

Old Settlers of Newton, Iowa

Original book is located in the Jasper County Historical Society Library

Page 1 - History of the Origin of the Old Settler Meeting of Newton Iowa.

In the spring of 1885 Albert Lufkin one of our early settlers concluded to give a party to some of the early settlers of Newton. After much inquiring he found that if he invited the heads of families that resided in Newton May 31, 1855, the day that he arrived here that it would make a part of about fifty persons, a number as large as could well be accommodated at his dwelling. Cards of invitation were issued for Saturday May 30th, the 31st falling on Sunday.

The intention was to write all heads of families who were residents of Newton May 31, 1855 or 30 years before the date of the party. The following persons were invited:

[Name(s)]	[Running total]
David Edmundson and wife	2
D. L. Cark and wife	4
H. J. Skiff and wife	6
Geo. T. Anderson and wife	8
Henry Kiisel and wife	10
Gen Jas Wilson and wife	12
D. E. Longfellow and wife	14
W. E. Hunter and wife	16
Caleb Lamb and wife	18
A.K. Emerson and wife	20
J. R. Mershon and wife	22
J. B. Hough and wife	24
John M. Hiatt and wife	26
John W. Harvey and wife	28
Ballinger Aydelott	29
Wm. W. Silsby and wife	31
George W. Taylor and wife	33
John J. Mann and wife	35

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Hugh Newell and wife	37
Mrs. Wm. R. Skiff	38
Mrs. (Miller) & Miss Kate Hunter	40
Mrs. Hugh Rodgers	41
C. J. Housel and wife	43
Wm. H. Pardoe and wife	45
A. J. Osborn and wife	47
David Evans and wife	49
L. D. Kennedy and wife	51
Mrs. Nancy Rickman	52

All of the above came except the following: Mrs. J. B. Hough, Ballinger Aydelott, John J. Mann, and Mrs. Rickman. One of the cards of invitation is attached to inside of the cover of this book.

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Hugh Newell died in the year 1895.

Page 4 - 1890 Meeting

Another five years rolled on and again Mr. Lufkin made an Old Settlers party at his house. One of the cards of invitation is pasted on the inside cover of this record. The following named persons were present and the persons invited were the same as five years before, excepting a few who were before absent and those who had passed away.

Names	Where Born	No.
D. E. Longfellow	Maine	1
J. R. Mershon	Kentucky	2
Mrs. Mershon	Conn	3
Caleb Lamb	N. Carolina	4
Mrs. C. J. Lamb	Indiana	5
David Edmundson	Kentucky	6
Mrs. D. Edmundson	Penn.	7
John H. Harvey	New York	8
Mrs. John H. Harvey	New York	9
Mrs. Nancy Hunter	Virginia	10
W. H. Pardoe	Penn.	11
Mrs. Pardoe	Mo	12
A. J. Osborne	Ohio	13
Mrs. Osborne	Ohio	14
Henry Kiisel	Sweden	15
Mrs. Kiisel	Maine	16
Mrs. James Wilson	New York	17
H. J. Skiff	New York	18
Mrs. Skiff	New York	19
F. W. Cozad	Virginia	20
Mrs. F. W. Cozad	Virginia	21
Geo. T. Anderson	Ohio	22
Mrs. Geo. T. Anderson	Ohio	23
J. B. Hough	Virginia	24
Albert Lufkin	Maine	25
Fannie E. Lufkin	Wisconsin	26

Page 5 - It will be observed that although the ones invited were almost exactly the same yet the number present was very much diminished and on motion a chairman was elected and an organization prospected to provide for annual meetings of the Old Settlers of Newton. The limit of eligibility for membership was all that were here May 31, 1855 and that were heads of families at that time or in business for themselves.

The meeting further that as the members diminished that the intention was to include each year enough more of the old settlers who came after May 31, 1855 to make a company of about fifty persons. In this way the Old Settlers meetings would continue as long as the pleasure of those meeting would direct.

The officers elected for the ensuing year were Albert Lufkin President Mrs. Olive J. Lamb V President Geo T. Anderson Secretary. The whole to be a committee to arrange for the meeting for 1891.

Page 6 – Lambert House Parlors Newton Iowa, June 1st 1891

The Old Settlers Association met pursuant to a call by the officers, to the number of about 50. And after an hours pleasant reunion sat down to a sumptuous repast served in Mrs. Lambert's best style.

The tables were lighted as of old Pioneer days with tallow dips and cotton wicks hanging out of saucers of Lard. All at once however, (as the eyes of the Company were not as good as 36 years ago,) the full blaze of the Electric lights – was turned on and the dainties disappeared in a manner to reflect – credit – upon the digestion of the company, and the skill of those who prepared the repast.

After the feast – old memories were recalled, and many good stories of the past were told and songs sung until a late hour.

The business of the evening resulted in the Election of the following officers for the ensuring year.

President – James R. Mershon
V President – Mrs. W. H. Pardoe
Secretary - Joseph Bowker

Who were constituted a com. To prepare for the next gathering on May 31, 1892.

Comm on Music and Poems
Mrs. Addie Wilson
Mrs. J. C. Wilson
Joseph Bowker

Page 7 - The place of birth was called for of each person present and the same placed on record as far as practicable and the company then dispersed after thanks to the genial proprietors of the Lambert House and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne"

G. T. Anderson, Sec
Albert Lufkin, Pres.

Lambert House Parlors, May 31st 1892

The Old Settlers Association Assembled at the call of the committee of invitation, appointed for the purpose at the last meeting, and John L. Mathews was elected temporary chairman in place of J. R. Mershon who was unable to be present on account of illness.

