



EAGLE GROVE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Eagle Grove, Iowa

SALUTES THE PAST

SURVEYS THE PRESENT

LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

SOUVENIR
of
OPEN HOUSE

and
EXHIBIT of EARLY EAGLE GROVE PICTURES

FEATURING

WATER COLORS by George Shane

on loan

from the FORD TIMES Art Collection

Sunday, April 12, 1970

from

2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Eagle Grove Public Library

Eagle Grove, Iowa

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OUR HERITAGE

by Robert D. Blue

GOVERNOR OF IOWA, 1945-1949

Every city and country, like every individual, has a distinct personality. Every city and nation has parents and children. All sons or daughters of a city or nation are the products of the heredity they received from the founding fathers of the community and the environment which nurtured them.

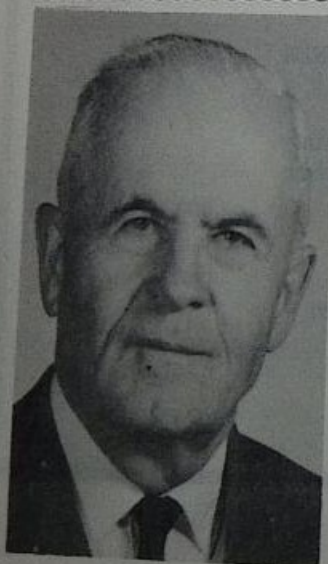
Are you proud of your heritage? You ought to be.

In 1845, the area where Eagle Grove is located was Indian Territory. Ten years later, the first settlers were arriving. By 1875, Wright County had been surveyed and the county map shows a small mark indicating the location of Eagle Grove. Extending across the map was a proposed railroad line. It wasn't until 1881 that the railroad was built and Eagle Grove became viable and alive.

A person must be something before he can do something. So when Eagle Grove became a railroad junction, things started to happen. The city incorporated, streets were laid out and people from all walks of life came to make it their home. It became a frontier community. The people who came to work on the railroad were as colorful and exciting as the characters in a novel. People came to Eagle Grove, but Eagle Grove people also traveled to the cultural and business centers of that day, bringing back news and new ideas.

More than 20 passenger trains a day, loaded with people going north, south, east, and west, passed through the Northwestern station where often three or four passenger trains were standing with their steam engines panting as passengers loaded, unloaded and transferred from one train to another.

In many ways it was an unlikely site on which to build a city. The terrain was flat and in a rainy season the streets turned into a sea of mud axle deep. In and around the city there were ponds and sloughs filled with bullheads, frogs, snakes and mosquitoes.



ROBERT D. BLUE

Governor Robert D. Blue's distinguished career in public service demonstrates his own pride in our heritage as Americans and as Iowans. It includes terms as county attorney, city attorney, state representative, minority and majority floor leader, lieutenant-governor and as governor.

Mr. Blue, an attorney, born in Eagle Grove, has always been one of its most loyal and ardent supporters. Much in demand as a public speaker throughout the years, he has also given generously of his time and energy to many human causes in other ways.

His career of voluntary service to the aging is especially noteworthy: Member of National Board of Hospitals and Homes of the Methodist Church; Member of the Methodist Hall of Fame; Member and Presiding Officer over the Plenary Session of the Federal State Conference on Aging in 1956; Appointed by President Eisenhower as a member of the committee to plan the White House Conference in 1961; Delegate to the White House Conference on Aging; State Chairman of the Iowa Commission on Aging; Vice-president of the National Association of State Units on Aging; and Member of the Advisory Committee on Aging to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

My father told me that he shot ducks in the area where Cal's supermarket is located. A small child was drowned in a marshy area in the block south of the Methodist Church.

A railroad junction doesn't make a city and an unfavorable terrain doesn't prevent the building of one. It takes people to build. It is the nature of good men to build and of evil men to tear down. Good people overcame adverse physical conditions and built Eagle Grove. It is from these people that we receive our heritage.

