

DAVIS COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XIV NO 1

1996

JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH

Davis County Genealogical Society, P O Box 94, Bloomfield Iowa
52537. Regular meetings: Third Thursday of the month , 7:30 PM
Bloomfield Public Library basemant

1996 President: Pat Howk Treasurer: Alice Huffman
Officers V Pres.: D. Sue Spilman Corresponding Secretary:
 Secretary: Lavon Davis Dorothy Goldizen

In order to better cordin~~ate~~te work among researchers, we are asking
you to detach (or photocopy) this section and return it to the
Society. These will be kept on file in the library and published
once a year in the Newsletter. If you need more room, please feel
free to use an additional sheet of paper.

SURNAMES BEING SEARCHED

Name: _____

Address: _____

NOW IS THE TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 1996. DUES ARE \$7.50

NAME; _____

ADDRESS: _____

QUERIES

Seek NUSBAUM, AUGSPURGER, BLASI in Pulaski, Davis Co. IA area.
Michael D Lacopo, DVM 10525 Red Pine Dr. Granger, Indiana 46530-
7529.

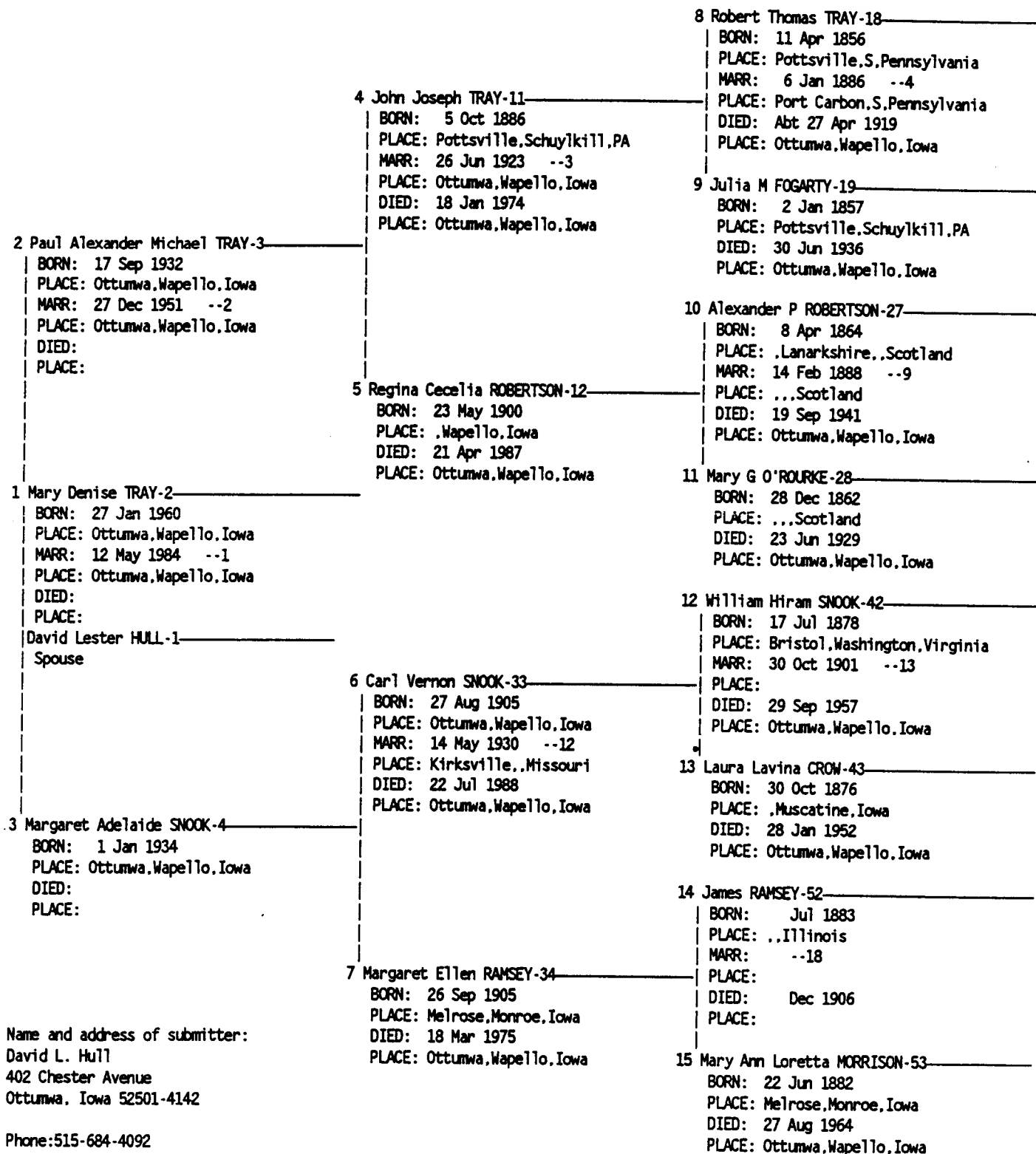
Interested in HAGERTY, born 8 June 1904, Floris IA. Also BROOKS
in same area. Maxi Anderson 10208 Maple Dr. Pasco WA 99301.