The minutes of last meeting were read and approved. After a bountiful repast served by our good host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Lambert, which endangered somewhat the ability of some to talk. Mr. H. J. Skiff favored us with a poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

J. B. Hough then read an original poem bringing in some of the early reminiscences of bygone days of interest to many of the members present.

Stories were told by Mr. Lufkin, Mr. Geo. T. Anderson, Rev. M. Shaffer and Caleb Lamb, and other accounts of mighty hunters and Fishers of those days by Ballinger Aydelott and L.L.D. Kennedy. The occasion was also enlivened by songs by an invited guest, Mr. Wm. Burney of the "Herald."

It was also moved and carried that the regrets and sympathy of those **[Page 8]** present extended to Judge David Edmundson and to our President James R. Mershon on account of the illness that prevented them from being present and participating in the festivities of this occasion.

The following officers were then elected for the ensuring year.

President John L. Mathews
V. President Mrs. Jno. C. Wilson
Secretary Joseph Bowker

These persons were also exofficio members of Executive Com to provide a program and Banquet for the next annual meeting. After an evening of unusual enjoyment, the society adjourned at a late hour with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" by our Scotch friend Wm. Burney.
Joseph Bowker, Secy.

Page 9 – May 29th 1894

The Old Settlers Association met in their annual reunion at Tennant's Café. About sixty of the pioneers of Newton and Jasper County assembled in the parlors at 8 P.M. And a half hour or more was spent in cordial and hearty greetings between old friends and neighbors, many of whom had not met each other for a long time. At 8:30 all marched down to the dining room, and enjoyed the bounteous supper that had been prepared for them.

After the supper, speechmaking was in order – The president Capt. J. L. Mathews presided with grace and dignity.

An original poem was read by John C. Wilson, in which many interesting events in early days were recounted and kindly reference was made of nearly all of the pioneers by name. Harvey J. Skiff entertained the company with the recitation of a poem.

Rev. C. C. Harrah, Capt. Lamb, Andrew Failor and Mrs. Failor, L.L.D. Kennedy, M.A. McCord, Col. Townsend, John Manning and J. H. Fugard responded to calls for short speeches and related many incidents of interest to those present.

After a pleasant evening together the company adjourned at a late hour.

The following officers were selected for the ensuing year.

President - Geo. T. Anderson
Vice Pres – Miss Addie Wilson
Secretary – J. H. Fugard

J. H. Fugard, Sec

Page 10 – Pasted in article from the newspaper, no date given except 1894.

OLD SETTLERS BANQUET. This annual occurrence took place at Tennant's Café, last Tuesday evening, May 29th. The pretty suite of rooms occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Tennant were used for reception rooms. The pioneer fathers and mothers began to arrive at eight o'clock and the cordial and heartfelt greetings between them, born of common experiences in the early days, were good to see. About 8:30, the party, numbering about sixty, marched down to the dining-room. The guests stood while Rev. Harrah asked the blessing of God. The repast was indeed inviting, with handsome floral centerpieces, delectable salads, choice meats, fresh fruits, the best of bread, butter, pickles and coffee with a climax of elegant cake and ice-cream with strawberries.

After the banquet, speech-making was the order. Most of the guests were married when they came West, away back in the "forties" or "fifties," but some had come as boys and girls with their parents. The retelling of the experiences of those days is of great interest to those who had them, but to those of the younger generation, it gives vast entertainment, better than any novel or play, because true as well as thrilling.

"Aunt Sally Springer" was perhaps the most interesting personage of the occasion. When, in 1845, she and her husband came with several other families to Jasper Co., the county was not surveyed nor the town of Newton laid out. Only four families lived in the county, the fathers of which were the follow: ____ Franklin of Elk Creek; Jimmy Pearson, east Newton; ____ Lacey, Adamson's Grove; ____ Bennett, at Hixson's Grove. After farming several years, she and her family moved to the new town of Newton, where she and her husband went into the tavern business. Their tavern stood where Russell's meat market now is and was a well-known hostelry for many years. "Aunt Sally" and "Uncle Billy" made friends far and near by their hospitality, the latter

being also prominent in politics. This gray-haired woman has wonderful vitality, never wore spectacles, can see both to read and sew, and is full of fun in spite of her 82 years. She told many interesting things, - of the travelers to California during the "gold fever;" of prairie fires; of the time that the Newton women put an end to the saloon that dared plat itself in their midst; of the 4th of July celebrations, where everybody in the county went; of going to trade at Oskaloosa, and the like.

Mr. John C. Wilson read a well-written, original poem, including in it entertaining items concerning nearly every settler in the town. Caleb Lamb told of the great hospitality shown the stranger in those days, how they had to send to Iowa City for a good sack of flour, and his pride in Newton people, throughout their history. Rev. Harrah's parents, six children, one brother and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Crouch and a number of visitors, off and on, lived in a two roomed house, on the ground where Will Burney now lives. Milt McCord's people landed where Carns' are now living, where the hazel brush was as high as the horses' backs. H. J. Skiff delivered a ludicrous "Ode to Spring;" L.L.D. Kennedy told of a wonderful hand-to-hand wolf fight. And so on, and so on. It would take columns to give full details. Although the enjoyment was great, a minor thread ran through the remarks, the thought that the book of life was about completed, the story told, the journey done.

Great honor is due those who endured the privations and struggles of pioneer life to make a home for their children, a place in which they would have a good chance to make an honest living, where Iowa's fertile soil gave unbounded limit to advancement.

The boys and girls of to-day ought to know more of the experiences of those days, in order to appreciate their privileges.