What kind of people were these men? When Eagle Grove was born, the steam engine was as glamorous as the jet plane is today. The men who came to work on the railroad were a hearty and often an adventurous lot. But civilization and culture have always followed the arteries of transportation, whether they be land, sea, or air.

So along with the railroad adventurers came business and professional men with their wives and families. These men were merchants, bankers, lawyers, doctors, dentists, preachers and teachers who laid the economic, social, religious, cultural and educational foundations upon which this community is built.

The Equality Club sponsored the winter lyceum and the summer chatauqua where politicians and entertainers of national renown were presented and left their impact. A Carnegie Library was built.

In the areas adjoining the city, the Troy Culture Club and the Evergreen Club were providing their contributions to the social and cultural life of the community.

The merchants were providing for the personal needs and the implements of husbandry to make the prairie bloom. The churches were building a moral climate so essential to the making of a well rounded person or community.

Who were these men? I cannot name them all, but such names as Hewett, Paine, Smith, Wright, Fitzmaurice, Miller, Packman, Porter, Keith, Atwood, Fort, McDonald, Baker, McGrath, Morse, Wills, Vaughn, Goldsmith, Armbruster, Spangler, Stryker, Prehm, Middleton, Brisbin, Christenson, Smallpage, Schaffter, Fisher, Cole, Barnes, O'Toole, Parker, Flynn, Odenheimer, Wasem, Moats, Donly, Williamson, James, Yearous, Hallock, McNaughton, Springer, Cowan, Grundy, Ashton, Correll, Wilson, Southwell, Allen, Quimby, Winters, Cantillion, Hall, Buchanan, Howland, Blake, Henneberry, and a host of others come to mind.

What is our heritage? It is the heritage of adventure and of men who had vision; a heritage of culture and education, of decency, morality and friendliness.

Today when visitors from India or Africa come to visit the bean plant, they pay tribute to the vision and business acumen of the fathers of this community.

The Motto, "Head, Heart, Hand and Health" of the 4-H Clubs sprouted and grew in the favorable social and moral climate in this community and has made a world-wide impact.

When students from around the world at a college or university or in schools scattered across the nation, attend a class presided over by professors or teachers who received their early education in the Eagle Grove Schools, they are beneficiaries of the heritage of this community.

The contributions of the sons and daughters of this city have made the world a better place in which to live.

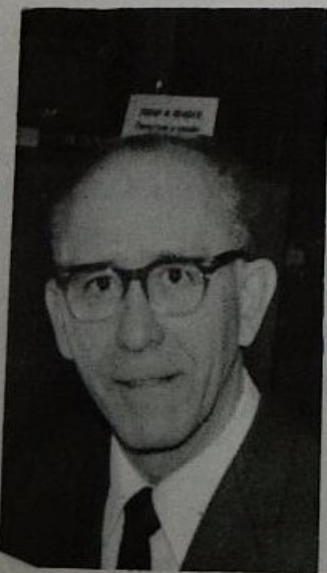
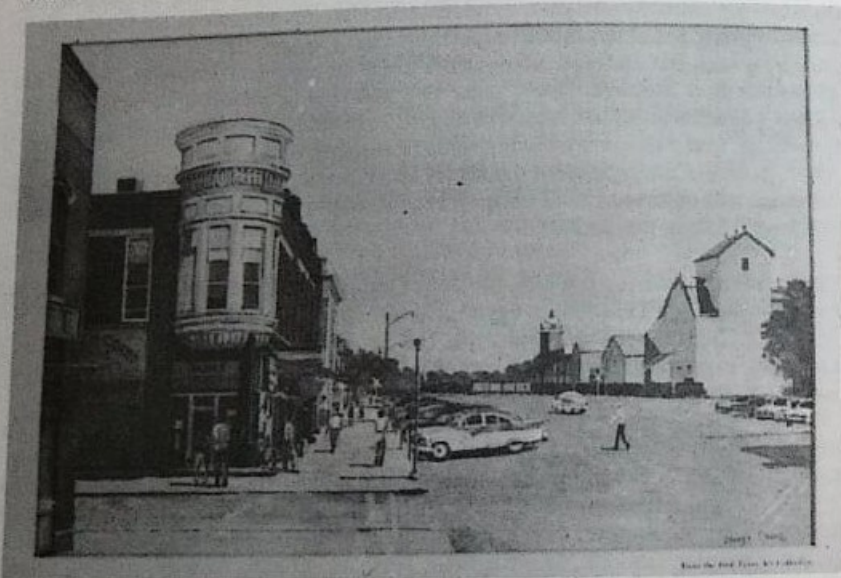
It is a good and a proud heritage.

