

Down Memory Lane

Edenville — 1856-1883

On April 10, 1848, the Board of Commissioners of Jasper County adopted the following: "That there hereby is a township laid off in the boundaries of Marshall County, to be known by the name of Minerva Creek Township; the place of holding the election to be at the house of George W. Halley. Washington Asher, David Miller and George W. Halley to act as judges of election."

The County of Marshall was organized under the management of Joseph M. Ferguson, acting as organizing sheriff by the provision of the district court. Though the certificate speaks of the entire county as "Minerva Township" it was divided at its organization into two polling precincts, the northern half being Minerva Creek Township and the southern half Jefferson Township. The first election numbered 28 ballots. The county used a Commissioners system of government. In 1851, the Commissioner system was abolished and substituted a plan known as County Judge system. One man was elected by the people with powers equal to those possessed by the board of Commissioners. John B. Hobb was elected Judge of the County Court in 1853.

In 1853, Iowa Township was added to the two established townships. This area was then in Marietta Township. In 1855, the county court re-divided the county into nine townships. Eden Township was created at this time and began at the northeast corner of township 83, range 20; thence west to the western boundary of the county; thence south to the southwest corner of the county; thence east to the southeast corner of the township 82, range 20; thence north on the township line to the place of the beginning. This included the present Eden and State Center Township. State Center Township was created in 1866 from township 83 north, range 20 west. Thus leaving Eden Township as it is today - township 82 north, range 20 west.

To the early settler this area had what they needed to survive. In early historical accounts it was often referred to as the "Paradise" or "The Eden of the West." Water was provided by Clear Creek and its tributaries on the west and North Skunk River on the east. As a bonus, large quantities of timber, approximately 3,500

acres, were standing mainly along Clear Creek. Among these trees were oaks, maples, cottonwood, elms and ash interspersed with hickory, butternut and walnut. This native timber served as a shelter from Iowa's weather, provided material for homes, furniture, barns, fences, wagons and buggies and eventually was used for bridges and business places.

Intermingled and around the timber were hazelnuts, berries, plums and crabapples. These added some delicacies to the pioneering family. There was also sufficient prairie to meet their needs. In the timber and prairie were many wild animals and fowl which provided much of the meat for the table. Such animals as the wolf and bear are mentioned in early days. It was said the early settler was welcomed by the howl of the wolf. As late as March of 1898 there is an article in the paper, "A large wolf made his appearance at the H. Floto farm. It was seen in the barnyard Saturday and killed one of his sheep. When Mr. Floto appeared it ran away. Wolves are getting too numerous, he favors a bounty on them."

The first settler to enter this territory was a David Maggard who came in 1848 and settled west of Clear Creek. He started to make some improvements but died of a fever from exposure. His closest known neighbors were the few families that constituted Newton at that time.

The next settlers to come and are referred to as the first permanent settlers in Eden Township were James Greene Allen and his wife Clarinda and six month old daughter, Mary Emily. They came by covered wagon from Casey County, Kentucky. They entered land at the land office in Iowa City and came to Jasper County in the spring of 1849. He received land as an assignee of John Whittle, a private in Captain Graves' Company, 16th Regiment of the United States Infantry. He obtained the E½ of the SE ¼ of Section 8 - 82 - 20 and the W½ of the SW ¼ of Section 9 - 82 - 20.

The most common way of settling land in this territory seemed to be through military land warrants. The acts of 1847 and 1850 initiated the issue of warrants as a reward and partial payment for armed services to the veterans of the Mexican War, the War of 1812 and any Indian War since 1790. In 1852 an

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

KNOW YE, That in pursuance of the Act of Congress entitled "An act to raise for a limited time an additional military force, and for other purposes," approved February 11th, 1847.

John Whittle, a private in Captain Graves' Company, Sixteenth Regiment of United States Infantry,

having deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE a WARRANT in *his* favor, numbered *15,936*

THERE IS THEREFORE GRANTED BY THE UNITED STATES, unto *James Green Allen,* assignee of said *John Whittle,* and to his heirs, the East half of the South East quarter of Section Eight and the West half of the South West quarter of Section Nine, in Township Eighty two North, of Range Twenty West, of the Fifth Principal Meridian, in the District of Lands Subject to Sale at Iowa City, Iowa, containing one hundred and sixty acres

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the SURVEYOR GENERAL, which said tracks have been located in satisfaction of the above mentioned Warrant, in pursuance of the Act of Congress above mentioned, approved February 11th, 1847. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said *parts of said* sections of land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said

James Green Allen, and to his

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the

BY THE PRESIDENT:

Fifth day of *March*

Willard Fillmore

in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred

By *Alex Mc Cormick* Sec'y.

and *fifty one* and of the INDEPENDENCE

OF THE UNITED STATES the seventy-*fifth*

E. J. Perry

Recorder of the General Land Office.