Page 11 – Newspaper clipping, no date

Recollections

Ballinger Aydelotte Speaks of the Past Days in "Old Jasper."

March 23, 1895

How well I remember fifty years ago to-day, when I first came on this ground where Newton stands, and how it looked then. What a change in fifty years! I can hardly realize the change, though I have seen it all. Then it was a wild country in its natural state, with no sign of civilization and no inhabitants, only now and then the roving Indians; they were quite plentiful at that time. I had no thought of living to see a town of three thousand inhabitants, with good homes surrounded with all the comforts of life.

Emigration came in very slowly the first seven years. So slow was it that we thought that the country would not be settled in a hundred years. Five families were settled on Elk Creek in the spring of 1845, by the first of June. Ther names were: Joab Bennett, James Pierson, B. Aydelotte, John H. Franklin and Mosel Lacey, Al and Mart Adkins settled the same spring in Adkins's Grove; in the Fall, several families moved in, and in November we got up a petition to the Legislature to have the county organized, if we could find settlers enough to entitle us to organization. We found thirty-six signers to the petition, just enough to entitle to organization. We sent the petition of Col. J.B. Shelledy, the member from Mahaska county. We also sent him a letter requesting him to urge his influence to have the county named Jasper. The enabling act was passed in January and an election appointed to be held at the house of Joab Bennett's who lived where Jacob Hickson's widow now lives, on the first Monday in March, 1846, to elect county and township officers. J. R. Sparks, Nathan Williams and Manley Gifford were elected county commissioners; Fleener, county clerk; John N. Kinsman, clerk of the court, by appointment; David Edmundson was elected Sheriff and Seth Hammer, recorder; Jonathan Swan, treasurer; B. Aydelotte, justice of the peace; Henry Smith, constable. The township included all territory north of South Skunk River in the county.

The first court in the county was held at the home of M. D. Springer, who lived where Sam Squires no lives. In the latter part of March, 1846, by order of the Legislature, we only had four days in which to build the court house and L. D. Springer now of Keokuk, Will Springer, deceased, and B. Aydelotte were to build the house in that time with hickory logs or poles. We put on clapboards for the roof and nailed clapboards for the roof and

nailed clapboards over the cracks; also piled mud against the logs at one end of the house to build the fire against, with a hole in the roof to let the smoke out, a Continental fireplace. The ground was the floor and we cut a doorway in the south side, but had no door. Made benches by splitting linn logs in two slabs ten feet long, and boring two holes in each end and one in the middle, and stuck pins in the middle for legs. This constituted the outfit, for the court-house. Our judge was Fiddling Joe Williams, of Muscatine. He was called the fiddling judge because he was a good fiddler, and sometimes carried his fiddle with him. He held his office by appointment from the President. As Iowa was then a territory, the county seat was located in 1846, by commiss'nrs appointed by the legislature. I being justice of the peace, had to administer the commissioner's oath of office. The first house in Newton was built in Newton in September by Joab Bennett. It was a log cabin, sixteen feet square, built on the alley at the east end of the present Mershon block. Soon after, Bennett bought a load of groceries, a two horse load, a good share of which was whisky. Moses Lacey was the first white man to get intoxicated in Newton.

The commissioners named the town Newton City, but three years afterwards we petitioned the legislature to take the City part off and they did so. Strangers passing through would ask where Newton City was, and say, "I hope they don't call three log cabins and a hazel brush a city."

What I have written is all from memory, as I have no notes. No doubt I have made many mistakes. Fifty years ia a long while. B. Aydelotte.

Page 12 – Newspaper Clipping, no date

Recollections

Ballinger Aydelotte Speaks of the Past Days in "Old Jasper."

In my last communication, I only spoke of one election being held in the county, and that one at the home of Joab Bennett. There was one held at the home of Adam Toole, where Monroe stands now. William Hiland was elected justice of the peace for the south side of Skunk river; and one was held at Lynn Grove at the house of John R. Sparks; and Wesley Stallings was elected justice of the peace. So there were three elections held in the county the first Monday in March, '46.

The first sermons preached in this part of the county were preached at the house of Joab Bennett in the winter of '45 and '46, by a Methodist minister that traveled, hunting out the settlers. I think he was from Jefferson county, but I have forgotten his name; the appointment was sent to all the settlers. My remembrance is that there were just four to hear him; John H. Franklin, B. Aydelotte, J. Bennett and his wife. He gave us a good talk and much good advice, for he was a very devout man. The next was preached at the house of B. Aydelotte, by a Mr. Smith, a Christian preacher. About this time Wm. Smith and Wm. Ferguson came into the neighborhood, both Christian preachers or exhorters, and the first church organized was the Christian church at the home of B. Aydelotte in May 1846, and William Ferguson, Elder; William Springer, was the Christian church at the home of B. Aydelotte in May 1846, and William Ferguson, Elder; William Springer, Clerk; and B. Aydelotte, Deacon. This organization held together till 1857, when it became disorganized through strife between the members and pastor.

The first wedding was a double wedding at the home of Thomas Pearson, in Adamson's Grove, when his daughter Nancy married Jesse Rickman; and Josephine married John Wilson; B. Aydelotte was the officiating just of the peace.

The first white woman to come into the county was Aunt Lavina Pearson, James Pearson's wife; the first white child born in this section was Wm. Springer's son, Oliver; the first school was taught by William Smith on what is now the Poor Farm; he was known afterwards ad Judge Smith, of Marshall county. We had three Bill Smiths; there was Preacher Bill, Wild Cat Bill and Fool Bill, the latter was elected justice of the peace in 1847, under the new state law.

