timothy seed A. Grewell & Co.

Sept. 24, 1872 - 68 above zero, clear, wind South Wm J. finished sturing clover sod & John & Henry halled stove wood & wind blew hard & Allen Vanmeter & I went to Albion.

Sept. 25, 1872 - 41 above zero, clear, wind N.W. Nancy Clemons had 15 teeth pulled and I had * teeth pulled & four left by James Speen.

* words unledgable.

March 26, 1873 - 1 above zero, clear wind N.W. Albert Grewell & wife here. I sold 28 lbs. of peaches to William Mooney out of last barrel.

March 27, 1873 - 16 above zero, clear wind south. I had something like the Coleramobe's & went to the Grange this evening Jap McDaniel worse.

March 28, 1873 - 38 above zero, clear wind S.W. John M. Gaunt sick & no better & Nancy sent for down at MacDaniels Jap not expected to live.

March 29, 1873 - 28 above zero, clear wind N.W. I & Nancy went to McDaniels & then to see John M. Gaunt he was purty sick all day McChild verry sick.

March 30, 1873 - 40 above zero cloudy & raining, wind N.W. The sick was all thought to be better. I & Nancy at J.M. Gaunts all day. Tiggars staid all knight.

March 31, 1873 - 30 above zero, clear wind south. I & Nancy & all the bouys started to the T. Vanmeters & State Center & bought 3 par of boots & 1 paper of pins & stove chimney change. John M. Gaunt thought to be worse, William M. Clemons.

April first 1873 account of the cold & heat at sunrise or before by the thermoniter Wm.M. Clemons.

April 1, 1873 - 36 above zero, cloudy & rained all knight & commenced snowing at 7 am, wind N.E. & snowed all day & rained to geather & verry Dis Agreeable day. I staid at John M. Gaunt's to nite & he was thought to be better but slept verry Drawn.

April 2, 1873 - 22 above zero, clear John M. Gaunt no better & no better at night. When Wm. J & John come from their thought to be rather worse.

April 3, 1873 - 38 above zero, cloudy, wind south, John M. Gaunt thought to be better & fever brake ?? & was thought to be better at night. I & Sarah Monney went to T. Hances & got no money & back to Gaunts says wife verry sick.

April 4, 1873 - 45 above zero, cloudy, wind south, John about the same & tookearly in day I went to Marshall & back & fetched two barrels of peaches & went to J.M. Gaunts after 11 P.M.

April 5, 1873 - 45 above zero, cloudy, G. Julien went to telegraph to Rossel & J. Gaunts. John M. Gaunt maid his will at 1 o'clock am & no better this moring.

April 6, 1873 - 40 above zero, cloudy & rained off and on all day. At John M. Gaunts all day he has the typhoid fever & Areciplys & can't tell what else.

April 7, 1873 - 36 above zero cloudy & rather colder, wind N.W. John appears better, eats better. Some has muded in their wheat. John is still amending.

April 8, 1873 - 30 above zero, cloudy, wind N.W. I & Nancy staid at J.M. Gaunts & snowed at 10 o'clock & snowed all day & until 2 or 3 o'clock next day.

April 9, 1873 - 30 above zero, cloudy & snowing at 11 am & must of snowed enough to of maid 1 foot of snow yesterday & today, but thawed considerable. John thought

to be better.

April 10, 1873 - 26 above zero, rather cloudy, wind N.W. & half the snow melted. Rained after dark at Grange. John thought to be better still. But little snow.

April 11, 1873 - 28 above zero, cloudy, wind N.W. I staid at S. Mooneys after Grange & come to John M. Gaunts & Holme & my back hurt & I was sick the afternoon. Wm J. & John & Oren killed J.G. hog.

April 12, 1873 - 29 above zero, Clear, wind south & John M. Gaunt is worse & Rickey there all night, butthought to be some better in evening but bad enough.

April 13, 1873 - 41 above zero, rather cloudy wind south, John is no better and staid so until night & couldn't sleep & verry nervous. G. Elder here.

April 14, 1873 - 48 above zero, raining, S.E. John drowsy since 2 a.m. G. Elder come from their. Rained most of the day. G. Elder here he thought John about the same when he left their.

April 15, 1873 - 34 above zero, cloudy, wind south, I went over to J.M. Gaunts & Doctor Richey thought he couldn't live until knight, but better.

April 16, 1873 - 35 above zero, raining & ground verry weat John M. Gaunt still living & may git well John was thought to be better at night Wm J.C.

April 17, 1873 - 38 above zero, cloudy wind west, John M. Gaunt thought to be right smart better all day. The doctor come at night.

April 18, 1873 - 36 above zero, wind west, Cloudy at sunrise John M. Gaunt thought to be about the same as yesterday. Lanced J.M.G. left arm & bun out 3 points of matter.

April 19, 1873 - 34 above zero, Clear, wind south J.M. Gaunt no worse the bouys harrowed over the lower piece twist & a little on the other & drove willows over the creek.

April 20, 1873 - 40 above zero, cloudy & rained a little John rested purty bad last night but got fever off this morning & rested better. Rickey lanced his right side in 2 places no matter.

