

Chapter Two

Settlement of Clemons Grove

The first permanent resident on the site of Clemons Grove (Clemons) was Robert Elder and family in 1851. The area was first referred to as "Elder's Grove." In 1853 William M. Clemons, who was married to Robert Elder's sister, made a trip to Iowa to purchase land. The land he wanted and bought was the farm established by Robert Elder. On August 11, 1854, the William M. Clemons family arrived.

Early stories and references in papers and documents refer to activities on Minerva Creek, which was just down the hill north from the Clemons farmstead. Streams were extremely important to early settlers as they provided water, ice in winter, a place to wash clothes, and a supply of trees for lumber and building materials, fences, and fuel. There was also a place to ford the creek there. As the area became settled, considerable activity took place in this area, which is probably the area now known as the old town park. The first church building of the Clemons church was located in 1859 on the bluff north of the creek and the road to the church crossed the creek down in this area. An old mortgage, dated June 23, 1856, given by Perlonzo Clemons to Robert Elder for the purchase of Mr. Elder's steam engine manufactured in Cincinnati, Ohio, and purchased in Iowa City, and a saw mill located on or to be constructed on Minerva Creek, indicates activities along the creek.

In 1856 the Clemons corner store was erected by William M. Clemons and was the only store west of Marietta. Also, old stories say Oliver Hamilton built the first store in 1858 and supplies came from Iowa City. Other old histories refer to a store at Clemons Corners located on Liberty Line, which appears to be this same area.

The present site of Clemons Grove was located on the road or trail west in the 1850's and, as the Elder or Clemons residence was one of the first permanent farmsteads, the road, or more accurately trail, passed by their doorstep. In the 1850's the Iowa General Assembly established state roads. The legislature authorized the establishment of South Skunk and Marietta State Road. The road was surveyed from a bridge on the South Skunk River in Polk County (probably Colfax to Webb's Point in Story County to Marietta). This road traveled right past the Clemons house and was one of the traveled roads from the 1850's to the 1880's and much of this road in Marshall County still exists.

In 1881 the railroad arrived in Clemons Grove. William M. Clemons was very interested in getting the railroad to pick a route near his residence and donated

land for a right of way. He had felt that the valley below his home would be a good place for a town and with the arrival of the railroad the time was ripe.

On October 27, 1882, a plat of the original town of Clemons Grove was filed by William M. Clemons, proprietor. The original plat consisted of only three blocks and today is the north three blocks of town.

As the town developed and the initial platted portion of land was inadequate, it became apparent there was a need for additional lots to be laid out and the town enlarged. On April 20, 1893, A.L. Clemons, the youngest son of William M. Clemons, now owning the old homestead, filed a plat for Clemons Addition to Clemons Grove. This being the second tier of three blocks south of northern street of town.

Again on December 17, 1897, there developed a need for more building lots and A.L. Clemons filed a plat for Clemons Second Addition to Clemons Grove and again on June 23, 1902 he filed a plat for Clemons Third Addition to the town of Clemons Grove. These are all of the platted additions of the town. The lots on the east side of town (east of Bevins Street) and on the north side of town (north of Market Avenue) have been basically created by just surveying them out of lots that were established for description purposes. These are usually County Auditor's plat done for taxation purposes.

By William M. Clemons' death in 1900, all the town had been platted but the Clemons Third Addition.

On April 30, 1903, an election of the residents of the village of Clemons Grove was held. With 48 votes cast, the vote was 28 in favor of incorporating and 20 opposed.

Pursuant to the adoption of the plan of incorporation, an election was set for May 25, 1903, this being the election of the first officials of the town of Clemons. The results of said election were:

W.J. Clemons, Mayor

Members of the Council

G.A. Hines

A. Brackney

H. P. Clemons

J.C. McCormack

R. Barnes

C.G. Turner

W.A. Pollock, Treasurer

A.D. McCormack, Clerk

The town of Clemons Grove is laid out in the South East quarter of the North East quarter of section No three (3) in Township No Eighty four North of Range No. 20 West in the County of Marshall and State of Iowa

More particular description of said tract is contained in the annexed certificate. Each lot is 150. in length, Each lot is 50 feet wide, excepting therein the west half of Block No 2 and those in the east half of Block No three (3) which are each 25 ft in width.

The figures in red indicate the size of the lots

The streets and alleys run north and south and east and west. The width of each street and of each alley is shown upon the plat.

The South East corner of Block No 1 is 23 rods and 15 1/2 links North and 2 rods west of the South East corner of the South East quarter of the North East fractional quarter of section No 3 in Township No 84 North of Range No 20 West State of Iowa

County of Marshall. The undersigned, owner of the tract of Real Estate situated in the County of Marshall and State of Iowa

described as follows, to wit: Beginning at a point situated North of our 1/4 Section North of the South East corner of the North East fractional quarter of section No three (3) in Township No 84 North of Range No 20 West; and running thence North 42 1/2 feet; thence West 220 feet, more or less to the eastern line of the tract of land conveyed by me to the Le & North Western R.R. Company; thence South 50 feet; thence West 941 feet; thence South 370 feet and thence East 1161 feet to the place of beginning

Containing 67 1/2 Acres

Being the tract of land in which the town of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat hereby certifies that he caused said town to be laid out and that his disposing said land as shown by said plat is in accordance with his free consent and in accordance with his decision

In witness whereof this 5th day of October 1892

William M. Clemons

See next page

State of Iowa I, Be it remembered that on the 27th day of
County of Marshall & before 1882 before the undersigned a
competent person, and for said County Recorder
I, H. M. Clemens, for me personally, known to be the
competent person, whose name is subscribed to the above
certificate and acknowledged said instrument to be his
own and not read and said that he executed the same
for the purpose therein mentioned

In witness my hand and notarial seal the day
and year last aforesaid.

(Signature)

H. M. Clemens

Notary Public

State of Iowa I, Be it remembered that on the 27th day of
County of Marshall & before 1882 before the undersigned County Recorder, in and
for said County hereby certifies that the tract of real
estate above described is laid out into lots, streets, and
alleys, and named Clemons Grove, as shown by the
returned plat, is free from any incumbrance and that
the return fee to the same is in said Recorder's
H. M. Clemens

In witness my hand this 27th day of October 1882

(Signature)

County Recorder

State of Iowa I, Be it remembered that on the 27th day of
County of Marshall & before 1882 before the undersigned County Treasurer within
and for said County of Marshall, hereby certifies that
the tract of Real Estate above described, on which the
tax of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the
returned plat, is free from all taxes

In witness my hand this 27th day of Oct 1882

Byron A. Brown Jr.

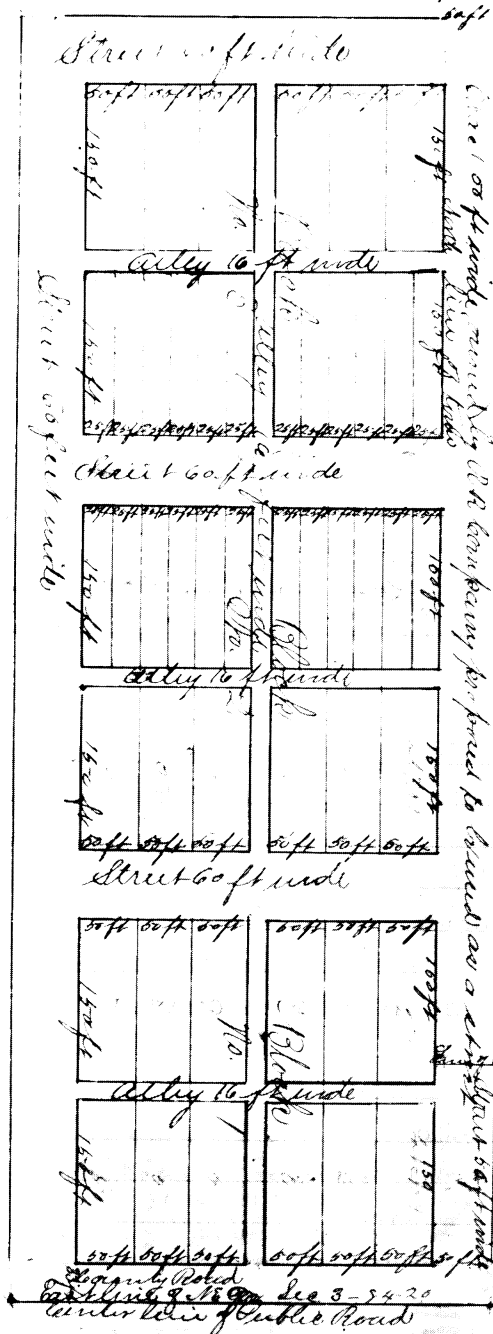
Clemons Grove
 Plotted for Record Oct 27th 1882 at 11 o'clock A.M.

Class

J.B. Jennings Plotted Marshall County, Iowa
 scale, inch = 100 ft.

Street 60 ft wide

See Book E59 Page 561 for location of a part of Minerva Sh. of resolution to convey



Clemons Addition to Clemons Grove is laid out upon a part of the South East quarter of the North East fractional quarter and part of the North East Quarter of the South East quarter of Section No. 3. in Township No. 84. North of Range No. 20. West of 5th P.M. in the County of Marshall and State of Iowa. A more particular description of said tract is contained in the annexed certificate.

The Lots in Blocks No. 1, 2, and 3, are each 50 feet in width and 150 feet in length. The width and length of Block No. 4, is shown upon the Plat.

The Streets and alleys run North and South and East and West. The width of each street and of each alley is shown upon the Plat.

The South East corner of Block No. One (1) is 23 feet and 6 inches North and 33 feet West of the South East corner of the North East fractional quarter of said Section No. 3.

The North line of Blocks Nos 1, 2 and 3, is 10 feet North of the South line of the South Street of the town of Clemons Grove.

State of Iowa }
County of Marshall }

The undesignated corner of the tract of land situated in the said County of Marshall, and State of Iowa, described as follows to-wit:

Beginning at a point thirty four and one half feet South of the South East corner of the North East fractional quarter of Section No. Three (3) in Township No. Eighty four (84) North, of Range No. Twenty (20) West of 5th P.M. and running thence North Three Hundred and seventy four feet, thence West eleven hundred and sixty one feet, thence North fifty feet, thence West one hundred and six feet, thence South Four hundred and twenty four feet, and thence East Twelve hundred and sixty seven feet, to the place of beginning. Containing Eleven Acres. Being a part of Lot No. One, of Subdivision of Lot No. One of Subdivisions of Lot No. One of Subdivisions of the South East quarter of the North East fractional quarter of said Section No. Three.

And a part of the North East quarter of the South East Quarter of said Section No. Three and being the tract of land on which Clemons Addition to the town of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed Plat

----- hereby certifies that he caused said Addition to be laid out and that the disposition of said land as shown by said Plat. hereto annexed is with his free consent and in accordance with his desire. In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this 20th day of April 1893

A. L. Clemone.

State of Iowa }
County of Marshall }

Be it remembered that on the 20th day of April 1893 before the undersigned a Notary Public within and for said County personally appeared A. L. Clemone to me personally known to be the identical person whose name is subscribed to the above certificate and acknowledged said instrument to be his voluntary act and deed and that he executed the same for the purposes therein mentioned.