John H. Franklin was elected the first county judge under the new state organization; the first person arrested for petit larceny was Jerry Weatherbee. Judge Franklin lived in town and had a yoke of oxen that he left with the yoke on, some time in September; the yoke was missing and could not be found; it went on till frost came and the prairie grass was burned off; I was going to town one day across the prairie and found the yoke, but the ring and staple were gone; so I reported; Franklin went to 'Squire Smith's and got out a search warrant to search Weatherbee's house for the ring and staple; Smith appointed Evan Adamson special constable to make the search, so he went and made the search and found the ring and staple in Weatherbee's bureau drawer; of course he was arrested and taken before "Squire Smith; he tried the case and said that it was such a plain case he would send him to the penitentiary for two years. Ezekiel Shipley says to him: "Bill, a justice of the peace can't send a man to the penitentiary," Bill said he guessed he knew his business and commenced writing a mittimus; Shipley says: "Bill, you had better examine the law before you go too far, or you may get your foot in it;" so it being lat at night, he told the constable to take care of the prisoner till morning and he would then decide what to do with him, and adjourned till morning. Well, somehow, Weatherbee made his escape that night, and that was the end of the "ring and staple case." B. Aydelotte.

Page 13 – Newspaper Clipping, no date

Recollections.

Ballinger Aydelotte Speaks Further Concerning Early Days in "Old Jasper."

In my last communication, I closed with the "Ring and Staple Case." In that article I said John H. Franklin was elected first county judge. That was true in one sense. He was elected the first Probate Judge, as he was called under the new state organization, in 1847. We did not have the county judge system until 1851, and Jesse Rickman was the first county judge elected, he taking the place of probate judge and the county commissioners. This was enacted in the Legislature of 1850 and 1851.

The first courthouse was built in Newton in 1847, by Evan Adamson. He took the contract to build the house for three hundred and fifty dollars. The house was one story, 18 x 32 feet, frame, weatherboarded, sealed inside, with shingled roof. Twelve feet off the west end was partitioned off for the grand and petit jury rooms, each one nine by twelve feet. This left a court room 18 x 20 feet, with the judge's stand in the east end. This, with slab benches, constituted the first courthouse in Newton. Asbury Jones did the carpenter work. Adamson hauled all the lumber from Fairfield with ox teams, except the frame which was made from trees out in the timber at home. The first seats for the court house with backs to them were made in 1854 by David Tripp, father of our present deputy sheriff.

The first case in court that came to trial was an ax handle case, from Des Moines township. A man by the name of Ray sued John Q. Deakin for cutting an ax handle on his land. Deakin evidently had gotten across the line about four feet on Ray's land, so Ray sued Deakin for trespass. The case was tried before the court without a jury. McKay, from Fort Des Moines, was the Judge. A lawyer from Iowa City was Ray's lawyer and "Bill" Seevers, afterwards Judge Seevers got up to speak, he said, "This is an ax handle case and I will take off my coat so that I can do it justice." I think he made the best plea then that I ever heard him make, and I heard him many times. The judge decided that each one should pay half the costs, as there was more spite work than damage.

The first couple that were married in Newton was Charley Thorpe and Calvin Wolf's daughter, (I forget her given name). They were married by John H. Franklin, justice of the peace. It was found out afterwards that Franklin was not a legal justice of the peace; so Thorpe and his wife were dissatisfied a bout it, as they thought they were not married at all and came to town to see what could be done about it. It happened that the county commissioners were in session and several men were in town from different parts of the county among them Squire Stallings, of Lynn Grove. So the trouble was talked over and over. It was finally thought best for them to be married over again by Squire Stallings, as he was a legal justice of the peace. So they were married again, and we had a lively wedding and a supper at Tom Adamson Hotel. A nice dress was bought for the bride, and all went home satisfied.

Franklin did some business as just of the peace, so we petitioned the legislature to legalize Franklin's act in that capacity, and they passed an act to that effect.

The first wedding in Lynn Grove township was that of Jesse Hammer and Margaret Sparks, daughter of John R. Sparks. These were parent of our Dr. Hammer, of Newton. B. Aydelotte. ~

Also on page 13, newspaper clipping
Auld Lang Syne.

The Old Settlers of Newton meet Once More.

The old settlers of Newton, Iowa, to the number of about fifty, gathered in annual meeting May 29th, at the Lambert House, at 8:30 p.m., and soon thereafter surrounded numerous tables spread with the tings needful for the physical man.

None however presumed to touch these good things until led by Rev. C. C. Harrah in prayer and thanksgiving for the mercies of the past, and also in seeking the blessing of Heaven on the present provision of his bounty. Then all with a hearty good will partook of the repast. The proprietor of the house may have been led to think that this was the first square meal his guests had received for some time; rather let him remember that a fine meal well spread will always tempt the appetite.

Supper over, we listened to a paper read by Miss May Aydelotte, the daughter of Ballinger Aydelotte, one of our oldest and most revered members. This father, though well up in the eighties, prepared the paper giving of his early experiences in the forties when he first came to this country. Judge Winslow, Capt. C. Lamb and Rev. C. C. Harrah each spoke in highest terms of the character of the early settlers of this community. Col. Wm. R. Manning spoke feelingly of his early life in the vicinity of Newton, relating a few of his terrific experiences, hair breadth escapes etc.; as for instance, at one time while breaking prairie, he jumped square over two yoke of oxen to save himself from being devoured by a hungry Boa Constructor or Bull Snake, one or the other. Again he told us of his early life in this country as a farmer. One season, especially, was he after much hard labor and toll rewarded with a fine crop and large, which after great difficulty he succeeded in delivering in the markets of Newton; but the merchants and citizens generally, taking advantage of his youth (not verd[ancy]), had his whole season's crop away from him and he was found wending his way home with one dollar and fifty cents in his pocket, fully determined that he would forever abandon the business of farming. Since which time he eats watermelons with great tears in his eyes.