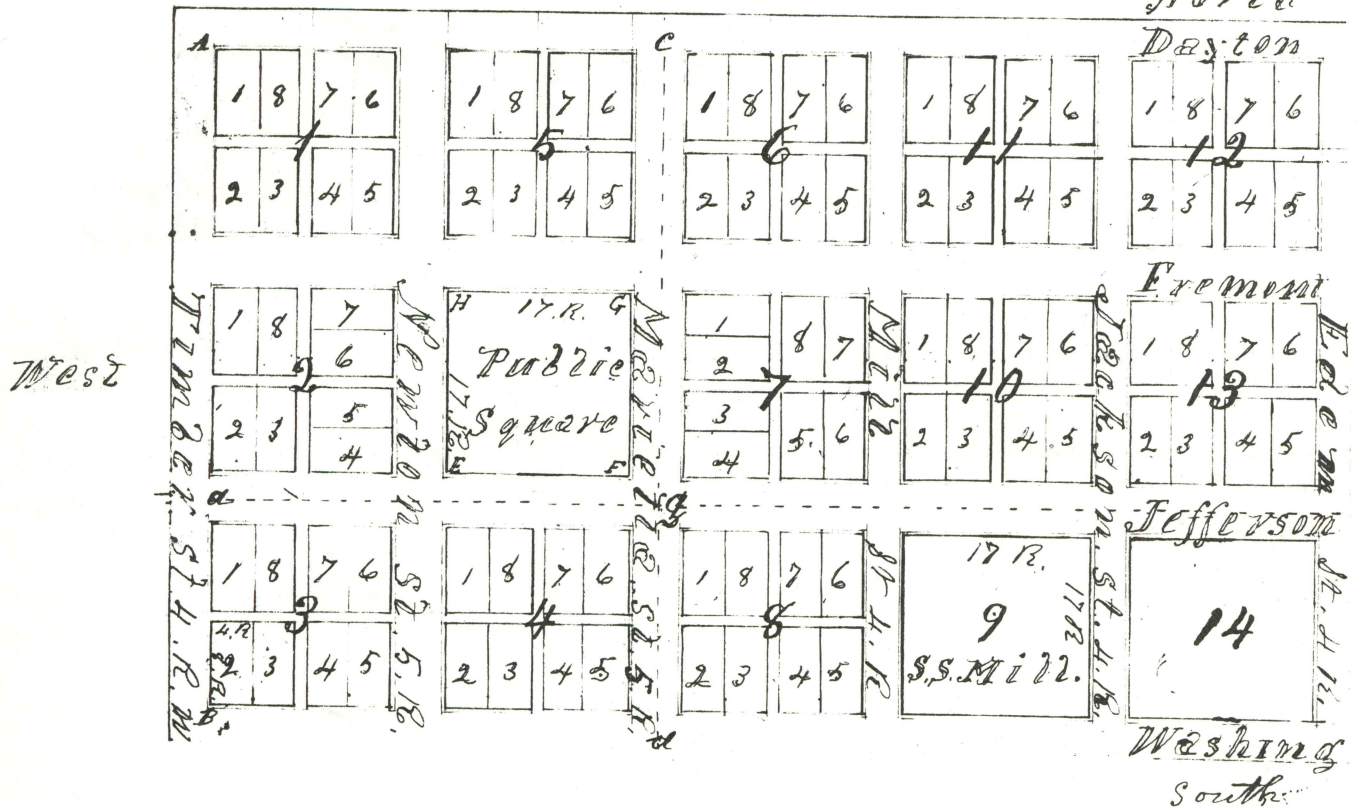
heirs and assigns forever.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, *Willard Fillmore*

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these Letters to be made Patent, and the SEAL OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

See North 150 page 241 for Partial vacation
See Bk 268 page 271

Plat of Edenville in Mar



Edenville is located in
Sec 9 T82 N R20 W.
C to d Centre Line North
& South through Sec. 9.

from a. to b. Centre Line East
& West b. being the East 1/4
Post, g. being Centre of Section
9., Monumental (Stone) Plante
at letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H.

Newton, Marietta, Jefferson
& Greemont Streets are 5 Rod
Wide, all others 4 Rods wide

Alleys 1 Rod wide.

Blocks 24, 25, 26 are 17 Rod
x 30 1/2 Rod. all others are
17 x 17 Rod.