Seek WHITE, William BARKER, family , Grove Twp Davis Co. IA
Wanda Flint 106 Eagle Point Rd., Cross, SC 29436-3204.

PEDIGREE CHART

20 Nov 1994

Chart no. 1

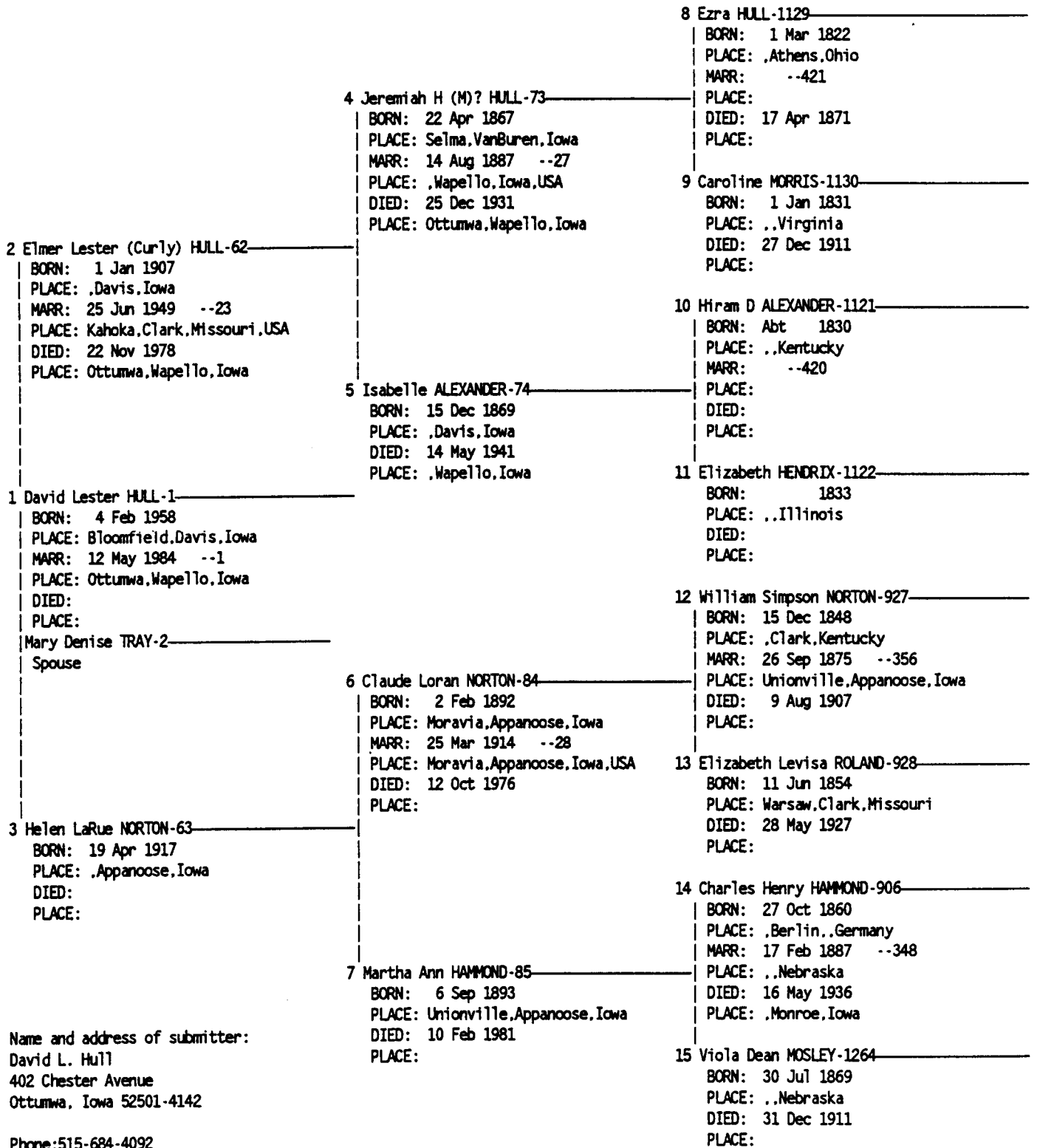


Name and address of submitter:
 David L. Hull
 402 Chester Avenue
 Ottumwa, Iowa 52501-4142
 Phone: 515-684-4092

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Town Of West Grove Long Ago

West Grove got its name from an old horse thief who was hanged a short ways north of the town, his name was Grove.

Now come along with me we'll go across the road, (we are at the school house now), Now all of Egberts barn lot was a huge pond., there was a brick kiln where they made brick and a big grain mill over where people took their grain to have it ground as everybody raised their own grain for their bread. There was a big waterwheel that ran the mill and about one fourth of the pond was fenced off so we couldn't get in this big wheel. but the rest of it we could skate on and everybody ice skated in those days.

I have gone with my wonderful old Grandfather to this mill, he'd back up his wagon to a platform and unload his grain and when it was ground they'd reload it for him.

Then to my understanding the long part of the house setting here west of the school house was the first lumber school house. More has been added on.

Oh! It wasn't the first school house West Grove had, the first one before my time was a log one. There was another house south of it, then on down the railroad track west, where Debbie keeps her ponies was a different house and oh such a beautiful place, all flowers and children. This old house had a fireplace to cook in. Then come along west of that house was a new house where a young fellow had prepared for his new bride , a neighbor girl, finally the old house was torn down and the new house worked into the house that stands there today.