The following persons were elected officers for the coming year, viz.: Joseph Bowker, President; Mrs. Nancy Rickman, Vice President; Mrs. John C. Wilson, Secretary.

Meeting closed with prayer and all returned to their homes in good season, glad for the opportunity of another meeting together.

Page 14 – Newspaper clipping, page dated 1895

Newton's Pioneer Settlers
Banquet At the Lambert And Talk of Old Times.

About fifty old settlers of Newton, met at the Lambert House last Wednesday evening in answer to invitations to attend the Old Settler's annual meeting. After friendly greetings, all marched to the dining room at 8:30, where they enjoyed a bountiful supper that had been prepared for them. After supper the company was called to order by the President, Geo. T. Anderson. Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

Ballinger Aydelott, the oldest settler present, present a paper, giving his first experiences in the county. The paper was read to the company by Mrs. May Aydelott and was as follows:

"In company with Jacob Bennett, of Jefferson county, I came to Jasper County in 1845. We reached what is now known as Elk Creek, on that twenty second of March, in the grove near by what called Hixson Grove. Here three hundred Indians were camped. They were the Pottawattamies, with John Green, chief and the Masquaquas (who were the Sac and Fox tribes consolidated) with old Poweshiek as their chief. We camped at Hixson's spring and had a great deal of fun with the Indians. The weather had been warm for two weeks and where the prairie had been burned the grass looked green, the Indian ponies could live in the sloughs and there seemed to be hundreds of them everywhere. We started out the twenty-third to look over the country, when we came out of the timber we saw a rather dim trail, but we could follow it easily. Bennett said it was not made by Indians for they always travel single file and this was double; made by two riding side by side. We found out afterward it was made by dragoons passing from Fort Des Moines to Iowa City. It was called the dragoon's trail for a number of years and was the main traveled road through the county. From east to west it run on what is now the alley south of Main street, and was to be seen there long after Newton was located.

It was a very warm day for the time of the year and the air was full of geese, ducks, swans, brants [added by transcriber from the American Heritage Dictionary: "any of several species of small, dark-colored geese of the genus *Branta*, especially *B. bernicla*, breeding in high northern latitudes and migrating south in the autumn"] and sand-hill cranes, the music they made was delightful. It sent a thrill through me that I have felt but few times in my life. I said to Bennett, I will pitch my tent somewhere in this neighborhood, I did so and it has been my home since that time. We followed the trail until we were about where Geo. Davis' house stands, when we saw a number of Indians together about where Wm. Armstrong lives. We went to them and found old "Clink" from Jefferson County, selling whiskey. There were forty or fifty Indians, men and women. Bennett knew Clink and traded what whiskey he had left for a pony. Soon after we arrived he hitched to his wagon, took his pony and left. He was afraid we would arrest him, which we had the right to do, but we would be required to take him to Fort Des Moines or Iowa City. We did not come here to do that so let him go. The Indians cut hazel brush, tied the ends together with buckskin strings then rolled the barrel on to the brush, tied it fast, then with a raw hide rope tied to this and the horn of one of their saddles they were ready for transportation and away they went whooping and yelling, Indian file, the drunkest behind. They had quite a village down by Cherry Creek, three quarters of a mile below where the bridge is on the Des Moines road. We followed on out to their village, but as so many of them were getting drunk, we thought it best not to stop long.

We crossed Cherry creek and followed the trail to the place where Sam Hickman afterward settled. Here we found a post four feet high to the left of the trail which we examined and found it was the boundary line between the whites and Indians and we were not allowed to cross to settle. Bennett had a pocket compass so we went north until we found two more posts. I said this place suits me, I will settle here; it is the place where Zeph Blakely now lives. Bennett says "let us go back to the big spring to-night and look over the timber, we did so and next day we concluded to settle on this creek. In making out our claims we had to cross the creek several times. I said, what is the name of the creek? He said 'it had no name.'" Let us call it Elk Creek. From that time on it has been called by that name. A few settlers came in the fall of '45 and a few more in the spring of '46. Emigration came in so slowly the first several years we thought it would not be settled very thickly in one hundred years.

I have written to some length and I might go on and describe how we lived in our log cabins; how they were built with continental fireplaces and bedsteads, with puncheon floors and clabboard doors with the latch, string always hanging out. I might tell of some of our meetings; I will mention one that was dismissed without the benediction, in consequence of bees stinging the preacher and congregation, but enough for now." B. Aydelott.

Judge Winslow spoke an eulogy of the character of the early pioneers of Newton and vicinity.

Col. Manning gave his recollections of early days, his parents having come in in 1854 and settled near North Skunk river and lived the first summer in a log house without windows or a swinging door. Their nearest

neighbor lived a mile away and the next one two miles. He describe the early improvements in Newton and said that when Hunter's residence, opposite the McCardell shop was built, it was the best house in town, and considered quite a wonder in its day.

Mr. John C. Wilson read an excellent original poem.

Capt. Lamb gave a number of interesting reminiscences. He settled in Newton in 1850, when they were but thirteen families in the town and spoke highly of the early settlers, and of their enterprising tact. In company with L. L. D. Kennedy he drove here from Indiana, and did not cross a single railroad.