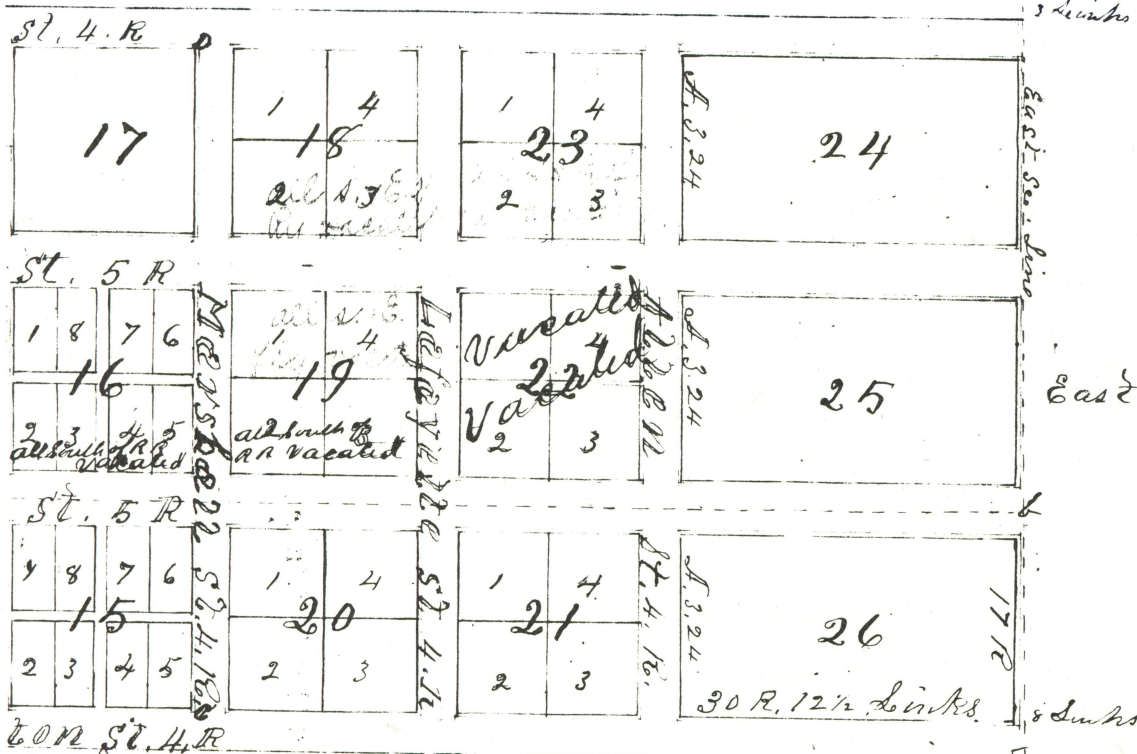
Public Square 17 x 17 Rods
as shown by the Plat,
Variation 10' 15" of all Lines.
N. & S. E & W.

Scale 16 Rod to an inch
Survey Made July 17th &
18th 1856

364 page 2 for change of Name to "Rhodes"

shall County Iowa.

430



Fred. Baum

Surveyor

1871

Filed for Record October
6th 1856 at 12, O'clock
M, Recorded in Book
D. Pages 430 & 431
J. H. Mercer

Recorder of
Marshall Co. Iowa

Fee 1.00 Paid

Edenville Business Directory.

Jos. Lacey, Proprietor Hotel.
Geo. Cury, Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots, Shoes, &c.
A. J. Salts, Physician and Surgeon.
D. B. Mendenhall, Farmer and Dealer in Stock of all kinds.
Sec. 10, Eden Tp.
H. Haines, Nurseryman, Dealer in Fruit Trees, &c. Sec. 9,
Eden Tp.
A. B. Rhodes, Farmer and Dealer in Stock of all kinds. Sec. 9,
Eden Tp.
O. B. Rhodes, Farmer and Dealer in Stock of all kinds. Sec.
9, Eden Tp.
Hulse & Watkins, Farmers and Stock Raisers. Sec. 7, Eden
Tp.
Wm. O. Weeks, Farmer and Thresher. Sec. 20, Eden Tp.

extension of the Act of 1847 made local land warrants assignable. By 1855 all wars in which the United States had been engaged were included, with 160 acres the minimum land grant. Fourteen days of service or participation in one battle would qualify a veteran. Land speculators usually purchased the land warrants at a discount on the eastern market and then resold them at a good profit to pioneers who were eager to go west.

Greene Allen built the first water-powered saw mill in the territory and it turned out most of the native lumber with which the early settlers built their cabins. It was located southwest of town on Clear Creek. Twice during their first year corn had to be hauled to Keokuk to be ground, that being their nearest grist mill.

The Allen's brought seeds with them from Kentucky. At first they even raised a small patch of tobacco. In the 1867 atlas, mention is made of one particular field of corn owned by Greene Allen that had been farmed 18 seasons without any diminution of the crop. In another atlas (1912), mention is made of a field of corn of Allen's which had a fine growth. A visitor from Indiana rode on horseback through the field with Rev. Mendenhall. He stopped in the midst of the section on a high part of the field and looked around and exclaimed, "I never before saw such a wilderness of corn." Perhaps these are the same fields they were speaking of in the early years.

Not much is known of the Indians that were the Allen family's first neighbors, who were the Musquakies and Pottawatomie tribes. Greene and Clarinda's philosophy was to be friends. In 1850 when there was trouble between the whites and Indians, others went to Fort Robinson, a stockade located near Timber Creek on a farm owned by a Mr. Robinson, but the Allen family felt safe and remained at home.

Lisle Wilkinson was the third settler to enter the area. He came in 1850 and settled on land in section 17.

The year 1851 was remembered for its continuous rains for three months beginning May 10. Another history mentions that '51 was the year the "Iowa River was three miles wide that summer." Even though there was a grist mill at Oskaloosa, it was an experience for the scattered settlers to get their corn to and from Oskaloosa that year.

Some other names of the earliest settlers are; C.B. Rhodes, Rev. Thomas Mendenhall, Rev. Abraham Woolston, Mr. Owen, Simon Price, Andrew Logan, P.A. Culver, Joseph Tuffree and Zenas Bartlett. Ruston Bullock and John Jaroleman followed shortly afterwards. (No doubt this is not all the settlers, but these names are most often mentioned in history books.)

Most history books record W. W. Allen as the first white child born in this part of the country, January 31, 1853.