Witness my hand and Notarial Seal the day and year last above written

H. P. Clemone

Notary Public

98.

State of Iowa }
County of Marshall }

The undersigned County Treasurer within and for said County hereby certifies that the above described tract of land on which Clemone Addition to the town of Clemone Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat is free from all taxes. Witness my hand this 3rd day of May 1893.

S. A. Emery.

County Treasurer.

State of Iowa }
County of Marshall }

The undersigned County Recorder within and for said County of Marshall, State of Iowa, hereby certifies that the above described tract of land laid out into Lots, Streets and alleys and named Clemone Addition to the town of Clemone Grove as shown by the annexed plat is free from every incumbrance and that the title in fee to the same is in said Proprietor, A. L. Clemone.

Witness my hand this 3rd day of May 1893

Low H. H. H.

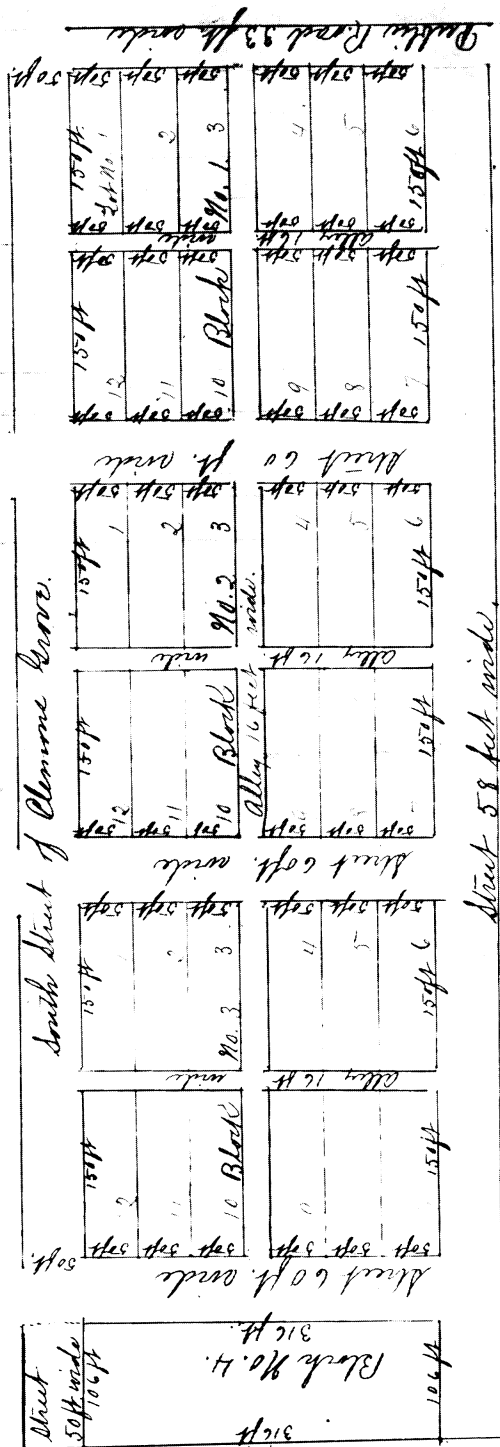
511

Plat. of Clemmons Addition to Clemmons Grove.

North. See Plat. E. 89. Page 561. for location of a part of Division St. & its extension to convey.

Clemmons Addition to
Clemmons Grove

Filed for Record May 2nd 1893 at 8
o'clock P.M. and entered for taxation
Low No. No. 1
Recorder.



Scale 1 inch = 100 feet.

Street 58 feet wide.

Plat

A. L. Clemons
to

Clemons Second Add.

Clemons Second Addition

To

Clemons Grove

Scale 1 inch = 100 ft.

Filed for record Dec. 17, 1897 at 2 P.M.

H. W. Mundhenk,

Recorder

See Book 559-Page 561 for location of part of Pine Grove St.

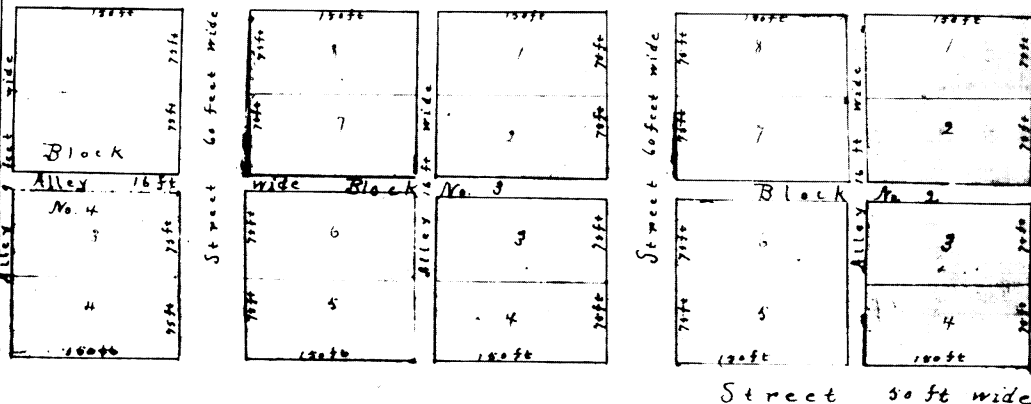
Clemons Second Addition to Clemons Grove is laid out upon a part of the North East quarter of the South East quarter and a part of the South East quarter of the N.E. 1/4 of Section No. 3 in Township No. 84 North of Range No. 20 West, in the County of Marshall and State of Iowa. A more particular description of said tract is contained in the annexed certificate. The lots are each 75 feet wide and 150 feet long excepting those marked differently upon the plat. The streets and alleys run North and South and East and West.

The width of each street and of each alley is shown upon the plat.

The North East corner of Lot No. 6 in Block No. 1 is 34 1/2 feet South and 208 feet 8 1/2 inches West of the North East corner of the South East quarter of said section No. 3.

State of Iowa, County of Marshall.

The undersigned owner of the tracts of land situated in the County of Marshall and State of Iowa described as follows, to-wit: The tract Beginning at a point 34 1/2 feet South and 208 feet and 8 1/2 inches West of the North East corner of the South East quarter of Section No. Three in Township No. Eighty-four, north of Range No. Twenty west and running thence West 1111 feet and 3 1/2 inches; thence North 208 feet and 8 1/2 inches; and thence North 175 1/2 feet to the place of beginning containing 10 3/4 Acres.



And the tract beginning at a point, 34 1/2 feet South and 1267 feet West of the North East corner of the South East quarter of said section No. 3 in said Township, and Range, and running thence North 639 feet, thence West 33 feet, thence South 639 feet and thence East 33 feet to the place of beginning, containing $\frac{1}{100}$ the Acre. Containing in both tracts $11\frac{23}{100}$ the acres, being the tracts of land on which Clemons Second Addition to the Town of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat.

— hereby certifies that he caused said Addition to be laid out and that the disposition of said land as shown by said plat is with his free consent and in accordance with his desire. Witness my hand this 17th day of December 1897.

A. L. Clemons.

State of Iowa County of Marshall  Be it remembered that on the 17th day of December 1897 before the undersigned a Notary Public within and for said County, personally appeared A. L. Clemons to me personally known to be the identical person whose name is subscribed to the above certificate and acknowledged said instrument to be his voluntary act and deed and that he executed the same for the purposes therein mentioned.

Witness my hand and Notarial seal, the day and year last above written.



Wm. Bremner, Notary Public.

State of Iowa County of Marshall  The undersigned County Treasurer within and for said County of Marshall hereby certifies that the tracts of land above described on which Clemons Second Addition to the Town of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat is free from all taxes. Witness my hand this 17th day of December 1897.

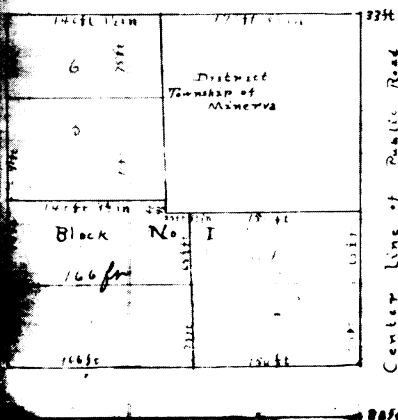
H. C. Wilson Co. Treas.

L. H. Smith Deputy.

State of Iowa

County of Marshall  The undersigned County Recorder within and for said County of Marshall hereby certifies that the tracts of land above described on which Clemons Second Addition to the Town of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat is free from every incumbrance and that the title in fee to the same is in said proprietor A. L. Clemons. Witness my hand this 17th day of December A. D. 1897.

H. W. Mundshenk



Clemon's Third Addition to the Town of Clemon's is laid out upon a part of the North east quarter of the South East Quarter of Section No. 3 in Township No. 84, North of Range No. 20, West of the 5th P.M. in the County of Marshall and State of Iowa. A more particular description of the land included in said Addition is contained in the annexed certificate.

The lots are each 75 ft. wide and 150 ft. long.

The streets and alleys run north and south. The width of each street and each alley is as shown upon the plat.

The North east corner of Block No. 1 is 24 rods and $6\frac{2}{100}$ links south, and 2 rods west of the North East corner of the South East corner of said section No. 3 in Township No. 84 North of Range No. 20 West.

State of Iowa, County of Marshall, ss:-

The undersigned owner of the tract of land situated in the County of Marshall, and State of Iowa, described as follows, to-wit: -

Beginning at a point 400 $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet (24 rods and $6\frac{2}{100}$ links) South of the North east corner of the south east quarter of Section No. Three in Township No. Eighty four, North of Range Twenty West of the 5th P.M. - and running thence west 1320 feet and thence North South 300 feet; thence east 1320 feet and thence North 300 feet to the place of beginning.

Containing Nine $09\frac{09}{100}$ Acres. being the tract of land in which Clemon's Third Addition to the Town of Clemon's Grove is laid out as shown by annexed plat. --- hereby certifies that he caused said addition to be laid out and that the disposition of said land as shown by said plat is with his free consent and in accordance with his desire.

Witness my hand this 23rd day of June 1902.

A.L. Clemons.

State of Iowa, Marshall County, ss:- Be it remembered that on the 23rd day of June, 1902 he came me the undersigned, a notary Public in and for said County personally appeared A.L. Clemons to me personally known to be the identical person whose name is subscribed to the annexed certificate and acknowledged said instrument to be his voluntary act and deed and that he caused the same to be laid out for the purpose therein mentioned.

Witness my hand Notarial seal the day and year last above written.

(L.S.)

Wm. Bremner, Notary Public.

State of Iowa County of Marshall, ss:-

The undersigned County Treasurer of said County of Marshall and State of Iowa, hereby certifies that the above described Tract of land on which Clemon's Third Addition to Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat is free from all taxes.

Witness my hand this 23rd day of June 1902.

C.H. Smith, County Treasurer.

State of Iowa, County of Marshall, ss:-

The undersigned County Recorder of said County of Marshall hereby certifies that the above described tract of land on which Clemon's Third Addition to the Town of Clemons Grove is laid out as shown by the annexed plat is free from every encumbrance, that the title in fee to the same is in said proprietor A.L. Clemons.