Rev. C. C. Harrah said although away from here for many years he had always considered Jasper county his home. His father had come west in 1846, and bought land in the vicinity of Newton. He also spoke highly of the character of those who had laid the foundation of the commonwealth. A point he made was that the early settlers were in favor of temperance and sobriety, and when at an early date a proposition was voted upon whether the people of Iowa should have open dram shops or prohibition, every county in his recollection, with the exception of one voted in favor of temperance and sobriety. In this respect he was proud that our grand state was not like here sister states, Ill., and Mo. His brother and brother-in law laid out the Hartzell's addition to Newton, and his father's house was the first one built on it and the finishing lumber he helped to haul from Davenport.

The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted in the following officers: President, Jos. Bowker; Vice-Pres, Mrs. Nancy Rickman, Sec., Mrs. Wilson.

The following is the list of those present:

Name	Where From.
Ballinger Adelott	North Carolina
Miss Mae Adelot	North Carolina
George T. Anderson	Ohio
Mrs. G. T. Anderson	"
Henry L. Kiisel	Sweden
Mrs. H. L. Kiisel	Maine
Mrs. James Wilson	New York
Miss Addie Wilson	New York
Caleb A. Lamb	North Carolina
G. W. Taylor	New Jersey
Mrs. G. W. Taylor	New Jersey
Mrs. J. C. Housel	
J. L. D. Kennedy	Kentucky
Mrs. J. L. D. Kennedy	Kentucky
Mrs. Mary Richmond	
Albert Lufkin	Main
J. L. Mathews	Indiana
Joseph Bowker	England
Mrs. Joseph Bowker	Ohio
John C. Wilson	Pennsylvania
Mrs. J. C. Wilson	Ohio
Mrs. Myra Vaughan	
W. R. Manning	
Mrs. W. R. Manning	
H. S. Winslow	
Mrs. Winslow	
Mrs. H. D. Winslow	

C. C. Harrah
Mrs. C. C. Harrah
J. H. McCalmont
M. A. McCord
Mrs. McCord
J. B. Owings
Mrs. Owings
Gilbert Hall
Mrs. Hall
A. M. Harrah
Mrs. Harrah
W. A. Armstrong
Mrs. Armstrong
C. Griebeling
Mrs. Griebeling
J. H. Fugard
Mrs. Fugard
B. Battles
Mrs. Battles
Mrs. A. Fugard
Aaron Hammer

Page 15 – Handwritten Minutes

May 20th 1895

The Old Settlers Association of Newton met in its annual meeting at the parlors of the Lambert House at 8 p.m.

About fifty were present. After an interchange of friendly greetings, the company marched to the dining room, and enjoyed the supper that had been prepared for them.

After supper President Geo. T. Anderson called the company to order, and the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

Ballinger Aydelotte, the oldest settler present, presented a paper giving his first experience in the county. It was read by Miss May Aydalotte, and was listened to with deep interest.

A telegram of kindly greetings was received and read from Mrs. Springer, nee Miss Skiff, now of Chicago, but family one of Newton's pioneers. On motion Capt. J. L. Mathews was appointed to send a suitable response on behalf of the society.

Judge Winslow and Col. Manning each made a short address, full of incidents of pioneer life, humorous and otherwise.

Mr. J. C. Wilson read an excellent original poem.

After which Capt. Lamb and Rev. C. C. Harrah made short speeches giving many interesting reminiscences of early days, and spoke highly of the characters of those who first settled our community and commonwealth, and of the good results that had been derived from their efforts.

The election of officers resulted as follows: Pres. Jos. Bawker, Vice Pres. Nancy Rickman, Sec'y, Mrs. John C. Wilson.

Adjourned. Jos. Fugard.

[Written along the edge of the page is the following:]

Mrs. Cornelia B. Meyer died July 24, 1895

Mr. David Edmanson died July 26 1895

Page 16 – Handwritten minutes

[The following newspaper clipping is pasted over part of the first paragraph of the minutes.]

The Old Settlers' Society, of Newton, held a business session at the Social Union Rooms last evening. Jos. Bowker was chairman and Mrs. J. C. Wilson, secretary. It was decided to hold the celebration on Tuesday, June 2nd, in C. Lamb's Grove, to meet at 10 a.m., and have a basket dinner at 12 o'clock. The following committees were appointed: On procuring tables, M. A. McCord and Wm. R. Manning; on procuring cups, Mrs. Huldah Longfellow; on preparing coffee, Mrs. Jos. Bowker and Wm. R. Manning; on program, Mrs. Jos. Bowker and A. Lufkin; on invitation, Miss Addie Wilson and A. Lufkin.

Newton Iowa April 14th 1896

. . . the call of the President (Joseph Bowker) . . . of the members of the . . . Association met in the reading . . . The meeting was called to order by . . . , who stated that the principal object of the meeting was that some action might be taken toward the arrangement for our annual meeting. Stating further that inasmuch as the 14th day of May 1896 would be the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of Jasper County and the location of our county seat etc. it might be well to consider the question of holding the annual meeting of the "Old Settlers Association" on the 14th instead of the 31st of May this year in order thus to combine the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the County and town with our annual meeting of the Old Settlers Association. Capt and Mrs. Caleb Lamb having kindly offered their beautiful grove near their home for the purpose, it was on motion decided that the Old Settlers Association hold their annual meeting May 14th, 1896 (during the day) in the aforementioned grove and that the day be celebrated by a grand Pic Nic or Basket dinner.

On further motion it was decided that a committee consisting of the following named persons be appointed to make further arrangements for said celebration, and make report of their doings at a subsequent meeting, Viz: Wm. R Manning, M. A. McCord, Albert Lufkin and Joseph Bowker. On motion meeting adjourned to meet in same room two weeks from tonight being Tuesday night April 28th 1896 at which time the committee of arrangements will report. Mrs. John C. Wilson, Secretary.