We are still going west to where the house stands out there on the south side of the railroad. There was a lovely old white house and so many pretty flowers and fruit. Now here we go across the railroad. Are you all following? There's lots to see if you could only see it with my eyes.

Right west of where the crossing goes over to this house sit a wonderful nice Wabash depot. An Oh, such a busy place as there were 8 passenger trains daily. Hauling passengers, mail and express that was besides all the freight trains as the Wabash used C.B. & Q. track from Moulton to Ottumwa and the C.B.&Q came on at Bloomfield. Then wondered off to Missouri from Moulton. You see there were no automobiles and no way to go anyplace of any distance only by train.

This depot was landscaped and was a very pretty sight when the flowers were out.

Now beginning with Mrs. James there was a house on that corner then, a and old house where Mrs. James lives. Then a big saw mill across the road from Rick Harper's south where the farmers for miles around brought their logs to have their own lumbers sawed to use for their buildings. Now back up and across the road north from Mrs. James house there in that corner sat a nice little white Christian Church. Now on down to Rick Harpers house, that was a little house and the old fellow who lived there kept a horse and buggy, and would drive the salesmen to Drakesville, Mark, Monterey or Bunch as I have mentioned no cars and no way of getting from one train to another.

Now we'll go across the road and go over to Ralph Harris. That was the Wabash depot and do you know one room upstairs has murials on it, but papered over now, one of the boarders years and years ago painted them on his room while he boarded there. Then in the corner east of Ralph's was our own C.B.& Q depot. The house that sits south of the tracks was moved from north of the depot over here.