Witness my hand this 23rd day of June 1902.

Anna Packer, Recorder.

quit-claim deed.

Clare Wescott

To

F.L. Wecker

Conveyance and assignment of interest in estate of John Wescott, deceased.

ooOoo

Filed for record June 25th 1902 at 1:30 P.M.

Entered for taxation June 25th 1902.

Anna Packer, Recorder

Whereas John Wescott died intestate, in Marshall County, State of Iowa, on the 31st day of October, 1865, seized of Lot Eight (8), in Block Eleven (11), of the original town of Marshall, Marshall County, State of Iowa; and by the terms of his will, dated October 28th, 1865, which is recorded in will record No. One Page Eighty nine (89) of the Marshall County Iowa records, and which will was afterwards duly probated in said County, willed and devised said real estate to his wife, Hannah Wescott, during her natural life, and at her death, willed and devised the East one-third (1/3) of said lot eight (8), in Block Eleven (11) of the original town of Marshall, Marshall County Iowa to his son, Charles Alfred Wescott, to have and to become possessed of the same during the term of his natural life, he to have the use rents and profits of the real estate last above described, during the term of his natural life, but without power to sell or dispose of it for a longer period than during his natural life.

And whereas it is further provided by said will, that at the death of said Charles Alfred Wescott, his share, being the East one-third (1/3) of said Lot Eight (8), to descend to his heirs; said heirs to have an absolute title to said portion.

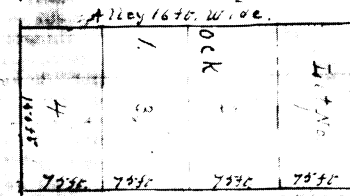
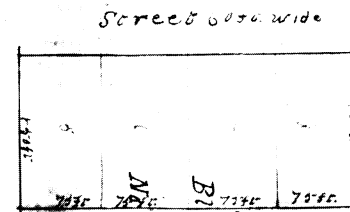
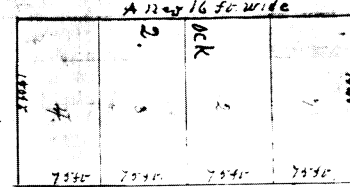
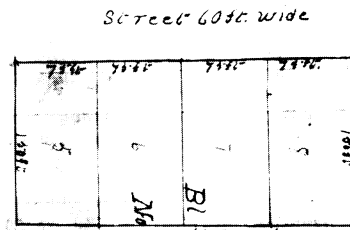
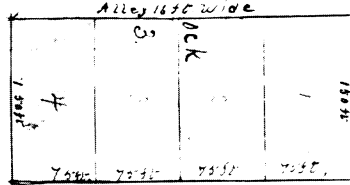
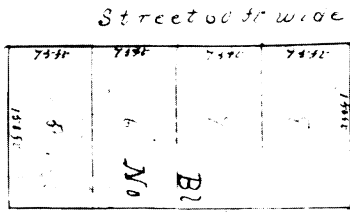
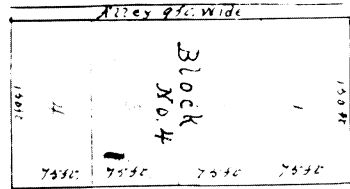
Now therefore, I, Clare Wescott, unmarried, a son, and one of the four children, and prospective heirs at law of said Charles Alfred Wescott, of the County of Marshall and State of Iowa, in consideration of the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00) to me in hand paid by F.L. Wecker, of the place aforesaid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant, sell, assign, convey, transfer, set over and quit-claim to said F.L. Wecker, the East one-third (1/3) of Lot Eight (8), in Block Eleven (11), of the original town of Marshall, Marshall County Iowa, and I also assign and transfer to him all my right, title and interest therein, in possession or expectancy, and all right or interest I may hereafter acquire, as remainder man, or devisee, of my Grand-father, John Wescott, and as son and heir at law of Charles Alfred Wescott, by descent, purchase, or otherwise, and all interest and right I have or may hereafter have, in and to said real estate, under the provisions of the will of my Grand-father, John Wescott.

do hereby and to hold the same as above described, with all the appurtenances

Clemon's Third Addition to Clemon's Grove.

Filed for record June 23rd 1900 at 4 P.M.
Anna Packer, Recorder.

scale 1 inche_ 100 feet.



Width of the Public Road

On July 8, 1903, a petition to incorporate the town of Clemons was signed by the following residents:

A. D. McCormack
H. P. Clemons
Frank Herlocker
J.C. McCormack
Joseph King
C.G. Turner
W.J. Clemons
T.J. Stanley
Al C. Crossan
Mikel Keoppel
Geo. M. Stahl
J.E. Mooney
R. Barnes
O.L. Lundin
G.A. Hines
E.P. Peice
B.W. McCormack
D.M. McCormack
C. Dickson
W.H. Mitchell
W.A. Pollock
A. Brackney
Wm. Mooney
G. Guche

The area incorporated into the town of Clemons, being city limits of the town are as follows:

Commencing at a point 40 rods East of the Northwest Corner of the Southwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 2, Township 84 North, Range 20 West of the 5th P.M., Marshall County, Iowa, thence West 160 rods, the South

160 rods, thence East 160 rods, thence North 160 to point of beginning.

On August 6, 1903, the first meeting of the Council of the Incorporated Town of Clemons was held in Dr. Turner's office. "The meeting was called to order by W.J. Clemons presiding. The members elect of said council was sworn into office by F.E. Northup." The council adopted Roberts Rules of Order for the conduct of meeting and set an agenda format. F.E. Northup was employed to "write up ordinances for Clemons, Iowa." A. D. McCormack was Town Clerk.

The second meeting held August 17, 1903, regular meetings were set on the first Monday of each month. The council members in 1904 were H.P. Clemons, Rue Barnes, J.S. McCormack, C.G. Turner, G.A. Hines, and A. Brackney, with W. J. Clemons as mayor. Early council meetings were held at various business offices around town: the creamery, A. Brackney's grain office, H.P. Clemons' store, store of A. Christensen.

At a meeting July 15, 1908, the council voted down an ordinance prohibiting the playing of baseball on Sunday.

On April 1, 1912, J.A. Freese applied to the council for an "exclusive" license for hotel purposes for five years.

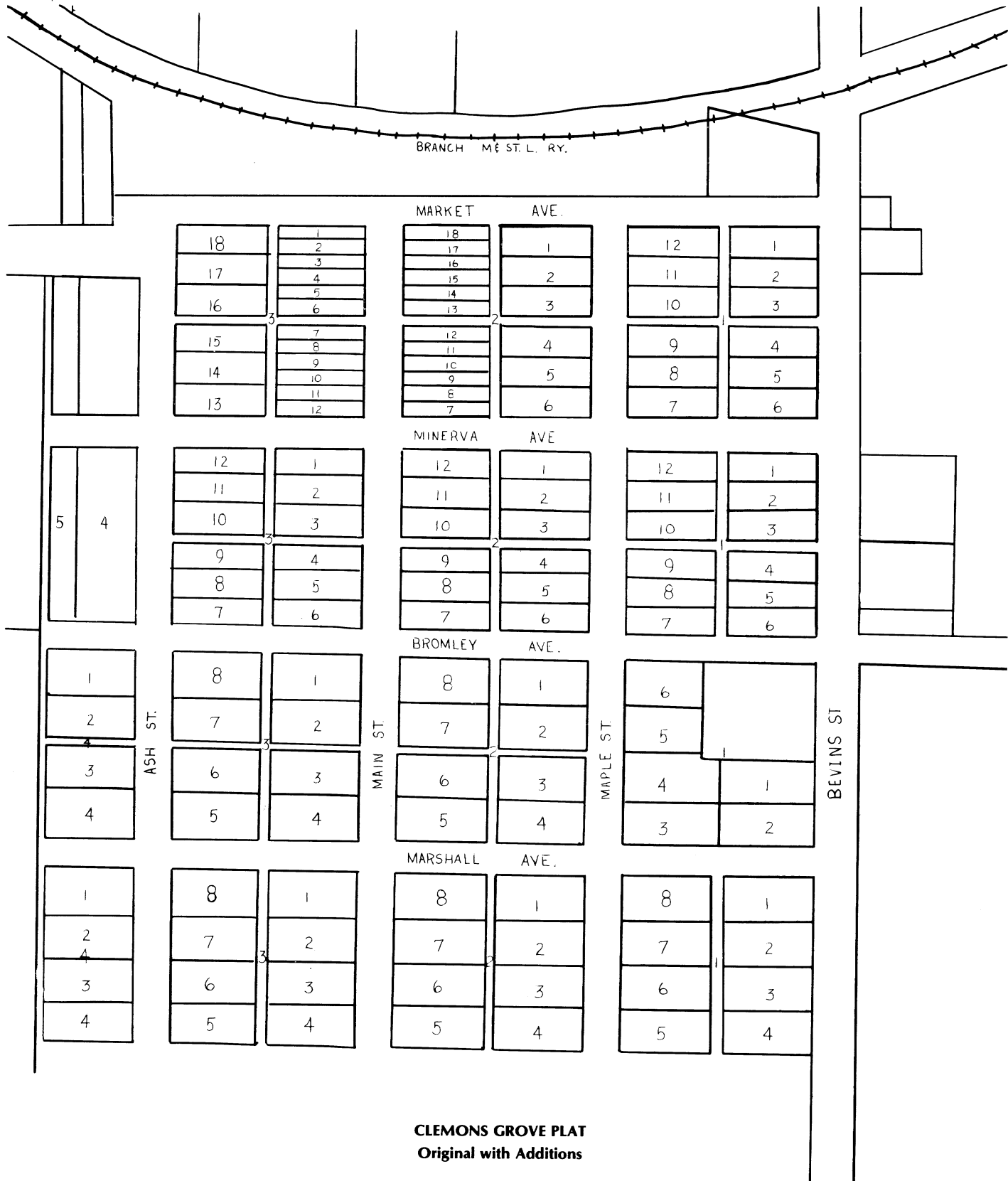
At a council meeting on February 19, 1913, the council approved an election to be held for the consideration of the electric franchise to the Iowa River Light and Power Company of Eldora, Iowa.

At a meeting of the council on June 30, 1913, the council voted to pay themselves a fee of 50 cents per



CLEMONS APPROXIMATELY 1945

Note Clemons Park Baseball diamond in upper right corner



meeting attended.