Page 19 - Newspaper Clipping

Newton's Semi-Centennial
Meeting of the Old Settlers

Gathering of the Early Pioneers – Interesting Reminiscences of Early Life in Newton –
A Jolly Crowd have a Grand Time

The . . . annual meeting of the Old Settlers' Association of Newton was held in the Armory on Tuesday evening. It had been the intention to hold the meeting in Capt. Lamb's grove, with an old-fashioned picnic dinner; but the rain during the night, and the threatening clouds of the morning, caused the change to be made to the armory.

There were present about one hundred and twenty-five—about the happiest, jolliest and best natured crowd that ever assembled in Newton. If they were nearly all among the "old settlers" of Newton, they forgot for the evening that they were old, and as old neighbors and friends they seemed to renew their youth in the memory of the early pioneer days of our city.

None had been invited who came to Newton since 1856; last year it was limited to 1855. Everthing was delightfully informal, with no set program to mar the enjoyment. All came for a good time and had it, without stint.

Long tables were set sufficient to accommodate all present, and oh, such a supper! The bare memory of it ought to be sufficient to banish hunger for many days. There was nothing of a pioneer nature about it, but decidedly modern. In the center of the room a table was spread and occupied by the honored guests of the evening, the five who had longest been residents of the city, as follows:

Aunt Sallie Springer, aged 85, who came to Newton in 1845, and was the first woman here. She and her husband, Wm. M. Springer, occupied the first house built north of Skunk river. Notwithstanding her age, she has never used glasses, her eyesight being as good as in her younger years.

Uncle Ballinger Aydelott, now 81 years of age, who came to Newton in 1845, and helped lay out the town, of which he tells in a paper read later on in the evening.

Caleb Lamb, 74, and his wife, Olive J. Lamb, 68, settled in Newton in 1850, and all the years since have been closely identified with all the best interests of our town. This was their 54th wedding anniversary, and they were showered with hearty congratulations by all present.

Mrs. Nancy Rickman, 65 years of age, came here with her father, uncle Jimmy Pearson, in 1847, and in 1848 was married to Judge Jesse Rickman, by Ballinger Aydelott, then a justice of the peace. Her husband was killed several years ago in a railroad accident.

The table and its occupants were an interesting picture, the center of attraction throughout the evening.

After the magnificent supper had been fully discussed, the secretary, Mrs. John C. Wilson, read the minutes of last year's meeting and also gave an interesting history of the organization. This was followed by a paper read by Joseph Bowker, so full of interest that we print it in full in another paper full of interesting early history written by uncle Ballinger Aydelott and read by his daughter, Miss May Aydelott, follow this account.

Aunt Sally Springer was called on for a tale, and amid te enthusiastic greetings of her old friends, many of whom she had not seen for years, she came forward and pleasantly responded to their kindly welcome.

Hon. John P. Beatty said he landed in Newton in 1855, stopped at the old Ault House for breakfast, but the grub was so poor that he left and went over to the Springer tavern, kept by uncle Billie and aunt Sallie Springer, and finished his morning meal. He then went up to the "College farm," a new institution of learning under the management of the old Free Presbyterian church. He paid a beautiful tribute to the memory of the Merrills, Vanattas, Shearers, Crawfords, Skiffs, Failors, Parsons, Taits and others of the old pioneers of which was then Malaka township, who labored to make their school a success—a pattern after Oberlin College.

Thos. Vanatta came to Muscatine county, this state, in 1846, and to Jasper county in 1854, settling near the "College Farm." Told of the privations and suffering of the early settlers. Just after he first came into the state, times were hard and necessaries hard to get. Salt was \$25 a barrel, flour out of sight. He gave a hog weighing 200 pounds for a pair of slippers for his wife; and traded a colt, which would be worth today between \$5 and \$10, for 450 bushels of corn.

J. R. Mershon spoke of the great immigration into Iowa in the early fifties, and of the vicissitudes of the emigrant in crossing sloughs, bottoms and over the wild and boundless prairies. When he came to Newton we had to go forty miles to mill, and all goods, provisions and everything else had to be hauled from either Davenport or Keokuk.

A. J. Logan's father came to Davenport in 1838, when Jack was an infant, and he published the old *Iowa Sun*, the second newspaper ever published west of the Mississippi. Jack told of the grass on the Mississippi bottom in the early days being as high as the ceiling of the armory, having failed to notice that it meant 20 feet. The crowd cheered and laughed, when Mrs. Logan arose to explain that her husband had lived for awhile among

the Democrats of Louisiana and learned to lie. But Jack stuck to his text, and Will Manning, Albert Lufkin, Jack Osborn and J. R. Mershon told yarns equally as improbably (and as true no doubt) which left a question as to who was the champion prevaricator of the evening.

W. R. Manning related interesting incidents of his boyhood, over forty years ago, when Charlie Kapple, who drove a stage in those days, was the embodemint of all that was great, in Will's eyes. Also referred to Joe McCalmont, the McCord boys and others who drove teams carrying goods of all kinds from the Mississippi river.

A. J. Osborn had eaten too much and didn't feel much like talking. Came here first in 1853; the winter was so warm and pleasant as to captivate him with our climate. Returned to Ohio and told his young wife he had found a land of perpetual summer, where one could be out of doors and wear slippers all winter. In 1856 he moved his family here. The first winter was a terror to the settlers – snow storms and the mercury away down "below Cairo," giving Mrs. O. ample opportunity to twit her husband about his "perpetual summer" yarn. Finding the snow drifted into their humble home, and all nature covered by many feet of "the beautiful," in the morning she would greet him with, "Come, Jack, get up and put on your slippers."