April 21, 1873 - 35 above zero, cloudy wind south, I went to J.M. Gaunts at 11 o'clock am. & staid all day & night. John had considerable fever.

April 22, 1873 - 31 above zero, & snowed 1 inch after 5am, wind N.E. John M. Gaunt had a chill a 9 o'clock am & dyed at 3 p.m. Drilling wheet.

April 23, 1873 - 29 above zero, clear, wind N. J.M. Gaunts funeral preached at 2 o'clock text picked by J.M.G. Revelations 14 Chapter & 13 verse Write blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord.

April 24, 1873 - 28 above zero mostly clear wind N.W. I

took Sarah & Mr. McCormack & James Gaunt to State Center and it snowed off & on all afternoon.

April 25, 1873 - 29 above zero, clear, wind north. I & Nancy went up to A. Smiths to see their sick girl & back by Mary S. Gaunts & over to D. Warcesters.

April 26, 1873 - 38 above zero, clear, wind west. Begun to drill last Tuesday & halve 15 acres lore field & 24 in upper field drilled & 4 to drill yet. It is a verry late spring this year.

April 27, 1873 - 42 above zero, clear, wind S.E. I & Nancy went over to Mary's & all the bouys went to hear Patent Preach & Nancy took sick.

April 28, 1873 - 42 above zero, rained a little last night, wind north. Wm J. Clemons finished drilling ourwheet in at noon & 12 acres stured for corn this evening.

April 29, 1873 - 38 above zero, rather hazey, wind S.E. I & Wm J. & John & Henry & two teams harrowed in wheat for Mary Susan Gaunt 25 acres on 38½ bushels sowed.

April 30, 1873 - 45 above zero, wind south east & got N.E., blows considerable & commenced to rain at 5pm & rained all evening & night purty studdy but not verry hard.

May 1, 1873 - Eliza Magee going to marry today.

Compiled by
Scott Clemons

Brick Houses

For many years a ride through the countryside of Liberty and Minerva Townships would reveal many old brick houses. These homes all date back to our earliest permanent settlers and have stood as strong, silent monuments of our pioneer families. Many of these are also located on the state roads and stage routes.

In the southeast corner of the NE¼ of Section 3, Liberty Township, still stands the Henry Dunn house, built in about 1876. Today the house is painted white and has been occupied by the Clarence Schoberg family for several years.

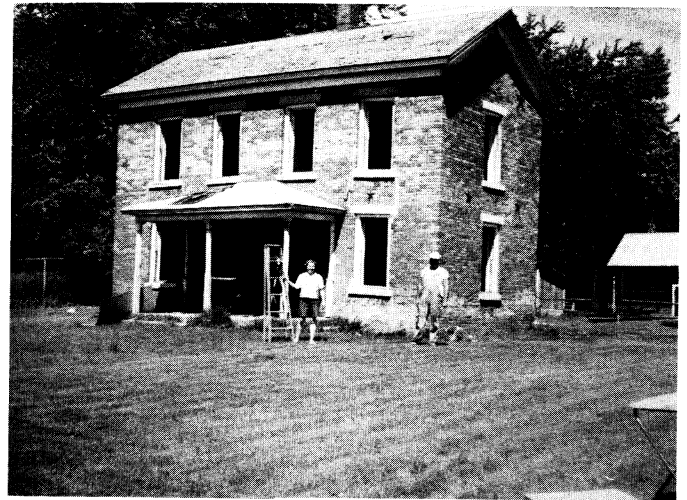
On south and west in southeast corner of the SE¼ of Section 9, Liberty Township was a brick house on land owned originally by William Clemons. It is believed this house was built in 1864. The house was torn down in 1968 and a new home built on the site by Mr. and Mrs. John Nichols.

The Anthony Pierce house was located on the farm where Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Willard now live. This house was built in 1860's and used until 1973 when it was replaced by a new home. This house was located in the northeast corner of SE¼ SW¼, Section 15, Liberty Township.



J. C. F. DUNN HOUSE

Recently occupied by Clarence and Rita Schoberg



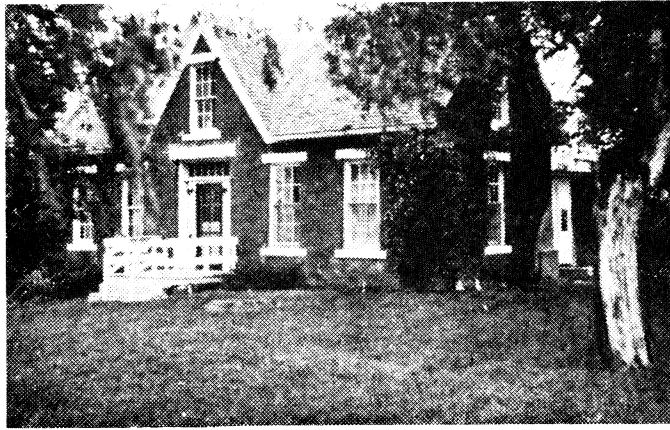
House built on the John Nichols farm. It was torn down by the Nichols in 1968.