Now here we all go back up to the highway and Flossie Robinson's. There was an old veteran living there. Of course a different house. Then a small house where Rev. Tan lives east and across a bridge and barns and so forth and on the corner north of Pam Wests was another nice old home. Destroyed by fire this was an old soldier and was a prisoner in Andersonville Prison. Now its belongs to Bob Barnett and Mable Barnett. There I had some little friends, across the road east and where Arnolds live my Grandfather lived, then east was another house and on that corner West of the lumber yard was big poultry packing the days work in barrells with ice, and shipping to Ottumwa. We had ice houses in West Grove as you know there wasn't electricity and no other way of keeping anything. Then across the road where the lumber yards are that whole square was stock yardpens, scales and feed bins. On Sundays and Tuesdays the stock was driven in on foot and loaded out on great big freight trains everybody helping and such a noise. There was a nice home where the park is on the south side between the road and railroad.

There never was any buildings where the township hall now stands but across the road west of anice house in the corner there, then a different one where Morrison's live. Mrs. Arnetts in that southwest corner a very nice insurance office then across west and to Bott's that was the Presbyterian parsonage or up to Goldizens.

There was a Cumberland Presbyterian Church where we all went for years and years to Sunday School. Now here we go down a hill across a bridge and to the house across for Flossie's which wasn't the same house. Here we are coming back down the highway directly north of Mrs. Harpers house sat a big old stage coach Inn where the coaches could unload and feed and water horses and stay the night if need be. Here I must tell you about the Inn. It was 6 rooms downstairs and 3 up. 3 on the north and 3 on the south side, the middle room on the north had a window and door and there's where the people registered. Then on the east of that a great big dinning room and a fireplace. On the west was what you call now the lounge and it was big and spacious and held another big fireplace. Then the kitchen on the southeast, bedroom on the southwest and an open room in the middle on the south ehere the blankets and saddle bags and luggage was kept. Do you know Debbie lives in the Stagecoach Inn. Oh it has been made over for the original so many times that few knew how it originaly was, but I lived ther 70 years ago.

Here we are down to the blacksmith shop and Sowell's where there was an axe handle factory. On across the street in the corner across from the blacksmith shop was a nice little office belonging to the doctor. His home was where Haskells lived then on east the doctors barn as there was no way to make his calls only by horse back or buggy. Then a big ice house, Where Mcmillins live was all maple trees and the people tapped them and made maple syrup in the spring time. There was lovely home facing east on that road that fire destroyed.

Across the road east the post office, Weeping Willow was established June 21, 1852 and closed down after 107 year in 1959.

Then east two nice big stores first there were grocery stores but years later a new store was put up where McMillins burned and on of these handled hardware over the east on was the Old Fellow and Rebecca' lodge.

Over the other the ladies of the Methodist Church used it as their place to serve meals and they had no basement then. All this layed on the north side of your own new park. There was a lovely home in the corner, northeast and across the road east was a big creamery where the farmers brought their whole milk and it was separated and shipped out that evening to Ottumwa, so no spoilage then the haulers returned the separated milk to the farmers on theri way home. All these were destroyed all by fire Sawyers is still as it was when I was growing up and as I told you Wally's home is made from the Inn as they bought it, tore it down and rebuilt it.

Where the church is was the old Presbyterian church the first one in town as I understand it.

Our cemetery was started by a brother-in-law of Andrew Sawyers coming to visit him and passed away they buried him in the cow pasture and that's the start of our lovely cemetery where so many old pioneers now lay sleeping. In later years there was a nice bank and new stores ad then the south side perked up. A big new store, grocery and dry goods , Robinson Brothers. Then the new hardware store and post office, Barnetts garage and a big long Livery stable by the Harris Brothers, then came the lumber yard, Howard & Harper. Now today where has it all gone. There has been some wonderful people in my time down there in the old town and when I visit the cemetery so many of them are there.

Given by Bonnie Harris to the
7th & 8th grade students at the
West Grove School on May 5, 1966.

I will tell you about the first auto I ever saw, In my childhood everybody had big families and the bigger children cared the smaller ones and it was nothing unusual for the older girls to go along the rail fences and get our supply of wild berries, black berries, goose berries, elderberries or what ever was in season. So the neighbor girls and my older sister and our little sister were picking gooseberries north of West Grove and coming from the east we heard this terrible racket we of course thought it was horses running away as that was an every day occurrence in those days. You should have seen us getting ourselves over the fence and to safety. But when it came in sight and started up the hill toward the cemetery it was a high wheeled buggy, no horses. Two men got out and pushed and one drove it up the cowpath of a road. My first auto and Oh! so scared ! How times have changed.