Col. Meyer came here in 1856, the year of the great Mormon emigration through to Utah. He talked of the great advancement made in schools, churches and civilization generally, since those early days.

A. Lufkin, the originator of the association, made a good talk, full of amusing incidents, and gave a tall grass story as a companion piece to that of A. J. Logan.

The following officers were elected for the coming year: Wm. R. Manning, president; Mrs. Lucretia Lister, vice-pres.; Joseph Bowker, secretary.

A collection was taken by Milt McCord, after one of his funny preparatory speeches, and then the crowd dispersed bidding each other a hearty farewell for another year.

[Hand written below news article]
Amount of collection. \$6.68

Disbursed as follows.

Will McMurry for rent of hall	\$3.00
A. M. Hough, rent of dishes	.80
Journal officer for print	1.75
Post master for stamps	.43
Fred Jackson delivery of invitations	.35
Joseph Bowker oil	<u>.35</u>
Total	\$6.68

The drapage bill is still unpaid, and nothing in the treas.

Sarah J. Wilson, Sec.
June 9, 1896

Page 20 - Handwritten minutes

Churchill House Parlors June 2nd, 1897

The annual meeting of the Old Settlers of Newton was called to order by the President Wm. R. Manning promptly at 7 o'clock P.M. and the members present 45 in number, proceeded immediately to the Dining room and partook of a sumptuous banquet prepared by Newton Host and Hostess Mr and Mrs Churchill, which was a credit to the pleasant Hostelry so favorably noted for such repasts.

After an hour spent so enjoyably, an informal program was presented commencing with Alber Lufkin and Geo T Anderson giving a personal account of the primitive manner of life in the early cabin homes where they commenced housekeeping. Bro. Lufkin was accused of being a bloated aristocrat for presuming to live in a house that boasted of a panel door for an entrance, and Bro Anderson starting in a loft which he prevailed on a more fortunate letter to add to his diminutive house, and in which he not only lived, with a dry goods box for a table, but kept a boarder. Contrasting these things, with the elegant surroundings of the most of Newton's newly married couples of the present day.

Wm. R. Manning told of his early experiences of the hard times and trials of the farm boys of those days winding up with the account of a wonderful snake killing, 13 feet long and six inches in diameter but failed to tell us which was measured, the snake or the account.

A. M. Harrah then told his Snake Story quite as probable as the former, and wound up with interesting incidents of his childhood in the new country.

W. G. Clements favored us with a speech in which he worked out the idea that the **[Page 21]** people of the present day were very ungrateful when they talked of hard times, even when compared to years from '55 to '65. The present generation of young people just entering upon the stage of action know comparatively nothing of hardships. O. C. Meredith told of the location of his father's family at Lynn Grove in the old days and V.W. Skiff excused himself on account of undue stress upon his digestive apparatus.

H. C. Efnor, coming to the county in '52 gave an interesting account of a trip to Red Rock Marion Co to mill, being instructed not to return without his grist, made an 11 days trip of it, and came near losing it at the crossing of the South Skunk, which in those days was only effected by fording, and how after his return the whole neighborhood was appraised that the flour had arrived, and the regular diet of corn pounded and made into cakes was exchanged for wheat bread. He then gave us a snake story as a match for the others, how having no cook stoves in those days the first one not having yet been brought up from the river. His mother was preparing the meal at the primitive fire place when the black log which had been some time on the fire and which proved to be hollow gave out a bundle of snakes which had thawed out and made things quite lively for some time to the great damage of the prospective supper.

Abe Carrier gave an account of his early hardships in a new country and from which he finally emerged into a prosperous citizen by his connection with the enterprise and progress of our beautiful city and county.

Fred Eaton told of his early journeying between Newton and the Eastern border of the state and rather got the joke on Albert Lufkin in his account of putting up with Bro. Eaton at his former Cabin home.

Page 22 – continued

James Lister made some extended remarks about the early manner of supplying some of the necessary provisions of life to the early pioneers before the days of Armour and Cudahy with their many improved, and sometimes, too much improved methods. Rev. C. C. Harrah who had previously been called away to perform a very modern wedding ceremony, returned and gave us a brief but very interesting talk of how the anticipations and hopes of the old days when we and the country were both young stimulated us to nobler efforts, and resulted in building up many characters, and thus incidentally helps out and filling up our happy and useful lives.

The next thing in order was the election of officers for the ensuing year which resulted unanimously for Caleb Lamb President, Geo T. Anderson Vice Presd, Joseph Bowker Sec & Treas.

Father Aydelotte not being able to be present . . . with a paper which he had prepared on the Indian Scare of the earliest days. (The day having been an unusually cold and threatening one – many of the oldest settlers

were absent.) G. G. Clements gave a glowing tribute to the worthy and honorable record of Father Aydelotte's life in our midst from its very earliest days to the present time and proposed a vote of sympathy and well wishes **[Page 23]** for many future and happy years to the old veterans Mr. Aydelotte, Mrs. Sally Springer and Mrs. Rickman and others, which was passed unanimously. The Sec'y then briefly told of the dead of the past year. Mrs. Nancy Hunter, Mr. J. C. Hunter, A. J. Osborn and C. L. Connelly after which the 51st anniversary of the settlement of Newton was brought to a close with many hopes for very many more such joyous occasions. Joseph Bowker, Sec'y.

Also on page 23 is a newspaper clipping of the death of Mr. Joseph Bowker, who died March 27, 1899.

End of Book

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