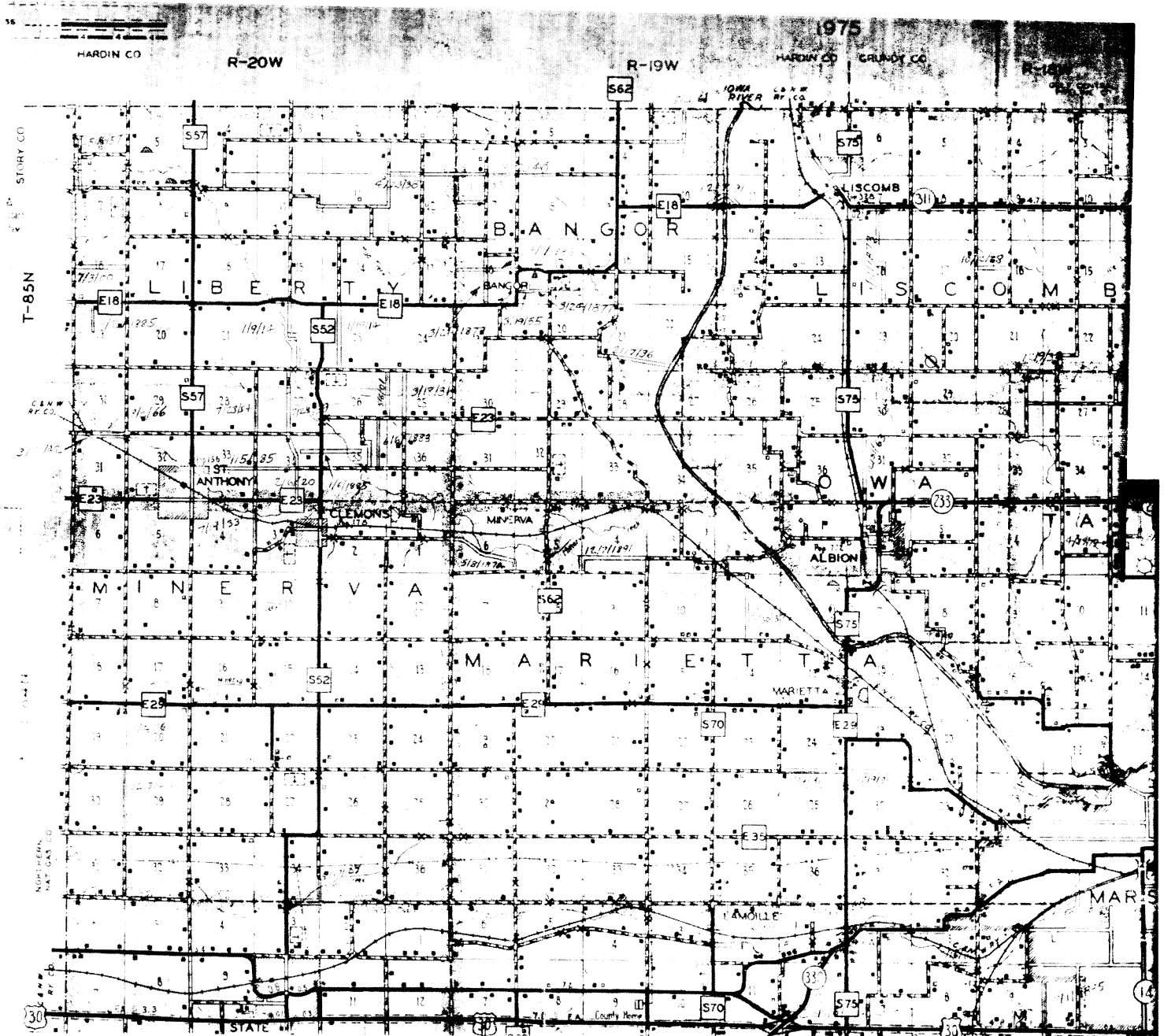
By 1914 the presence of the automobile was felt in Clemons, for on April 1, 1913, the council passed the first automobile and motor vehicle ordinance. The modern era had truly arrived, for on April 6, 1914, the council instructed the clerk to notify people with hitching posts on Main Street to remove them in two days. (They still had hitching posts into the 1930's but not on Main Street.) On June 1, 1914, the council also authorized purchase of the first grader instead of hiring the Liberty grader.

The council agreed to pay rent of \$1.00 to the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad Company for a lease of the driveway to Park of Clemons on December 3, 1914.

The town fathers were also beginning to become concerned about fire protection as the council moved to buy fire extinguishers and advertise for a chemical engine on December 29, 1914 and on June 7, 1915 a councilman, Easter, was appointed to look up fire protection. The council took up revision of ordinances and established a "fire Force" on July 26, 1915.

At the April 3, 1916 meeting, the council approved the purchase of a Fairbank-Morse gas engine and pump and not less than 150 feet of hose for fire protection for \$132.58.

L.H. Armbrecht and Jas. Hughes were named to a



Road and Rail Map of present and past

committee for naming streets at a July 26, 1915, council meeting, and on October 4, 1915 an ordinance was passed naming the streets.

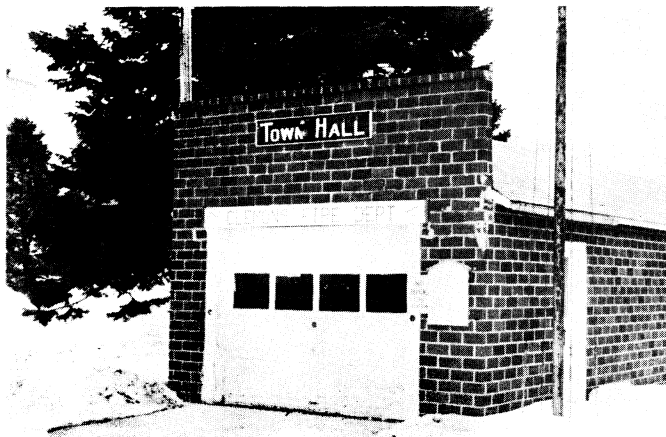
At the December 7, 1915 meeting of the council, an ordinance establishing on election for a franchise to the Iowa Railway and Light Company to construct, maintain and operate a power plant for generation of electricity and a system for transmission and distribution was set for January 10, 1916. At said election the franchise was granted, 56 in favor of, with one opposed to grant said franchise. At the August 10, 1916 meeting the mayor was instructed to get "information on wiring of houses for electricity," and at the January 23, 1917 meeting the council approved 100 watt light bulbs for street lights.

The town records between about 1920 and 1950 are not available and have either been lost or destroyed in one of the town fires. The 1920's and 1930's were active times for the town. In the 1920's times appear to have been flourishing and many community projects were started. There were active businessmen who helped develop the old Clemons Park, formed the Clemons Community Park Association, and acquired land for the baseball diamond across the creek.

The growing use of the automobile created an interest in better roads. The county began to gravel roads and on November 29, 1924, the first gravel road was completed and opened to Marshalltown.

There were a series of events in the 1930's that created very difficult times for the town. In the early 1930's the depression took its toll on the community and the town lost its bank. The bank failure caused many economic problems for the area residents. The Farmers Cooperative Company also failed about this time. These events and the effects of the depression, with many farmers losing their farms, dealt crippling blows to the town. To further add to the economic woes were the drought years of 1934, 1935 and 1936.

It was also during this time that the town lost a number of buildings and businesses to the two major fires--the fire on the east side and the Butt's Store fire on the west side.



Fire Station and Town Hall

It is believed that Clemons purchased its first fire engine in the middle or late 1930's, although there are no records available. In 1950 the town was still using a 1938 or 1939 Ford fire truck.

On November 17, 1938, the town acquired Lots 15, 16 and the West 90 feet of Lots 17 and 18 in Block 2 of the Original Town of Clemons Grove. This is the property on which the fire station, Town Hall and Town Park are now located. Most of this property was originally stores and businesses that had been destroyed in 1932 by fire. The Town Hall and fire station were built shortly thereafter.

During the 1940's many of the young men were gone to Service in World War II. The town was still a prosperous farm community with most of the buildings having going businesses. It is also interesting to note that the second floor of most buildings downtown were also businesses, such as beauty shops or apartments with people living in them.

By the 1950's the town was considering a municipal water system and the council called a special meeting for that purpose on December 10, 1953. Layne Western Company drilled test wells from January 15, 1954 to February 1, 1954 to determine the available sites for a well. At a council meeting March 1, 1954, a petition containing 68 signatures was filed with the council asking that an election be held to consider the erection and construction of a water works system for the Town of Clemons at a cost not to exceed \$23,000. The council set the election for March 31, 1954 at the Town Hall and appointed T.J. Warner, J.E. Ingledue, and W.M. Moore election judges and B.A. Smith and W.C. Ward election clerks. The measure was passed and the contract was awarded to L. C. Jennings Company of New London, Iowa. On December 30, 1954, on the advice of H. V. Pedersen, engineer, the completed water works was accepted by the council.

At the May 22, 1955 meeting, Harold Christensen and Woody Shives met with the council requesting permission to remove one tree in the town park uptown to make room to construct a new bandstand on the east side of the park next to the elevator feed mill.

On April 24, 1956, the council approved the county's request to blacktop the portion of the county road in the town limits thus completing approval to blacktop the road to Marshalltown.

On March 25, 1957, a special meeting was held to discuss the need for purchasing a new fire truck. At the May 28, 1957 meeting the council approved the purchase of a new fire truck from Fred Mount Motors of Marshalltown for \$2703.30 and new equipment for the truck from Hooker Supply Company of Marshalltown for \$6499.50.

Approval was granted to blacktop the two blocks past the two gas stations for the next year (1958) and grading in September 1957 by the council on June 15, 1957. They also discussed the need for removing the canopy and moving the gas pumps at the Standard Station

owned by Glen Bartholmew.

A Special Council meeting August 13, 1957, granted Minerva Valley Telephone Company permission to use the town streets, alleys, and public places for construction, maintaining and operating a telephone and communications system.

The streets of the town were being improved in 1958 with the council decision on June 3, 1958 to have streets blacktopped by Concrete Materials Company of LeGrand.



Men working on the new band stand in the town park - 1955
Left to right - Harold Christensen, Earl Van Metre, Richard Lister, Woody Shives

On September 4, 1958 James Mentor and Joe Barker were granted permission to establish a garbage route and service in town. Prior to this there had been no regular service for garage and refuse disposal. The council contracted with various people for dump locations and at various times had contracted with E.W. Holmes, Walter Sanders and Herb Bartlett.

Until the decision was made at the October 7, 1958 council meeting to put the doors on the front or west side of the town hall, the doors for the fire truck were on the east end of the structure.

Because of expected problems with pranksters, the October 29, 1958 meeting authorized the deputizing of the councilmen and firemen for Halloween and the night before and after Halloween.

At the November 6, 1958, meeting the approval was given to remove the old fire bell tower and replace it with a pole for the fire siren.

At the March 6, 1961 council meeting Mayor W.A. Armbrecht, Fire Chief Warren Reisinger and Gerald Ellis were appointed as a committee to build a hose cart.

At the November 7, 1962 council meeting the council agreed to accept two lots across the street from

the Town Hall that had been purchased from Glen Jay by the Clemons High School Band mothers. The Band Mothers had used their funds to purchase the property and build a concrete slab on the property for use of the town for recreation purposes.

At the July 2, 1963 council meeting it was decided to build a 16 by 30 foot addition to the east end of the fire station. The March 2, 1964 meeting noted that said addition had been completed and that a tank truck purchase was approved for the fire department.

1964 was an interesting year--all summer no one was sure what time it was. Every town decided for itself if it was going to have daylight savings time that year and if it decided to, they also decided what the effective dates were. It was a new concept for the area and was quite controversial. The Clemons council voted to have Daylight Savings Time to begin at 00:01 a.m. April 24 at its April 22 meeting. At the September 1, 1964 meeting they voted to go off daylight time at 11:59 p.m., September 2, 1964.