MY TOM SAWYER STORY

by John Reider

THE TOWN is easy to locate on the road maps of Iowa. A fingertip at the center of the state will almost touch the small dot on Highway 60 labeled Eagle Grove.

Today it is a relaxed place of 4,300 where the corn grows as high as an elephant's eye and even the kids can tell the difference between a Hampshire and a Poland China



JOHN REIDER

John Reider, now retired, has been a lawyer, postmaster, and rural mail carrier in Eagle Grove where he was born in 1905.

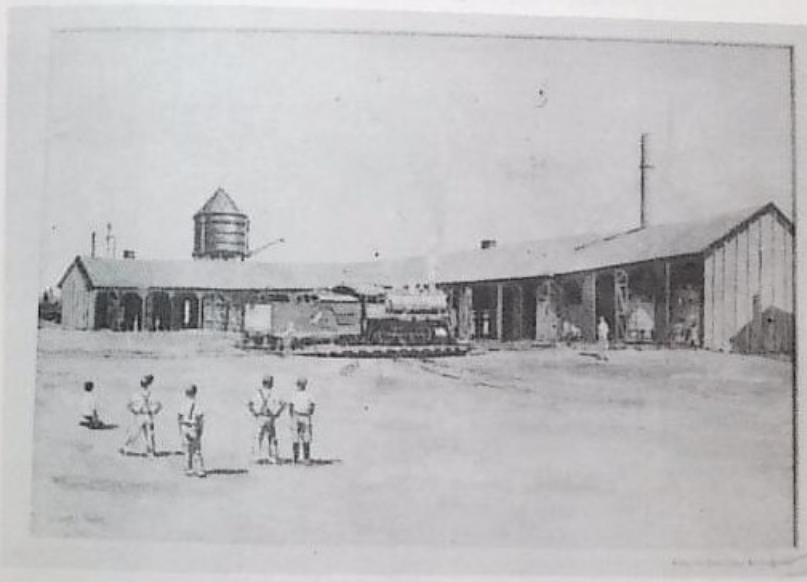
Writing has been his hobby. He wrote "My Tom Sawyer Town" and sold it to the *Ford Times* in 1954. George Shane was commissioned to illustrate it, and Mr. Reider accompanied him when he visited Eagle Grove scenes of the story.

Mr. Shane painted six watercolors, but though *Ford Times* scheduled publication of the story, they did not publish it. *Times* and the content of the magazine changed so that the editor released the original story to Mr. Reider in 1968. He presented it, with the correspondence file regarding it, to the Public Library. In addition to being a long-time patron and library supporter, he served as trustee for six years.

In 1969 Mr. Reider secured the original water-colors on indefinite loan to the Eagle Grove Public Library and the trustees decided to publish the story and pictures as a part of a move to promote and preserve early Eagle Grove history.

But when I was Tom's age "Eagle" was a bustling railroad junction flexing its iron muscles all over central Iowa. Trains by the score rolled in and out of town daily. Business boomed on the Chicago Great Western. It was better yet on the Chicago North Western which maintained division headquarters with a twenty stall roundhouse and everything that went with it. And on the timetable maps Eagle Grove was a splash of black ink not so much smaller, comparatively, than mighty Chicago itself.