Rev. Thomas Mendenhall came in August of 1854. He was a devoted minister and later preached in the

school of North Eden. He performed the first marriage ceremony in the township, the bride being the daughter of Jacob Crouch, the groom John Dondson. The first sermon was preached in Eden Township by the Rev. Abraham Woolston. It was in a new log house, and there were about sixty people present. Rev. Wooston said that every man, woman and child in the township was present except one very old lady.

No doubt some residents voted in the presidential election of 1852, but the first record where Eden Township voted was in the April election of 1855, where the people voted on the question of allowing swine to run at large in the county. Eden Township voted, "for the law restraining - 12 votes: against the law restraining - 2 votes." The county voted 245 to restrain and 102 against restraining.

In 1853, Conway Rhodes came from Illinois to this area. He received from the United States a patent for the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 9. He bought the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 8 and the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 9 Township 82, Range 20 from Greene Allen consisting of 160 acres. In 1856 Mr. Rhodes felt the township had grown to where they needed a village. He platted the town on August 29, 1856 and called it Edenville because he said it was the "Eden of the West." It was platted around the "village square" or "village green." This square is where the school house stood for many years. The square was surrounded by Marietta, Jefferson, Fremont and Newton Streets. Mr. Rhodes built the first steam grist mill, sawmill and store, bringing the lumber and goods from Iowa City, "using emphatic words at the sloughs." The grist mill was three stories high, and the sawmill produced much of the lumber for the buildings.

Previous to 1857, the settlers post office was Newton, Jasper County, Iowa. One neighbor going for mail or any essentials they may need, would bring the mail back for the neighborhood. A weekly mail was established in 1857.

The supervisors system of county government began in 1861 and continued for ten years. In 1871, the 13th General Assembly created the Board of Supervisors of each county to consist of three persons. The early supervisors of Eden Township were: C.B. Rhodes, 1861-1863; P.A. Asher, 1864; P.A. Culver, 1865; J.M. Rhodes, 1866-1869; C.B. Rhodes, 1868-1869; and George Curry, 1870.

By 1867 the town of Edenville contained two hotels, a store, two blacksmith shops, a large flour mill, cabinet shop and a large schoolhouse used also for church purposes. There was a large group of "Methodists" and a small group of "Disciples." In the days of Edenville most homes had a barn and a small chicken house. Most homes had a fence around their lot as it was open range and livestock would wander about.

Know all men by these presents, that we, James G. Allen and Henrietta W. Allen wife of the said James G. Allen, of Marshall County, State of Iowa, in consideration of the sum of Six hundred Dollars in hand paid by Conaway B. Rhodes, of Marshall County, State of Iowa, (do hereby sell and convey unto the said Conaway B. Rhodes, his heirs and assigns the following described premises, situated in the County of Marshall, to-wit:

The East half of the South East quarter of Section Eight, and the West half of the South West quarter of Section Nine in Township Eighty two, North of Range Twenty West of the 5th principal meridian containing One hundred sixty acres according to the official plat of United States surveys.

And we do hereby covenant with the said Conaway B. Rhodes, his heirs and assigns forever, that we are lawfully seized of said premises, that they are free from incumbrance that we have good right and lawful authority to sell the same and we do here covenant to warrant & defend the said premises against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals this thirty first day of October A. D. 1853.

Executed in presence of }
L. B. Mendenhall }
Vardis Vaupelt }

James G. Allen reat
Henrietta W. Allen reat

State of Iowa, }
Marshall County } I do hereby certify that before me Joseph M. Ferguson, a Justice of the Peace in and for said county personally appeared the above named James G. Allen and Henrietta W. Allen, who are personally known to me to be the identical persons whose names are affixed to the above conveyance as grantors and acknowledged the execution of the same to be their voluntary act & deed for the purposes therein mentioned.

Given under my hand this Thirty first day of October A. D. 1853.