This Iowa Farm Has Been in Same Family Since 1820



A painting of the Brown homestead was done by George Shane in 1959. This picture now hangs in the Davis County Museum. The

frame was made from oak trees grown by the original owner.

Historians who have checked the old records of early settlement in Iowa believe the farm longest in the ownership of one family is a scenic tract of land in Davis County, about 12 miles southeast of Bloomfield. The farm first was claimed through patent rights by James T. Brown in 1820, according to old family and cemetery records possessed by Brown's lineal descendants. This information was supplied by Brown's great-granddaughter, Mrs. Lyle Kruse of Bloomfield, to George Sheets of Iowa City, who made a records survey of Iowa farms in 1958 for the State University of Iowa.

The story of the Brown farm indicates the white man came into the Iowa country in some areas much sooner than is generally supposed. When Brown laid claim to 900 acres in what is now Davis County the land was the prairie and timber hunting ground of Indians, a wilderness which had been observed only by a few trappers who probed westward from the Mississippi into unknown land.

The year Brown homesteaded was the same year the Missouri Compromise was signed. The vaguely defined Iowa region was free territory. This was the year Col. Stephen W. Kearny wrote his account of his expedition across the high grasses and timberlands of a rolling country, the first extensive exploration of Iowa by white men. This was a day when hunters and trappers from Kentucky and Tennessee entered Iowa, the old legends say, because they had heard this was a new country, much like their old homeland. Brown was one of those

who established little camps or rudimentary settlements in a strip of country 10 miles wide, between the forks of the Big and Little Wyaconda creeks, which flow through some of the most picturesque country in southeast Davis County.

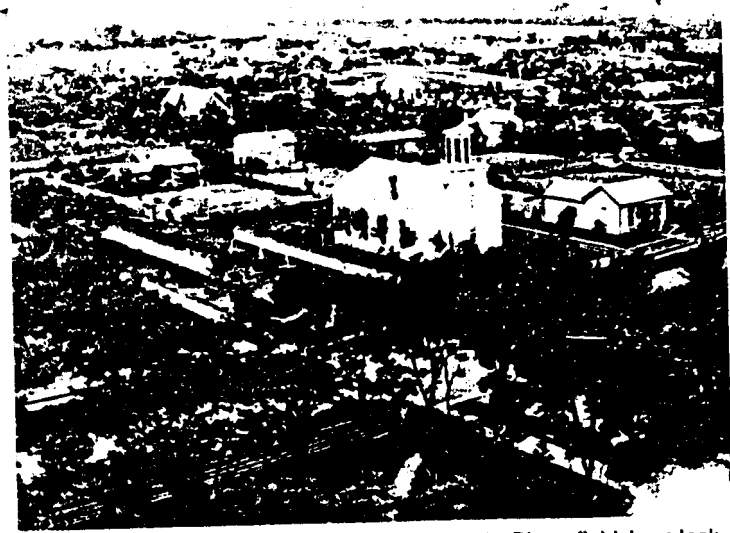
This rough but fertile country became one of Iowa's earliest frontiers and in the years which followed ownership of the land remained in a transitional stage. Early patents issued to Brown were signed by President James K. Polk and President Millard Fillmore. Brown's holdings of 900 acres were divided after his death equally among nine sons. One was William Brown, born in 1841, who was Mrs. Kruse's grandfather. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Osborne Ellis. Her son, who will represent the fifth generation in ownership of the farm, is Charles R. Kruse.

Through the years the scene has changed as timber was cleared for fields and new buildings replaced the old. Frame dwellings followed early log cabins—and the last house, remodeled in 1912, is the last old landmark on the farm today.

During the Civil War guerrilla raiders foraged through the neighborhood and it was down the road past the old Brown home that the James Boys rode after a bank holdup foray into Iowa. History has passed by the old farm, but it paused to make this scene a venerable part.



Photo from old stereo - taken before Courthouse was built, sometime around 1875.



Early photo taken from old stereo, around 1870's. Bloomfield, Iowa looking N.E. from grade school area.

These last two pages are from the 1976 Davis Co. history book that the society is reprinting. The book has a large variety of information about the county in it. Brochure is included with this newsletter. Hurry and order one today.

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