EAGLE GROVE boys succumbed early to the lure of the steam engines, and were inclined to measure other boys by the same yardstick. If a cousin from a distant town was mentioned favorably, we were apt to say, "Aw go on. I'll bet he's never even been inside the roundhouse!"



The first visit to that dim, smoky cavern was unforgettable. Stricken giants of the rails stood cold and powerless—wheels gone, vitals removed—while men armed with torches and sledge hammers swarmed over them like ants. Farther around the busy circle they were painted and polished.

And then the moment came when Father, who was an engineer, allowed us to climb up into the cab, to perch on the seat box, to peer anxiously out the windows past the long black snout, and to study the dials, valves and levers that throbbled with waiting power.

No wonder our first game was "Railroad". It was fun to pull an imaginary throttle on the R-1's that grunted upgrade west of town while smoke from the stacks shot high in the sky to boil and swirl like huge black cauliflowers. We counted the cars, memorized the names and speculated on contents and destinations.

Even the sounds were fascinating. The rumble of coal spilling down onto a tender, the smooth whoosh of steam, the clack of telegraph keys, or the far-off mournful wail of a whistle sent delightful small chills down the backbone.

TOM AND HUCK had "The River." We had "The Rails." They were magic pathways through fields, over rivers and mountains, leading anywhere a young adventurer might wish to travel. That's why we liked the passenger trains best. They ventured out into "The World," a place we were eager but fearful to investigate. They

were nimble and quick, and the people in those shiny, banana-yellow cars could be in Ames or Des Moines or Chicago right on time.

Number twenty-four was the favorite. Once in a while my brother and I slipped away from a Run-Sheep-Run game and hurried down to the North Western depot where all was activity and excitement. Passengers left the trains which arrived from West and North to board "24" for the trip to Chicago, or disappeared into the hallowed precincts of the Occidental Hotel, a large frame building sprawled alongside the tracks, with only one small end given over to depot waiting rooms. Important people like opera singers and congressmen were occasional guests, but we kept our eyes open for champion wrestlers or U.S. Marshals.



Mingling with the crowd we enjoyed the pleasant confusion three trains could produce. If we felt daring enough, we would choose a lightly-laden drummer and accost him—"Carry your bags for a nickel, Mister?" Sometimes it worked. We shuffled proudly along through hissing wisps of steam to the end of the train and back up the plank platform to the hotel entrance where Howie Simmons held the door open invitingly. Over the rumble of hand trucks and the brassy clang of engine bells he shouted, "Occidental Hotel-First class accommodations!"

By virtue of the bags, we passed into the oak-paneled, leather-stuffed lobby. This was a part of the World. It was presided over by Mr. Henry Insull who always wore a white tooth suspended from the gold chain across his vest.

We tried the chairs for feel and bounce and slyly let fly at the spotless cuspidors. But a glance from him sent us scampering out to the platform where we lingered until the glowing tail lanterns of "24" faded from sight.

THE TRAINS were the main attraction, but the men who worked them furnished the real dash and zest. Among the more colorful were Johnny McDonald, Sr., "Dude" Tallman and "Josh" Billings. And there was Conductor Belt, man with a past, sometimes kindly, more often acidly sarcastic and always unpredictable. A motherly old lady about to board the train inquired, "Conductor, I am going to Bancroft, Iowa. Is this my train?"

Mr. Belt bowed from the waist. "No, Madam, this is not your train. It is the property of the Chicago North Western Railway Company!"

No one told us what happened next but we resented such conduct toward Grandmas, and in retaliation, when there was nothing else to do, we spied on the Belt house and grounds for clues which might lead to the fortune said to be buried in his back yard.



A BOY LIVES A LOT in his imagination and in that field we had to admit Neil Dunkle, exaggerator delightful. At the time Neil was night policeman and self-acknowledged acquaintance of Buffalo Bill, circumstances which if only half-true lent weight to his words. He loved to hunt. One morning near town he picked up the trail of an elusive fox which he followed all day. At dusk he looked up from his tracking to find himself on the outskirts of Hawarden, 145 miles distant! Neil admitted to us that his famous friend would have been hard pressed to follow him that day!