Joseph M. Ferguson
a Justice of the Peace

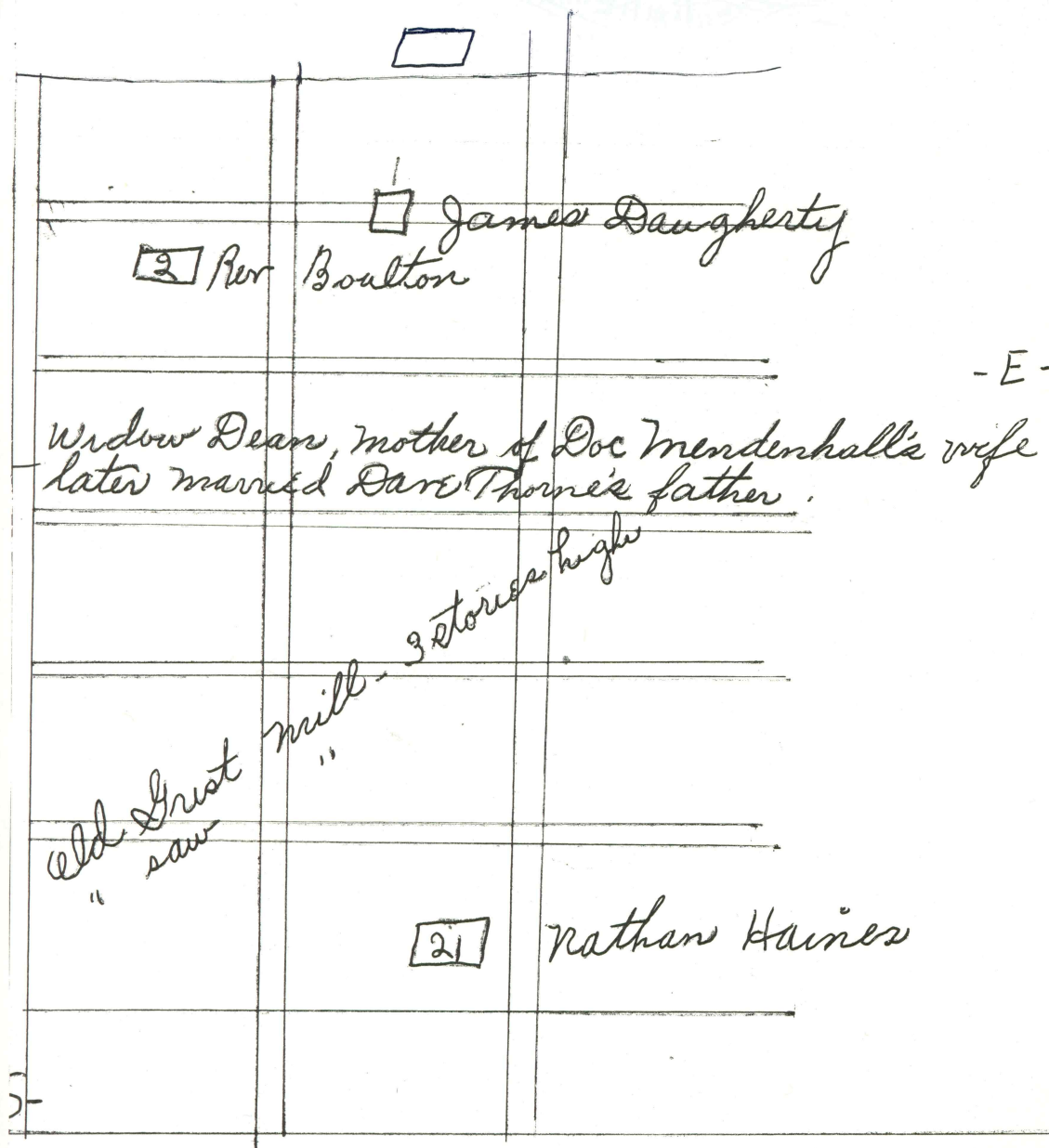
3 ← Pete Rhodes



After the Civil War, new settlers streamed into the

As the age of the township grew, farms continually improved. Farmers became very proud of their farms and worked hard keeping the buildings up. After awhile livestock was brought in to improve their present stock. In the 1874 census of Eden Township there was mention of "one head of thoroughbred shorthorn cattle." In the Eden District Agricultural Society Fair book of 1895, there were advertisements

Iowa April 4 1866 when



of at least seven breeders of purebred shorthorn cattle in Eden Township and surrounding areas. Mentioned were two breeders of Percheron horses, one of Clydesdales and one Morgan. There were also two breeders of Shropshire sheep and one of Cotswold sheep. There is mention of several who had poultry, one mentioning Langshan chickens.

Before the township was completely settled, cattle and horses were allowed to range on unfenced land, much of which was owned by non-residents. As farmers began to produce more than they could use, a market had to be found. Eden Township was a long way from a market, closest being Iowa City. There was