It was really a confusing time. Some people were on daylight time, while others remained on standard time. Other towns had their own version and no one knew for sure what time it was. There were many humorous experiences, as meetings, church, and events scheduled, with people showing up an hour early or an hour late depending on what time they were using.

By 1967 the residents were considering the need for a municipal sewer system. Mr. Henry Oakes met with the council on April 1, 1967 to discuss the necessary steps in establishing a sewer system. On May 22, 1967, a meeting of the council and citizens was held with 30 citizens present to discuss the need for a sewer system. The council set November 7, 1967, for an election on whether or not to construct a municipal sewer system. The vote was 39 yes in favor of said construction and 15 opposed.

The project progressed well, with the council establishing the Sanitary Sewer District for Clemons on March 15, 1969 and on April 2, 1969, the plan was approved. On July 1, 1969 the construction contract was awarded to Public Development Company for \$82,599.00. On September 8, 1970, the council approved final payment for said construction.

In 1970 there was an application filed for a special use permit with the Marshall County Board of Adjustment for the excavation of gravel and sand in the area south and west of town. A special meeting of the council and its citizens was held October 27, 1970 to discuss the issue. Many appeared at the Board of Adjustment hearing to oppose said request. The Board rejected the application.

On January 15, 1971, the council agreed to purchase a different maintainer from Dale Rowland Farm Equipment.

At the July 6, 1971 meeting the council approved plans to build a laboratory and rest rooms on the north

side of the fire station.

A meeting of the Township Trustees of Liberty, Minerva, Marietta, and Bangor Townships and the town council was held on March 24, 1972, to consider the purchase of a new fire truck. On May 23 the council accepted a bid and purchased a new fire truck which then gave the fire department two trucks.



Clemons Volunteer Fire Truck

Mayors

W.J. Clemons	8-6,	1903
J.B. McCormack	4-3,	1905
G.A. Hines	4-2,	1907
Joseph King	2-17,	1908
C. Dickson	4-6,	1908
W.J. Clemons	4-13,	1910
A. Christensen	3-21,	1913
Jim Hughes		1913
W.J. Clemons	3-2,	1914
D.D. Mitchell	4-5,	1915
F.V. Brackney	12-6,	1915
Chas. Bulfer	4-2,	1917
W.P. Hughes		1926
W.J. Darland		1928
A.C. Kersey		1930
Theo Helmcke		1930
W.J. Paltzer	10-5,	1936
O.Z. Burkhead		
F.C. Davis		
Louis King	7-6,	1953
Gordon Warren	6-6,	1955
M.R. Funke	8-6,	1956
M.A. Armbrecht	1-6,	1958
Vernon Phillips		1976
Jack Mackin		1980
Hugh Miller		

CLERKS

A.D. McCormack	1903
M.F. Baker	4-3-05
F.M. Miller	4-7-05
E.H. Noble	4-2-07
Aaron Brackney	2-17-08
W.E. Jones	1909
A.A. Arney	4-1-12
J.C. Armstrong	3-31-13
E.M. Frederickson	1913
Theo. Armstrong	12-29-14
Floyd V. Brackney	10-4-15
Alfred Butts	12-6-15
H.H. Armbrecht	
Charles H. Beckwith	2-2-20
Everitt Robie	6-18-35
Wallace H. Chance	10-5-36
B.O. Sweet	2-6-39
B.A. Smith	1953
Richard Lister	4-4-55
Marvin H. Christensen	8-29-65
Gordon Krause	
Deanne Swenson	1978

Clemons Fire Department

Although there are no accurate records of the establishment of a fire department, the old council minutes refer to the purchase of an engine, pump, and hose for fire protection on April 3, 1916. The fire chiefs before Burt Meier are unknown.

FIRE CHIEFS

Burt Meier	1951	Paul Mille
Guy Heath	1952	Max Mabie
John Berends	1953	Wendell Price
1947 Clarence Duffy	1955	M.R. Funke
1947 L.J. Elsberry	1958	Warren Reisinger
1947 Wayne Elsberry	1976	Gary Harding
1950 Louis King	1980	Jack Mackin

1981-82 FIREMEN

Garry Axtell	Jack Mackin
John Berends	John Mason
Duane Bryant	Bob Nelson
Lonny Bryant	Vance Phillips
Marvin Christensen	Virgil Phillips
Roy Davis	Wendell Price
Ken Doser	Larry Pritchett
Brian Funke	Bruce Reisinger
Grady Lewis	Dennis Tuttle

Byways-Trails and Rails

Until about the mid-1850's this was the frontier and the end of the road west, but after that time the area was just a stopping place on the way west. This brought settlement and civilization with all the needs for transportation and communication.

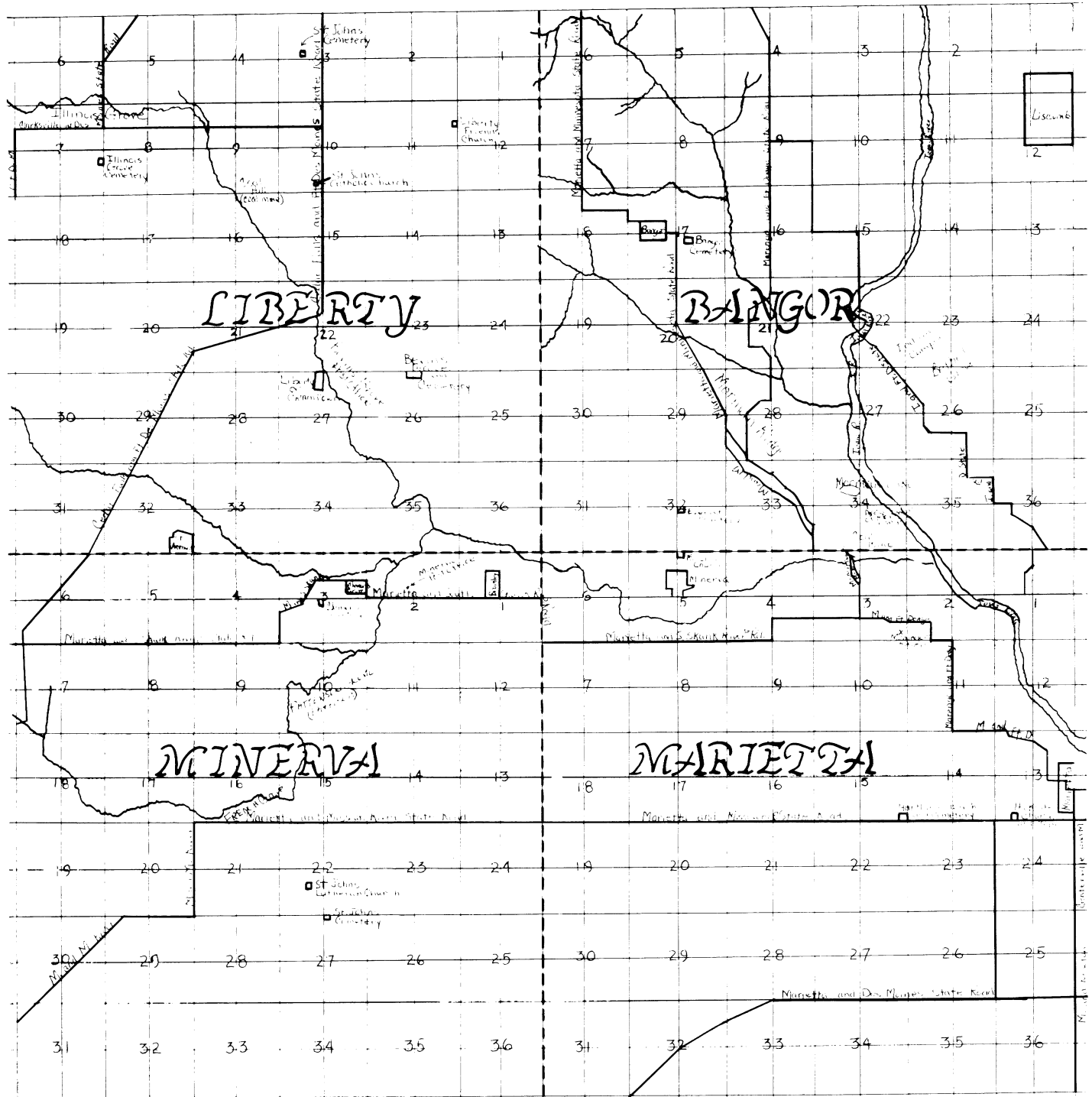
In 1857 stage coaches began to travel the main roads of the county. Most of these probably made regular

scheduled trips once to three times a week. The routes were on the state roads established by the General Assembly in the 1850's. Some of the roads crossing this area are as follows:

Cedar Falls and Fort Des Moines State Road

Clarksville and Des Moines State Road

Marietta and South Skunk River State Road, established December 1853



Map of Stagecoach Trails

Marietta and Missouri River State Road, established 1857

Marengo and Fort Dodge State Road, established July 1, 1853 - completed 1854

Marietta and Iowa Falls State Road, established 1858

Marietta and Minnesota State Road, established 1857

Marietta and Des Moines State Road, established October 1857

These roads were authorized but little more was done than surveying and marking them out. Most of them just started out cutting across country and paid no particular attention to section lines or going around someone's property. The land was open with no fences and there was no need to do more than get the best route from place to place. As there were no bridges, good stream crossings were very important.

Remnants of these old roads in many places can be seen yet today. Many county roads are substantially the routes of these old state roads with the exception that they have straightened them and removed some of the bends, curves and diagonal paths across fields.

The present road down Illinois Grove is basically the old Clarksville and Des Moines State Road. If you'll remember before it was graded about 15 or 20 years ago, it wasn't as straight as it is today and it was pretty well shaded by big trees. Also note how it bends or curves as it enters Story County.

The Marietta and South Skunk River State Road ran through Clemons, past the old Clemons Homestead at the top of the hill and on past the cemetery going west. Notice how it winds across the hilltop diagonally in this area. The road proceeds east of Clemons towards Bromley on the site of the present county road.

The Cedar Falls and Fort Des Moines State Road proceeded basically north and south through Liberty Township just east of Liberty School House and on south through the timber along Minerva Creek west of the Bevins Cemetery about a half mile.

The Marietta and Missouri River State Road is basically the county road a mile south of the present county road E-29.

Another good example of the old roads is the county road down the top of Mormon Ridge. This was the Marengo and Fort Dodge and Marietta and Iowa Falls State Roads.

The names of the companies and stage lines are long forgotten, but the stagecoach that traveled through Bevins Grove probably followed the Cedar Falls and Fort Des Moines State Road. The line supposedly went from Eldora to Colfax.

These were the interstates of the 1850, 1860 and 1870's over which the streams of commerce ran. They

brought visitors, the mail, supplies, and provided a means to market the settler's produce.

In the 1860's people's interest turned towards the "iron horse" and settlers became concerned with obtaining railroad service for their area. The old state roads and the stage lines that used them continued until about 1880, but the attention was focused on the railroads. At the time of these state roads notice the prominence of Marietta, it was a growing town attracting much attention.