An hour's hike west of town was the Boone River. Though named after Daniel, it probably wouldn't have looked like much water to Tom except in the spring when overnight it left its banks and rampaged along like a big river. The rest of the time it was a swimming, fishing, dreaming-on-the-bank kind of stream; a refuge from such drudgeries as window washing, grass cutting and rug beating. Horseshoe Bend was for swimming, Cowan's Park dam for carp snagging and Dad Moore's woods for berrying, nutting and squirrel hunting.

Iowa seasons furnished plenty of variety, but for us they were like a red plush carpet unrolling into the next, almost unnoticed, except for the pleasures they brought.

THE FIRST SNOWFALL opened the door on a host of vivid delights ranging from snowballing to ice-skating, and from hopping bob-sleds to snaring cottontails with nothing but a stocking cap. At the end of the day it was just as much fun to sit around the cozy glow of the hard-coal stove and toast your toes on the nickel wings of the burner—if you didn't have chilblains—and eat all the popcorn you could hold.

We loved reading and, after discovering the likes of Horatio Alger and Jack London, we quickly became the Library's best customer and biggest winter-time nuisance. When footracing and marble-playing came again, it was spring. We oiled up the bikes and pedaled to Horseshoe Bend where the new crop of boys were given practical swimming lessons by pushing them off the high bank into six feet of water.



But there were days quiet enough to soothe a mother's nerves. Games like Duck-on-the-Rock and Ante-Over were too much effort. It seemed more appropriate to hang suspended between life and death, with legs scissored on the bag swing, and drift idly back and forth. This strange lassitude usually overcame us when it was time to take lessons on the horn for Dad Lamos' Kid Band.

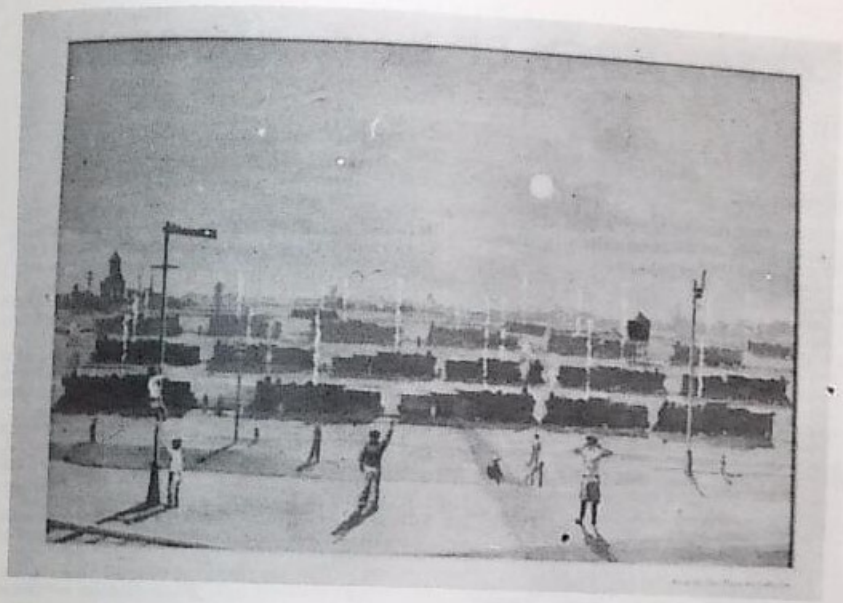
And there were positive days when events stirred us mightily. Like the day the town marshal unintentionally shot a fugitive forger who made a run for it. "Bug" Stedman, "Dutchie" Loughlin, and I finally worked up courage to climb Kubitschek's dark stairway for a quick, soul-searing look.

THEN CAME THE DAY a boy dreams about, a real-life phantasy in which everyone became a boy again. A day of whistles, sirens, bells and shotguns. A wondrous pandemonium of noisy emotion—Armistice Day, 1918!