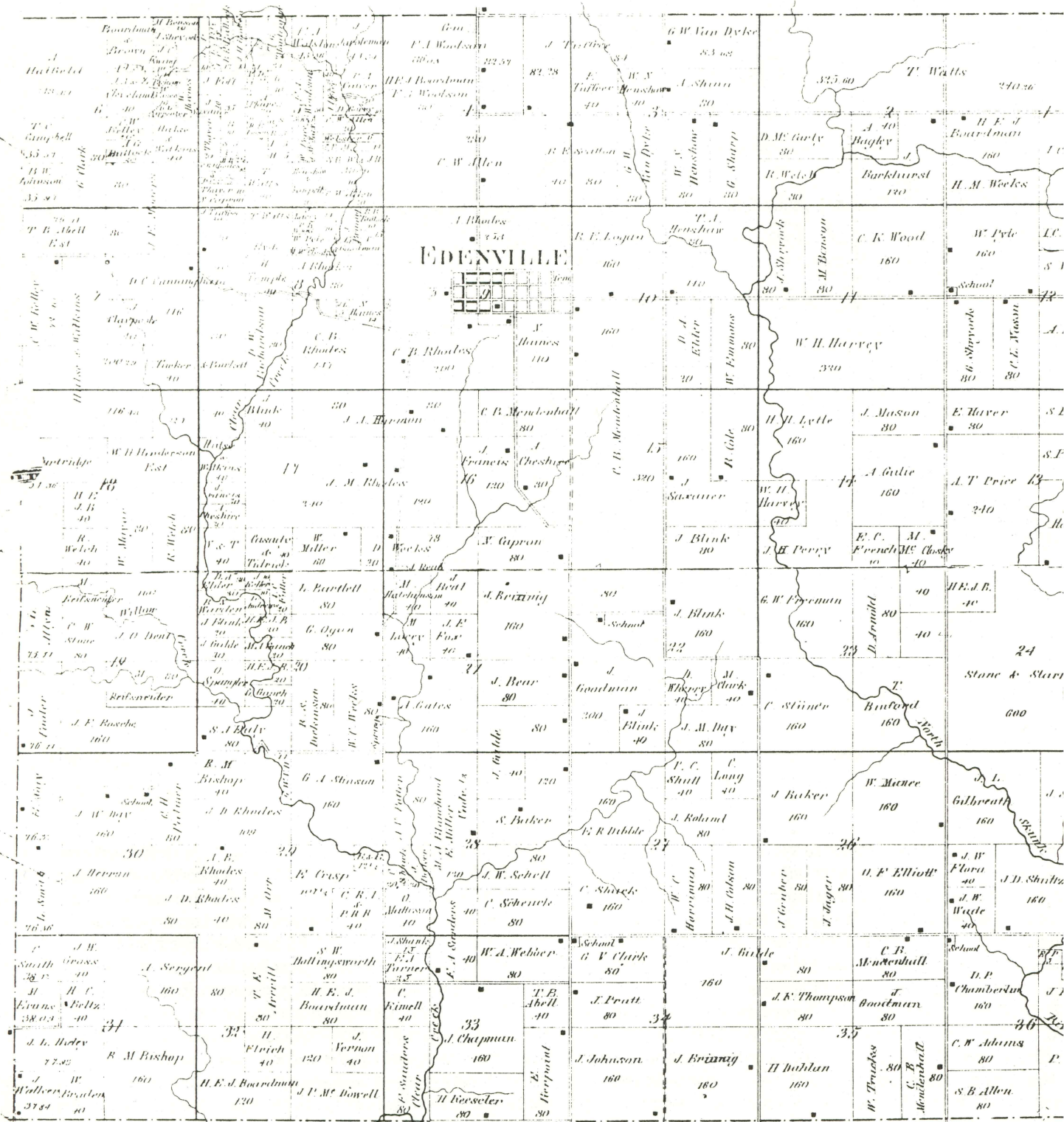
no mail, telephone or radio to bring in quotations daily. Mr. Joseph Tuffree tells how they waited for the bitter cold days to butcher. They loaded the dressed meat on bobsleds and started for Iowa City, a trip which took a week. He sold hogs at \$1.65 to \$2.10 per hundred.

Geographically Eden Township was closer to Marshalltown than Newton. However, for many years Newton was the center of trade for the people of this area as they could follow the ridge to Newton. Going to Marshalltown was quite difficult as the country was mostly raw prairie without any bridges across the streams. Eden Township did not join in county affairs and continued to go to Newton until the arrival of the railroad.

Township 82 North 20 West
Range 20 West
(of 5th Principal Meridian)
1871

EDEN

Scale 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches to the Mch.



STATE CENTRE

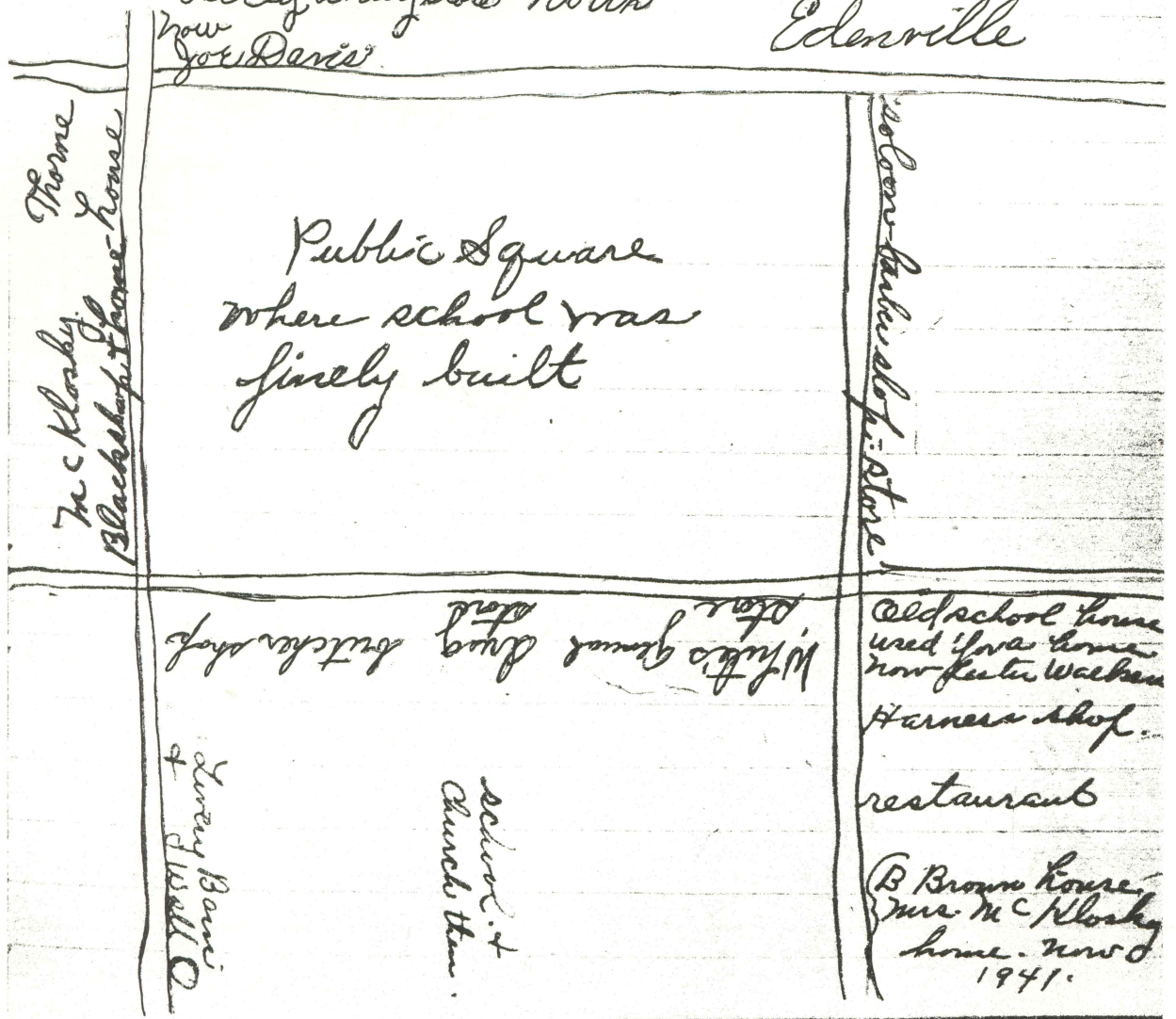
[illegible]