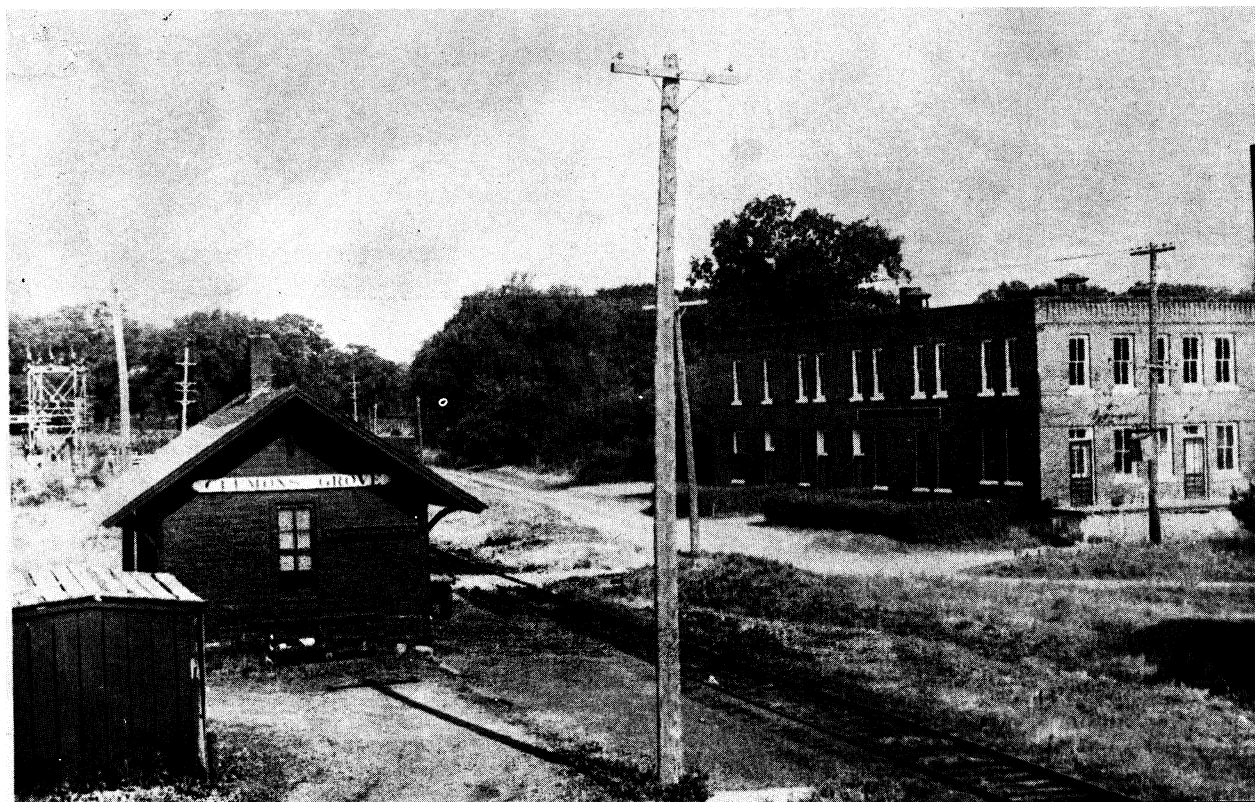
The early pioneers were the first to locate in the newly opened frontier and established settlements, but the railroads opened the areas to the development of agriculture and commercial operation. The railroad provided a fast means of transporting agricultural products east and a source of manufactured products for the taming of the prairie. Early promoters were anxious to have railroads serve their area.

Many early railroads were attempts by local areas to help themselves. They formed companies and tried to build their own railroads in hopes of either connecting their area with a main line railroad or to be the beginning of a large railroad themselves with grandiose plans of power and wealth.

The Chicago, Iowa and Nebraska Railroad built the first section of track to Cedar Rapids in 1859. This company was to later become the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Public land grants by Congress in the 1850's were designed to promote the construction of east and west railroads across the nation. The Iowa Central Air Line Railroad was organized in 1853 to construct a railroad along the forty-second parallel from Lyons (Sabula) on the Mississippi River to Council Bluffs on the Missouri River. If this line had been constructed, the railroad would have passed through Marietta instead of Marshalltown and probably would have allowed Marietta to realize her plans, not the least of which was the dream of getting the state capital!

In 1856 the State Legislature granted every odd-numbered section of land within six miles of its track to the Iowa Central Air Line Railroad. Apparently the Air Line was poorly managed or financed, and in 1858 the line appeared to be faltering. The Air Line proposed to reorganize and establish a line from Anamosa to Marietta and on west to the Des Moines River. This line, called the Dubuque, Marion and Western Railroad Company, was surveyed and probably would have passed along the route later used by the Iowa Central (originally called the Central Railroad of Iowa) when it constructed its Story City branch through the Minerva Valley.

Since the Air Line route was in public disfavor and did not connect with an already established rail line, the State Legislature passed a bill on March 24, 1860 transferring the land grant of lands from the Air Line to the Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad Company that had been organized on June 14, 1859.



**The Clemons Grove Depot and
Minerva Valley Creamery Association**

The Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad Company connected at Cedar Rapids with the Chicago, Iowa and Nebraska Railroad. The Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad reached Marshalltown on December 31, 1861, and was completed on to Council Bluffs in 1867. During this time period the companies had reorganized into the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

THE STORY CITY BRANCH

The railroad that eventually served the Minerva Valley, called the Story City Branch, was constructed by the Central Iowa Railroad Company whose name was changed to Central Railroad Company of Iowa, to Central Iowa Railway, and eventually to the Iowa Central. The Iowa Central had its beginnings on February 7, 1866 when the Eldora Railroad and Coal Company was formed to build a connecting railroad from the Illinois Central Railroad at Ackley to the coal fields that had been discovered at Eldora. On September 1, 1868 a new company, the Iowa River Railway, took over this line and extended the line to Marshalltown where it connected the Chicago and Northwestern which reached Marshalltown in 1869. This line eventually was extended north and south to Minneapolis and St. Louis respectively and became Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad.

The Story City Branch, the railroad through Minerva Valley, was a branch of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. The line began at railroad milepost

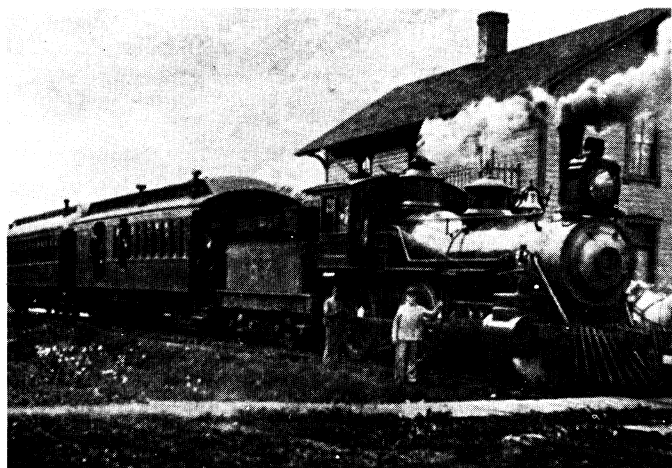
239.6 at Minerva Junction on the main line about three miles northwest of Marshalltown and originally went to Story City in Story County, a distance of 35 miles. The line served the towns or stops of Marietta, Galvin, Minerva, Bromley, Clemons, and St. Anthony in Marshall County, and Zearing, McCallsburg, Roland and Story City in Story County. The railroad also occasionally made pickups at Moningers, but did not maintain a station there, just an occasional shipping point. (Galvin was a post office from 1882 to 1902 in the Southeast corner of Section 3, Marietta Township, and appears to be near Moningers and may have had a station in early days of the railroad.)

On October 2, 1880, the Iowa Central and Northwestern Railway Company was formed. This appears to be a company formed by the Iowa Central Railroad to build and construct the Story City Branch Line. The work on the railroad was done in 1881, as the deed by William M. and Nancy Clemons to The Iowa Central and Northwestern Railway Company, dated September 21, 1881, is for the strip of ground 50 feet on either side of line as surveyed. There was talk or hopes of extending the line to Northwest Iowa in the Spirit Lake area in early times, but was laid out and construction only went to Story City.

The Iowa Central operated with the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad through various arrangements until 1912 when it was purchased by the Minneapolis and St. Louis. About 1955, the Chicago and Northwestern acquired the Minneapolis and St. Louis.

In early days, there was daily, except Sunday,

freight and passenger service, consisting of two round trips a day from Marshalltown to Story City. The Story City Branch was said to be one of the most profitable lines for many years. Regular service was maintained through the 1930's for both freight and passengers. Regular scheduled service was discontinued in the 1950's. The trackage between Roland and Story City was abandoned in the late 1940's or early 1950's, and since has also been referred to as Roland Branch.



The Story City Branch Train
1890's

In the early years of the railroad, almost anything and everything arrived by rail. The trains left and picked up freight and mail at the depot for residents. In the early 1960's the railroad stopped "less than car load service." The inbound shipments on the line have mainly been coal, gasoline, fuel oil, fertilizer, and lumber, and out-land shipments were mainly livestock, gravel, and grain, with grain becoming the predominate commodity.

As late as 1970 the line was serving the Bromley Gravel Pit (Empire Sand and Gravel and later Hallett Construction), eight fertilizer plants, six grain elevators, three lumberyards, a furniture factory in the following towns: Clemons, St. Anthony, Zearing, McCallsburg, and Roland, and the county shipping points of the Bromley gravel pit and Minerva.

In 1962 the Chicago and Northwestern (C & NW) asked for the termination of the only two depot agents on the line, at Clemons and Roland. The Clemons agent served St. Anthony, Zearing and the Minerva and Bromley shipping points. This was denied, but the patrons of the railroad became concerned about the future of their rail service. As a consequence the Roland Branch Shipper Association was formed. Their group consisted of an informal association of anyone interested in improving and promoting rail service on the line, and they began to keep individual records of rail car movements, routings, destinations and revenues, rail car orders, derailments and maintenance and work done or needed on the line. They also maintained a vigil for Interstate Commerce Commission action filed concerning the line.

The original members were:
Clemons Grain and Supply Company, Clemons
Mackin Grain Co., St. Anthony
Zearing Elevators, Inc., Zearing
Zearing Cheese Co., Zearing
Fitzgerald Lumber and Ready Mix, Zearing
R.W. Snider, Union, Iowa
Farmers Coop, Roland
C.B. Johnson Grain Co., Roland
Kerns Furniture Company, Roland
W.E. Brown, Tri-County State Bank, Zearing

Again in 1964 and 1967, the C & NW petitioned the Iowa Commerce Commission to terminate depot agents at Clemons and Roland and again this was denied both times.

On October 21, 1968, the C & NW placed an embargo on all traffic on the line citing track conditions. The association met with the Iowa Grain and Feed Association and the Farmers Grain Dealers Association and all agreed to fight. They decided to make this branch line an example of the deterioration of railroad operation and to take their plight to anyone who would listen. The group made numerous contacts to the various regulatory commissions and public officials.