We joined the parades, official and unofficial, riding up and down main street in Fords, Maxwells and high-wheeled farm wagons, shrilling triumphant insults at the Kaiser.

During the height of the confusion, a noise intruded. We hurried to the North Western depot. There Tom Collins, the hostler, had assembled every available engine, fifteen or twenty in all, fired up a full head of steam and tied down each whistle cord. Other noises faded to a whisper in that tide of sound. The staid old Occidental Hotel rocked under its waves. People said afterward that they could hear it all the way to Woolstock ten miles away.

I'll bet Tom and Huck would have enjoyed that day! We did.



George Shane was at his best when painting such subjects as he chose as illustrations for Mr. Reider's story, "My Tom Sawyer Town." His death in 1969 interrupted an active and successful artistic career.

He had been art critic for The Des Moines Register since 1938. He was a working newspaperman who traveled extensively to report on art activities and general news for his paper.

He was a practicing artist whose favorite subjects were landscapes, small town squares and streets. He was also noted for his painstaking still life compositions.

His awards included first-place in the Iowa Annual Art Show at the Des Moines Art Center and the purchase award at the 1947 Iowa State Fair Salon.

Dwight Kirsch, former director of the Des Moines Art Center, wrote of his work:

"He translates the basic images into paint to recreate a mood or a memory, romantic at times, but reinforced by the strength of reality—."



GEORGE SHANE

CHRONOLOGY OF E. G. HISTORY

- 1846 Iowa admitted to Union: 29th state
1854 (July) William Stryker, first to settle in Wright Co. (Troy Twp.)
1854 (Nov.) S. B. Hewett, Sr., S. B. Hewett, and N. B. Paine settled on Boone River banks in area that became Eagle Grove Twp.
1855 Wright County organized at site of Hewett-Paine cabin.
"Beneath that tent in dog-day heat, Wright County organized complete, and the county judge was county seat." By N. B. Paine (Named for Silas Wright, 12th governor of New York state.)
1855 Eagle Grove Twp. "when laid out as a township there were five hundred wigwams upon it, but the march of civilization extending westward, caused the savage to leave these beautiful hunting-grounds..."
1855 Liberty platted (Goldfield later)
1855 Pair of eagles "at home" in nest, six feet across, high in a very large red oak tree that "towered some seventy feet or more above the bluff" in a primitive grove west of Paine cabin where C & NW Ry. later crossed the Boone River
1856 1st post office in Wright Co. - Fryebrug, Horse Grove, Ia. Twp.
1856 Belmont platted (Crown Point)
1857 Eagles for whom Eagle Grove was named "were shot and killed by a vandal trapper...and the young eagles were left to starve." That winter some boys, coon-hunting "treed some coon" up the old eagle's nest tree and cut the tree down, destroying one of the old land-marks.
1857 Spirit Lake Massacre: Belmont built a mud fort; settlers elsewhere took refuge at Webster City until scare was over
1858 Election held, county seat moved to Liberty, newly-platted as Goldfield
1858 Legendary "wet year" - great hardship to get through winter
1860 1st teacher in Wright Co. - Wm. Middleton (Troy Twp.) Troy Dist. No. 2
1861 1st school in Wright Co. - Stryker school
1861 Eagle Grove post office established at the "grove"
1861 2nd school in Wright Co. - Paine school, Eagle Grove Twp.
1861-1865 Out of only 155 men aged 18-45 in Wright Co., 53 served in the Civil War
1865 Amidst much controversy, county seat moved to geographical center and Grant (later Clarion) created. Courthouse built two blocks east of geographical center to be "above water"
1871 "Duncombe grade," first railroad bed attempt in county - a failure and left to rot
1880 Dows platted (Otisville)
1881 Dr. C. L. Morse, pioneer doctor, walked the railroad grade for the last few miles into Eagle Grove Junction before the tracks were laid. Story told that painters were putting final "e" on depot sign for "Eagle Grove" as he arrived.
1881 (July 7) 1st newspaper, *The Times*, founded by J. C. and A. A. Prehm. (Consolidated with *Eagle Grove Eagle* in 1927)
1881 Eagle Grove platted; railroad tracks laid to junction and boxcar pushed off into swamp for headquarters
1881 Mrs. E. M. Scott and children rode first passenger train into Eagle Grove. (Amy Scott Donly rode the last C. & N. W. one into Eagle Grove in 1954.)
1881 1st school in store building on north side of East 3rd St. (Ryder Hall) Teacher, A. Yearous, paid by private collections, not taxes
1881 Galt platted as "Norwich"
1881 Woolstock platted; traders annually examined and bought from a large stock of wool
1881 (Sitting Bull, Chief of the Sioux, surrendered, July 31, ending an historical era)
1882 Eagle Grove incorporated, E. M. Scott, first mayor
1883 Independent School District organized; first tax support
1883 1st East Side school built; (Moved to present site, 109 N. Commercial, in 1888)
1883 Occidental Hotel built as depot-hotel (The site is now a parking lot east of Central Park; west tracks torn up)
1884 Rowan laid out; named for Rowen family with "e" changed to "a" because of Bowen, Ia.
1884 June tornado wrecked 27 buildings, including Methodist Church (Total damage: \$10,000)
1885 Kate Prehm, 17 years old, edited *The Times*, first woman editor in Iowa
1885 Eagle Grove population: 1,217
1886 West Side four-room school (Lincoln) built on present high school building site
1886 1st high school class graduated in Wright Co. (Belmond)
1886 1st school system combining East and West Side schools
1887 1st brick building erected on West Side (Cowan Block, present LeRoy's Shoe Store)
1888 Garfield (East Side) School built at 218 N. Jackson
1890 Eagle Grove population: 1,881
1890 1st high school graduating class (Eagle Grove) 1 student
1892 Present Wright Co. courthouse built (Cost: \$50,000)
1894 1st electric light plant (Owners: George & James Innes)
1894 1st waterworks plant
1894 Four rooms added to Lincoln school.
1894 1st July 4th celebration
1894 Tornado destroyed Catholic church
1894 Disastrous fire on East Side; business shifted to West Side; "Dublin" lost out to "Boston"