1876

Remember

17

He thinks the town was as per
diagram by George Chamberlain.
Lacey Drugstore North
now Joe Davis Edenville



Early Edenville

Many communities were settled by people of one nationality but Eden Township was a unique settlement. In the census of Eden Township of 1885, settlers were of English, Irish, Scotch, French, German and Russian nationalities.

The timber areas in Eden Township were a busy place, being used by settlers. In 1856, "the Manwarring family of Melbourne purchased timber near Edenville. During the summer they cut trees and hauled logs to the sawmill on Clear Creek south of Edenville to get their lumber to build more buildings." Many settlers purchased 20 acre lots of woodland to use for lumber, fence building and fuel. Mention is made as late as 1897, "John Perry is hiring 100 cords of wood cut from

the Clear Creek bottom. He is planning on clearing 30 acres or more."

Ruston Bullock was the first to raise cultivated fruit in this community. Among the trees he planted was a cherry tree. One 4th of July, the tree had produced a few clusters of cherries, which were the object of much comment at the celebration.

By the 1870's Edenville had grown considerably. The old schoolhouse was no longer adequate, so in 1875 a new one was built. This also allowed more room for church, as the building was used for both.

C.B. Rhodes had tried for sometime to get a railroad in Edenville. At one time the Des Moines & McGregor Railroad was surveyed through here, but nothing

developed. Finally, talk of and surveying for the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad through Central Iowa spirited the growth of our village. Active inducements were offered by citizens to get the railroad to pass through town. Edenville was successful in getting it to run close. C.B. Rhodes sold 25 acres for one dollar for the depot site. After the railroad was built in 1882 the town started moving south toward the depot. Business places were moved from around the square in Edenville to their present locations. New houses were soon built around the newer business district. The town grew during this time. Families who worked on the railroad and also on the reservoir, which was to supply water for the steam engines, moved to town and built or purchased homes. Hotels were built. The Chamberlain family started a boarding and lodging house which housed 40 to 60 railroad workers. The men slept on the floor. George (Peg) Chamberlain said, "These men were Irish-Swedes for the most part."

Railroad officials wished to call the depot a different name than Edenville, as some historical articles say there was already an "Edenville" on the line and others say there was an "Eddyville." Which ever is right, we do not know, but the depot was named "Rhodes" in honor of the man who gave the land. The post office adopted the name also. For sometime we had a town named Edenville and the depot Rhodes. Rhodes was used almost entirely.



The way hogs, ready for market, were taken to the stock yards in Rhodes for shipping.

In the '80's there was a need for a new school and a new store building. They were both built from the brick made in Edenville by the Brick and Tile Company. In 1882 the Methodist Protestants' built a new frame building. It was a fine church for the time and had an extra fine toned bell. In 1886 the Catholic congregation built their church. The town was growing.

Edenville, platted August 29, 1856 by Conway B. Rhodes and located in Section 9, Eden Township, incorporated with its additions, March 16, 1883, as the town of Edenville with the railway station and post office as Rhodes.