The railroad began work in ten days to do repair work on the line, but citing a lack of available labor and "excessive moisture" causing poor track conditions, the railroad refused to set a date for removing the embargo. On November 11, 1968, the first train since the embargo was placed on the line and ran at a speed of 5 mph. The railroad left the embargo on but did promise periodic service. By January 9, 1969, only four trains had run on the line, although again citing poor track conditions caused by "excessive moisture", retained the embargo.

On January 28, 1969, the Shippers Association contacted the Iowa Interstate Commerce Commission and U.S. Senator Jack Miller asking the embargo be lifted as no work crews remained working and the ground was frozen. On February 5, 1969, the embargo was lifted and operation began again on an irregular basis.

On June 18, 1969, the Iowa Commerce Commission again ruled that station agents at Roland and Clemons be retained and on June 23 the railroad advised that more repair work and regular service would be forthcoming as business warranted.

Again on July 23, 1970, all loaded cars were removed from the line and shippers were informed that track conditions were unsafe. Again shippers sprang into action and within a few days service was restored.

The shippers at this time were able to show a 125% increase in rail usage over the past year. From November 1968 to June 1970, the line showed total cars shipped of 1874 and cars of material shipped in of 383. Clemons had received 11 cars and shipped out 371 cars during this period even though the embargo was on part of the time.

The railroad informed shippers that the line

would not be upgraded at that time but service would be maintained, as traffic justified.

In 1971 the service and rail car shortages began to be noticeable with total rail car movement dropping from 1657 in 1970, to 1220 in 1971, to 1308 in 1972, to 1080 in 1973, to 552 in 1974.

On March 14, 1973, the line was again embargoed for track conditions. The embargo was lifted on April 23, 1973.

On December 23, 1974, the last train left Clemons and shippers were informed not to order any more cars as the line was again embargoed. Between December 23, 1974 and June 8, 1978, no trains ran on the line as the C & NW filed for abandonment of the line on January 31, 1975.

Again the Shippers Association protested and appeared at the abandonment hearing. They also filed for an injunction against the railroad in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa to require the railroad to maintain service until the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled on the embargo. On September 10, 1975, the court denied the Shippers application for the injunction. On March 27, 1976, the Shippers appealed to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in St. Louis the District Court's denial of their injunction but again were overruled and the District Court decision was upheld.

In April 1976 the Commerce Commission held the hearing on the application for abandonment. The Com-

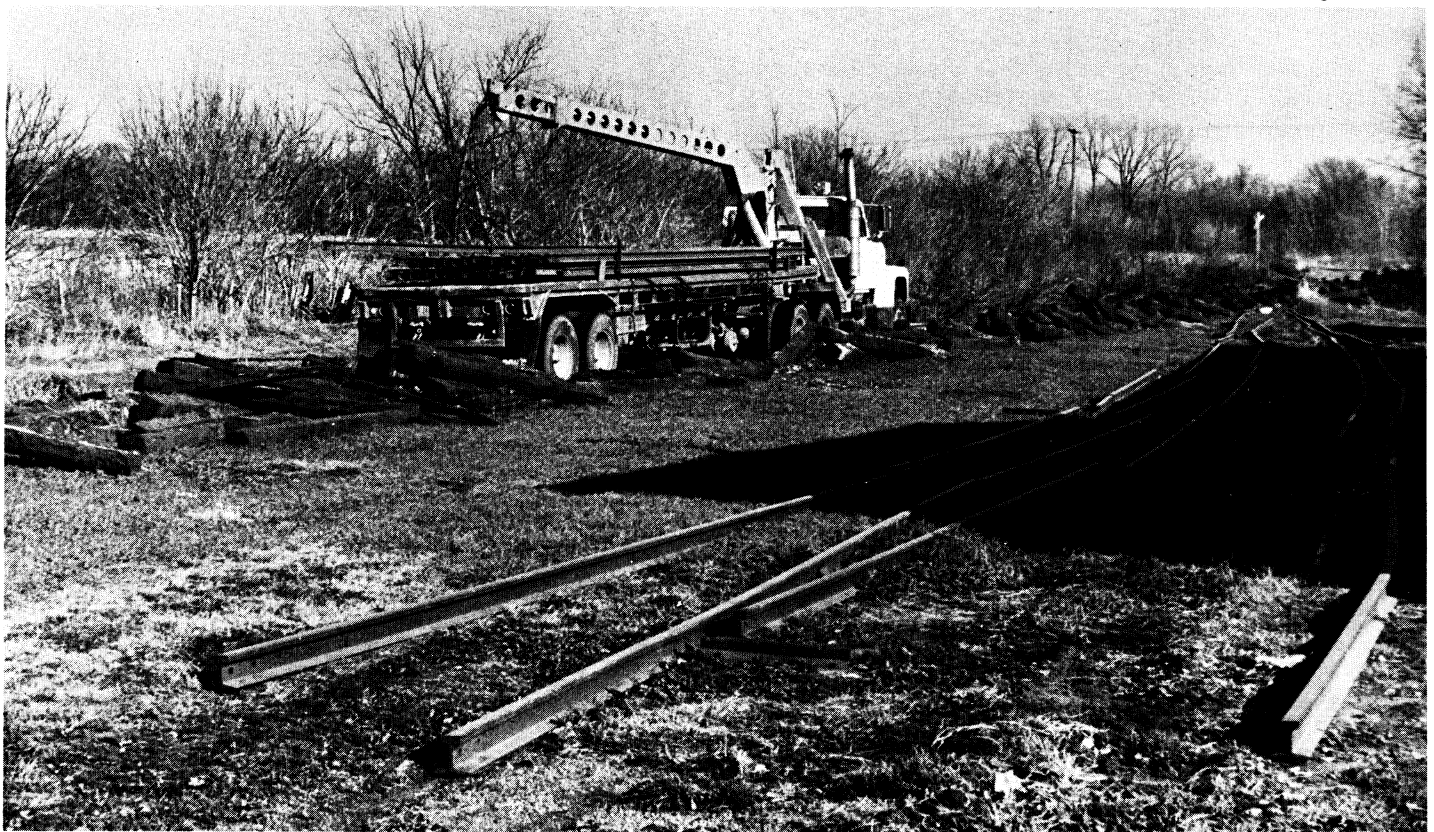
mission ruled on July 23, 1976, that the C & NW could abandon the line from Roland to Zearing but must maintain the rest of the line to the main line at Minerva Junction. The C & NW appealed this decision to the full Interstate Commerce Commission and the decision was upheld on January 14, 1977. The C & NW then appealed to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago and the Commerce Commission decision was upheld on November 8, 1977. On November 21, 1977, Judge Hanson of U.S. District Court ordered the railroad to begin service.

In the spring of 1978 repairs on the line were begun and the first train since the abandonment action was started arrived in Clemons on June 8, 1978.

On May 27, 1980, the C & NW again petitioned for abandonment of line and on February 18, 1981, the Commerce Commission granted said request. On March 2, 1981, the railroad picked up the last cars on the track and the last train left Clemons.

It was the end of the line for the railroad in Clemons. In the space of almost exactly 100 years, the railroad had appeared, flourished, withered, and disappeared. The Shippers Association had made a gallant effort and had probably preserved rail service for the community for an additional ten years. Their fight and their winning the initial abandonment cases were landmarks in railroad abandonment cases.

In the fall of 1981, the salvage crews began removing the track. Work commenced at Zearing and proceeded eastward and the crews were working in No-



Track removal after 100 years of service - 1981

vember and December 1981 in the Clemons area. By January 1982, most of the rails and ties were picked up and placed on semitrucks and hauled away.

It is rather sad to note the end of an era, especially when we recall that it was the coming of the railroad that caused Clemons, Bromley and Minerva to be platted. The railroad in early days had been the hub of activity for the community. It provided a means to receive goods from all over the world and to ship goods in return. It allowed the citizens of the community an expedient means to travel and receive visitors. Many older people in our community today recall getting on the train and going to Marshalltown to shop and to conduct business or attend social events.

It is also important to note that the coming of railroads brought improved communication. On the Story City Branch in most places along the north side of the right of way was constructed a telegraph line. The telegraph, until the coming of the telephone and radio, provided the means for receiving news, just as quick as it could be tapped out. Who can also forget the importance of telegraph in relaying the important messages during the war. During the war years, many people hated to see the depot agent coming for fear of the message he might be carrying. This is all passed now and only memories, but hopefully they will give you an appreciation of the importance the railroad and telegraph played in the community.

The last depot agent was Gordon Krause who served at the Clemons Depot from January 23, 1963 - May 31, 1979. The depot business was then turned over to a Marshalltown agency.

Prior to him, W.J. (Bill) Palzer was the local agent for 32 years. Bill was also very active in community activities and was mayor in the 1930's. Paul Baker was agent for 2 years after Bill resigned.

RAILROAD PROPOSALS

The Northwestern corner of Marshall County was served by only the Story City Branch of the M. & St. L. Railroad which crosses Marietta and Minerva Townships and just cuts through a corner of Liberty Township. Bangor Township has no railroad. But there have been dreams, but little more than dreams. The details of these "promises" of railroads are very illusive and there is very little that can be substantiated about them, but by piecing together what is known, perhaps we can get a picture of their dreams.

Articles of Incorporation were filed by the Farmers Union Railway Company on December 6, 1869, in the Marshall County Records Office. The stated purpose of the corporation was to construct a railroad from Vinton on the Cedar River to Liscomb and the Iowa River. The offices were to be in Liscomb. Incorporation were John S. Tilford, Dr. Daniels, James L. Wilson, S.S. Beaman, John Conrad, William Battin, David Beighly,

and John W. Tripp.

At about this same time, Articles of Incorporation dated December 18, 1869, were filed January 12, 1870, for the Minerva Valley Rail Road and Coal Company. The stated purpose of this group was to "acquire, maintain and construct a railroad from Liscomb to Coal City in Marshall County and coal business and operating coal mine." The principle places of business were Liscomb and Coal City. The directors of this corporation were: J.W. Tripp of Liscomb, H.W. McNeill of Eldora, William Phillips of Eldora, S.M. Churchill of Danforth, Illinois, and John Abbott. It does not give Mr. Abbott's address, but there were Abbotts in the Illinois Grove area at that time and also at that time it was believed that Liberty Township had significant coal deposits that could be profitably mined. The corporation, in addition to the usual offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, also had a mining superintendent and a railroad superintendent. Such plans and dreams.

We have also been unable to locate the town of Coal City that is referred to, but it is known that there was a coal mine in the Mormon Ridge area and in the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 9 of Liberty Township. Coal City may have been only a dream or prospector's town, or at most, it probably consisted of only a few shacks or homes.

There is little else appearing on the records about these companies, but on March 20, 1875, Articles of Incorporation were signed by John W. Tripp, S.A. Emery, Theodore D. Kennedy, Stephen Paul Sheffield, W.W. Wilson, E.L. Eaton, Wm. R. Pickering, Nettie Sanford, Abigail Hodgkin, Owen Albright, Wm. Battin, E.N. Chapin, Betsy Tripp, Mrs. Wm. Speas, Wm. Barber, Byron A. Burour, W. Martin, and L.A. Sante. The purpose as stated was "to construct and operate a railroad from the Mississippi River to Liscomb to Mapleton." The railroad was to be a 3 foot gauge (narrow gauge) with its principal place of business at Liscomb.