ANTHONY PIERCE HOUSE

Now owned by Marvin and Colleen Willard

It is believed that these houses were built from brick made from clay dug from pits near the center of Section 22, Liberty Township. These were soft brick that were fired in kiln near these clay pits south of the Hayden Smith house.



HAYDEN SMITH HOUSE

Torn down 1980

In the Northeast corner of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 22, Liberty Township, stands the Perlsonzo Clemons house which also was built in the 1860's or 70's. This house still retains much of its original character and has been owned by the Levick family for many years.



PERLONZO CLEMONS HOUSE

Levick Estate

The present residence of Mr. and Mrs. E.W. Bartine was built by David Teager in about 1863. This house was restored in 1975 with most of its original character being retained. The bricks for this house are a soft red-dish yellow and were hauled from Iowa City. The house originally had a gable roof but a cyclone on July 27, 1896, tore the roof off and the present hipped roof style was to replace it. This house is located in the Southeast corner of the Northeast Quarter of Section 35, Liberty Township.

The George Magee house, now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Delbert Fields, in the Northwest corner of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Sectin 3, Minerva Township. This house is now white stucco in appearance, but is brick underneath. The house burned in 1928 and was rebuilt. The

stucco was used to cover up the burned and discolored brick.



TEAGER HOUSE

1895 - Samuel Mooney and family
Now owned by E. W. Bartine



GEORGE MAGEE HOUSE

Just West of the Clemons Cemetery



HOME OF WILLIAM M. CLEMONS

Left to right - Fred Clemons, Addie Clemons, Harold Clemons, William Dean Clemons, Lincoln Clemons, Vern Clemons, Martha Ellen Gaunt Clemons, Charles S. Clemons, William J. Clemons, Wm. M. Clemons, Henry Perlsonzo Clemons, Nancy Clemons, John Clemons, Clara Clemons, Unknown.

The brick house of William M. Clemons, built in 1856, is the oldest of these houses. It is presently owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. John Davis. The bricks for this house were made from clay on the farm just north of the house and road, and from bricks made on the old William Mooney farm in the north half of Section 34 of Liberty Township.

A view of these remaining stately houses are reminiscent of the prominence of their builders and the importance they placed on their homes.

Landmark

One of the old landmarks of the area is the large brick home in the Southeast quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 35 of Liberty Township now owned and occupied by Mr. & Mrs. E.W. Bartine.

The structure was built by David Teager about 1863 during the Civil War. Mr. Teager was a very prominent and prosperous framer in the area and owned several hundred acres of land. The bricks for the house came from Iowa City and were hauled by horse and wagon. The house is approximately forty by fifty feet and the walls are four brick thick. The house floor plan is two large square rooms on each side of a large center hall and the floor plan is identical for the basement and first and second floors. The interior walls on the first floor are also solid brick. The window sills and door thresholds are stone brought from Kentucky.



E. W. BARTINE RESIDENCE
Left to right - Ed Bartine, Erin and Todd Bartine
1981

The northwest room of the first floor has a fireplace. The rooms on the south side of the house have two south windows, while the rooms on the north have only one north window. There are ten foot ceilings on the first floor and nine foot ceilings on the second floor. The staircase has a solid black walnut banister.

The house is structurally very much the way its ap-

peared in the 1860's. On July 27, 1896, the roof was blown off by a cyclone. Originally the roof was gable metal roof with a window in the east and west ends. The roof was replaced with a four way hipped roof with a flat deck in the center.

In 1975, the house was completely restored by E.W. Bartine. At that time the interior was refinished but basically was unaltered from its original design. The exterior was sandblasted and tuckpointed.

Also, located on the farm is the original barn constructed during the Civil War of hewed logs that are pinned together with wooden pegs. The barn construction was begun by William Mooney who was wounded in the war and discharged. He cut the beams and frame of the barn and after the war the men raised the barn.

The farm now belongs to E.W. Bartine and has been in his family since 1893 when his grandfather, Samuel Mooney, purchased it from the Teager Estate. Originally the farmstead site was in the timber, but today the timber has greatly thinned out.

Early Settlers of the Area

Henry Bevins
William Lowe
Dr. Charles Miller
George Voris
John Bevins
Robert Elder
Pattison
Anthony Pierce
Daniel Stevens
Stacy Nichols
William M. Clemons
John Ford
Thomas Clemons
William McCormack
Archibald Clemons
Thomas Hall
John M. Clemons
Jonas Mooney
Geroge Wantz
John Anselm
Joe Anselm
Henry L. Pfantz, Sr.
William Mooney
LePlants
August Eckhart
George Magee

James Ingledue
Thomas Blackburn
William Spence
William Tucker
Perlono Celmons
James Howard
Samuel Mooney
William Dunn
Henry Dunn
Patrick Dunn
Thomas Hance
H. H. Smith
David Teager
John King
Otis Warner
Joseph Ely
A.A. Bartine
John Gaunt
Thomas Hall
Issac Van Metre
Gabriel Sharp
Hiram Peckham
Harry Grewell
C.S. Andrews
J.W. Lacey
Richard Bryant
Abraham Hill
Joseph Howard
Charles Howard