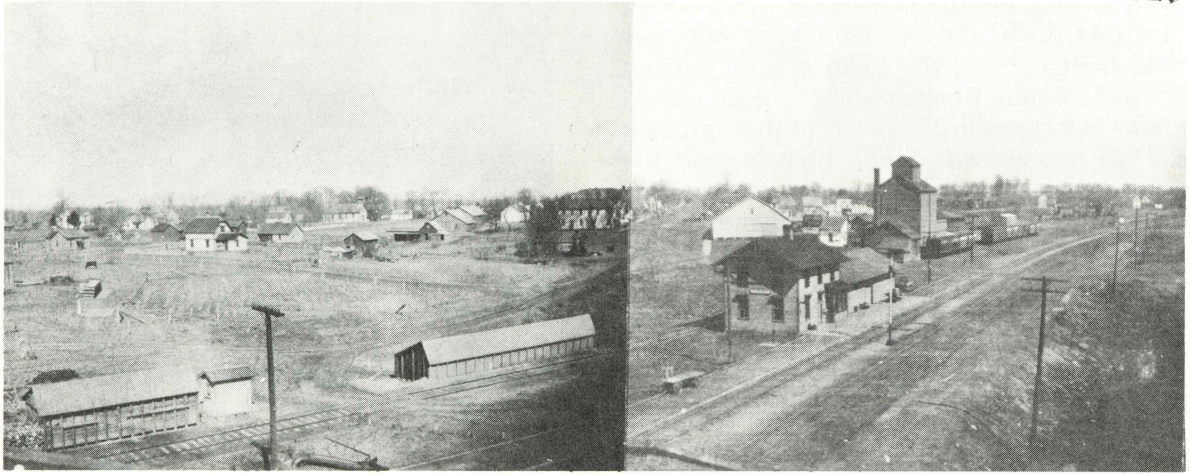
Stock Yards

The railroad was a boom to the town. There was a stockyard built. Farmers now had a way to get their livestock to market even if they had to drive them to town. Eventually an elevator was built. Products and mail were brought in by rail.



The Artesian Well, west of Rhodes.

Edenville—Rhodes 1883-1928



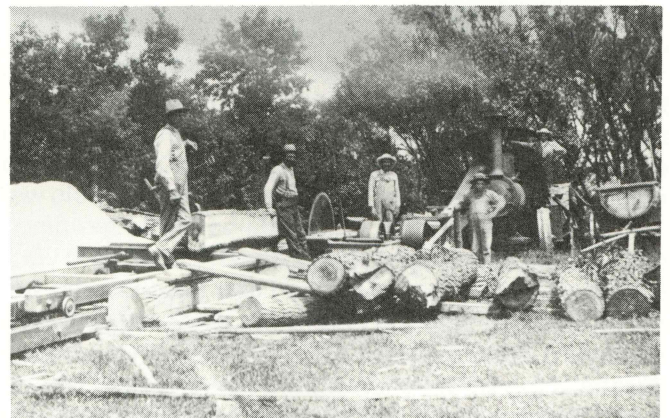
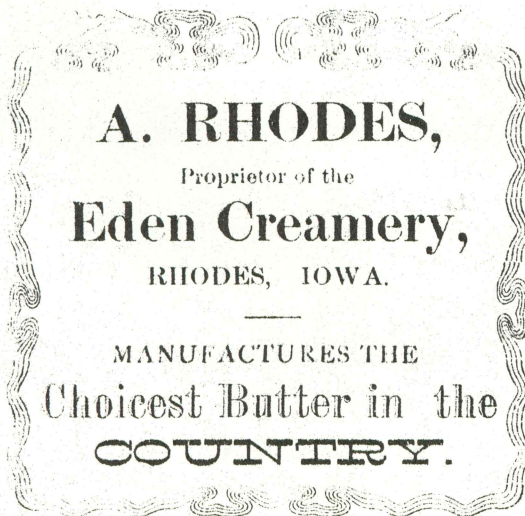
Rhodes in the early days.

The town boasts "one of the principal features, and one of which all our citizens are proud, is the Mineral Well situated in a beautiful grove one-half mile west of town, the water having been analyzed and found to contain the same healing properties as the springs at Colfax, and many people come here to obtain the benefits to be derived from the use of the water." In the Rhodes News of October 1897, "The artesian well has been cleaned out and is now at its best. It is located about one half-mile west of town and is known for many miles around Rhodes." Picnics were held there for many years, but finally the well had to be filled in for safety's sake.

We find mention of a creamery in Rhodes. We are unable to find much about it except in the beginning, as far as we can tell, it was owned by Anthony (Pete) Rhodes. How long he had it before he sold it we do not know, but in a news item, August 13, 1896, "Mr. Rhodes traded his farm, creamery, and all property in Rhodes

for J.H. Perry's stock of general merchandise in Melbourne." Maud Hale says her father, Lon Richmond, drove a team of horses on a wagon and picked up cream in 1897 and 1898. It apparently was still in existence in 1912. In that atlas, mention is made that they regret no information was sent in on the Brick and Tile Factory and Creamery. The creamery was located on the north edge of town. Some say they are sure it is the barn on the old Fred Robinson place, (later Della and Denzil Richesons' home). In noting the windows and doors on the building, it is hard to believe it would have been first built for a barn. Part of the creamery was moved to the present Anna Kolbe acreage in town, on Walnut Street.

A lumberyard was eventually established in town. The railroad could bring in better lumber than produced here, so the decline began in cutting timber and lumber produced by local mills. During the years there were the following sawmills; Greene Allen, C.B. Rhodes, Cy Huffaker, Charles E. Dewey, Hoy Brothers and probably others we have not heard mentioned.



An early Saw Mill, where lumber came from to build the early houses in Edenville-Rhodes.