As was common practice in those days because of financial problems and attempts to seek more support, it is probably that the first Farmers Union Railroad and Minerva Valley Railroad and Coal Company were reorganized into the new Farmers Union Railroad Company. The fact that the stated purpose of the Articles of Incorporation cover about the same thing and that many of the same people were involved in this would support this: Officers of the company were: John Tripp, President; William Battin, Secretary; S.S. Beaman and J.W. Conrad and Joe Howard, Bangor, were directors.

Construction began in April 1875 at Liscomb with Frank Willy as engineer. Grading was done both east and west of Liscomb. Track was laid only about a mile west to the saw mill and east as far as Beaman. Both the rail and ties were sawed from oak timber at the saw mill. The rails ranged in various lengths up to 16 feet and were tapered and bolted together.

The railroad had a few cars and engine operated between Liscomb and Beaman for a year or two until

June 1876.

No track was laid west of the Iowa River but grading was done. It is believed that the graded road bed, visible in the pasture just west of the Kenneth Holveck farm in the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 13, Liberty Township, was a part of this railroad grading. As late as the 1950's, part of the proposed graded railroad rail bed was visible in fields on the south side of the road just west of the bridge over the Iowa River at Liscomb and also in the south part of Section 16, Township 85 North, Range 19 West in Bangor Township.

There are also stories about a railroad proposed at one time from Albion to New Providence, but there does not appear to be any record available concerning that.

There are Articles of Incorporation on file dated February 23, 1878, for the Marshalltown and Sioux City Railroad Company stating the company's purpose is to construct a railroad from Marshalltown to Sioux City. The directors of this company were: W. J. Hovic, Marshalltown; W. W. Weatherly, Marshalltown; W. B. Ketchum, Marshalltown; A. T. Bickard, Marshalltown; A. P. Peterson, Mineral Ridge, Iowa (northern Boone County); A. R. Pierce, Bevens Grove, Iowa; and Isaac Painter, Idaho, Iowa (south and east of Hubbard in Hardin County). Since A. P. Pierce, who lived in Liberty Township and Issac Painter from Hardin County just north and west of Illinois Grove, were directors and promoters of this venture, it is possible that a railroad route was considered that would pass through this area, but there is nothing available to substantiate this.

THE FARMERS UNION RAILWAY COMPANY

The Farmers Union Railway Company was formed in Liscomb, Iowa, March 22, 1875, and work on the road started the next April. The old Iowa Central had been operating north and south through Liscomb since 1869, but John Tripp and some others in Liscomb through an east and west road was needed. They envisioned a railroad from the Mississippi to the Missouri that passed through Liscomb. They built about twelve miles of track from the sawmill east of the river, through Liscomb, and on to Beaman.

The track was built with wooden rails, sawed at the sawmill from oak trees. The rails were 3½ by 5 inches in size, and the lengths varied from ten to sixteen feet. Each rail was beveled at the end to meet the next rail, and they were bolted together with half inch bolts with a big washer at each end of the bolt. For a time they rented an engine and six or seven cars, but the business did not produce enough income and the owners took the cars back. For a time after that, cars were pulled by horses, but eventually the venture folded completely.

With the track to Beaman completed, the project was vigorously pushed to the west. Many times, the right

of way for a railroad was paid for by stock in the company. The following handwritten contract was found on a loose page in one of the old assessors books for Bangor Township: " This certifies that P. Hollingsworth is entitled to one share of Capital Stock in the Farmers Union Railroad Company in consideration of the right-of-way across the east half of the Southwest Quarter of Section Seven in Township Eighty-five Range Nineteen (Bangor Township) whenever the said company decided to build their road across said Land." (Signed) Wm. Bztin, Right of Way Agent, F. U. R. R. Company.

Also the names: P. Hollingsworth and Emma Hollingsworth.

And how would the proposed right of way have reached the eighty acres described? It would go almost due west from where it crossed the Iowa River and roughly follow the section line between section eleven and fourteen. It would swing south and cross Honey Creek just south of the site of the Reuben Bond Grist Mill. It would have followed the valley of a small tributary of Honey Creek for about a mile westward, then swung slightly north to the eighty described. But for some reason the route was changed. Perhaps the surveyor found the rise between the valley of the Iowa River and Honey Creek valley too high, or there may have been difficulty in securing the right of way over other land. The final decision was for the right of way to turn southwest soon after crossing the Iowa River, and it passed over Honey Creek just north of the present highway bridge southeast of Bangor. It then proceeded westward to the valley of Mud Creek, followed that for a few miles, and work ended in the edge of Liberty Township. The end of the worked grade was on the farm now owned by Kenneth Holveck. The grade across the Iowa River and Honey Creek valleys was high enough to be safely above high water, and some of it remains today. No bridges were built, but most of the way was ready for ties and rails.

Why was the Farmers Union Railroad abandoned after so much propagation and real hard work? There were rumors that the officials were bought off by citizens of Marshalltown, who wanted all railroads in the county to center in their city, but that does not seem likely. There were many bad debts, and much of the grading was never paid for. It probably collapsed for want of sound financing and good management. But whatever the reason, the demise of the Farmers Union Railroad left the territory free for the building of the Story City Branch Railroad and the development of Clemons and the other towns along that route which it supplied for so many years.

Post Office

The nearest post office in 1850 was Iowa City where the supplies were bought. In 1854 the post office was placed in the William M. Clemons' log cabin. Later in 1856 when the Clemons' brick house was built, the post office moved into the "well-traveled" Clemons home. William M. Clemons was postmaster for 4 years. In 1864 it was moved to the small settlement later to be known as Clemons Grove.

The Post Office was located on the east side of Main Street, Lot 3 in the early 1900's.



CLEMONS POST OFFICE

In 1928 the post office was moved to the Arlington Hotel, then owned by Postmaster A. W. Monroe. It was later sold to E. T. and Marie VanMetre. This building housed the post office until 1970 when the new building was built across and to the west of the old Arlington Hotel. This is the present office today.

The following are the postmasters listed in the National Archives beginning in 1882. Although Clemons Grove was recorded as having a post office, no names are recorded before 1882.

1856	William M. Clemons
October 27, 1882	Allen T. Miller
August 14, 1883	N. Egleston
December 2, 1884	Allen T. Miller
April 27, 1885	John H. Damer
October 6, 1885	Earl S. Perry
February 24, 1886	Henry P. Clemons
September 25, 1902	William Mooney
May 4, 1904	Calvin Dickson
April 7, 1904	Anna Tucker
May 1, 1907	Calvin Dickson
January 9, 1915	Gertrude M. Brackney
June 19, 1917	Gertrude B. Grinstead
March 1, 1918	Grace E. Brackney
April 28, 1919	Aaron W. Montrose
February 16, 1932	Earl T. VanMetre
Earl T. VanMetre, Retired February 28, 1969	
Marie VanMetre, Officer in charge February 1969	
Virginia R. Borton, Officer in charge May 1, 1970	
Virginia R. Borton, Postmaster November 27, 1971	

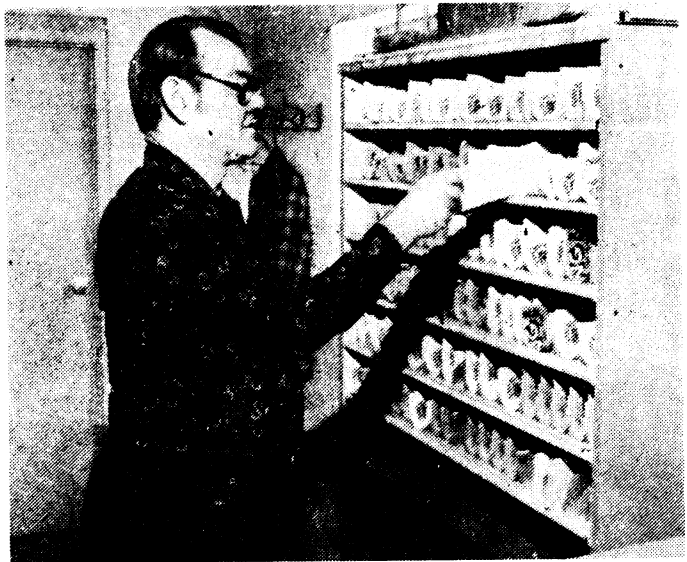
Rural mail service began in 1900 or slightly before. The following have served as rural carriers over the past 82 years.

1900 - 1924	Sam Stahl
1924 - 1952	Freeman Perry
1952 - 1979	Charles Beckwith
1979 -	E. W. Shives
	William R. Ward



Former Arlington Hotel
Now owned by Jerry and Sherry Bab
Post Office from 1924-1970

Lyle Perry, son of the Freeman Perry, described to us the days of delivering mail with his father by horse and buggy. When he began the rural mail route was 26 miles long. If the weather was snowy and bad, Lyle was the sub-carrier. He rode a horse and would continue the delivery from the buggy on the main road to the individual farms. They tried to continue the delivery even if the storm was bad. Sometimes they even drove their horses over fence lines.



Rural Carrier E. W. "Woody" Shives sorting mail

Charles Beckwith began his mail route with 24 miles in 1924. In 1941, Clemons' and St. Anthony's post offices consolidated increasing his mileage to 80 miles daily.

E. W. (Woody) Shives was appointed rural carrier in 1952. During his years of carrying mail he generally traveled 86 miles daily. In his 27 years of service to the U. S. Postal Service, he delivered unique packages; everything from bees, snakes, baby ducks, and even ASHES! (from cremation). Woody retired in 1979. He was honored with a retirement party attended by 250 friends at the Clemons Gymnasium. Woody was the first carrier in Marshall County to give door service to all the patrons on his route.

Today the rural mail route is 82 miles. This includes the area surrounding both communities of Clemons and St. Anthony. The carrier is Bill Ward.

Medicine

The first white medicine man to arrive in the territory now Marshall County was Dr. E. B. Bush. He took up a claim and settled in the locality now known as Mormon Ridge at the junction of Little and Big Minerva Creek in August 1847. The Indians came for his help frequently as did the pioneers. Because there was little means to be offered, he started a sawmill on the Minerva Creek, sawing logs into rough lumber. Soon after settling he made entry of a quarter section of land in June 1848. This was the first entry of land in the vicinity of what is now known as Marietta. Later he moved to California but returned to be the first doctor in Albion.

Clemons has always been fortunate to have a doctor since the late 1890's. Due to lack of records, it is



Bank Building
Now Dr. Sheldahl's office

unknown if there were doctors before this. Doctors serving our community were:

Dr. Turner	1890 - 1905
Dr. Earl Noble	1905 - 1944
Dr. Marvin L. Hobson	1944 - 1952
Dr. E. W. Sheldahl	1952 -

The original doctor's office built for Dr. Turner was as well known as the past telephone office. Later it was used as a bakery, printing office, telephone office and now a home.

Dr. Earl Noble's office was near his home, now owned by Ethel Charlier.

Dr. Hobson and Dr. Sheldahl have used the bank building as their offices. This is where Dr. Sheldahl practices today.



First Doctor's Office - Dr. Turner
Telephone Building - 1909