CHRONOLOGY OF E. G. HISTORY

- 1894 Dr. C. L. Morse's campaign for swamp drainage finally succeeded. "The waters receded, giving Eagle Grove a firm foundation on which to build for the future."
1895 1st daily newspaper in Wright Co.; *Eagle Grove Daily Times* (Discontinued in 1906)
1895 Holmes platted
1895 Eagle Grove population: over 3,000
1896 Four rooms added to Garfield school.
1897 1st Eagle Grove class to finish 4-year high school course
1898 Company C, 52nd Regiment, Ia. Infantry Volunteers formed and 25 left from Eagle Grove to serve in the Spanish-American War
1900 Eagle Grove population: 3,557
1901 Sacred Heart school built; (torn down in 1970)
1901 1st high school built (McKinley) (present Fine Arts Building)
1902 1st football team
1902 1st library board appointed
1903 Carnegie Public Library built at 401 West Broadway; dedicated on September 15 with address by Governor A. B. Cummins
1903 1st car in Eagle Grove - a three-wheeler with chain-drive, steered by a stick; proud owner was Dr. E. H. McCall
1905 1st natural gas service
1907 O. H. Benson originated 4-H clubs and emblem; became national; new emblem in 1969
1908 Company K, 53rd Regiment, Iowa National Guard organized
1908 1st hospital opened by Drs. C. L. Morse and W. C. McGrath at 111 S. Lucas; operated as exceptionally well-equipped hospital for the area until Dr. McGrath's death in 1917. Converted to a hotel, presently Eagle Grove's only one: Hotel Eagle
1909 1st high school annual published
1910 Eagle Grove population: 3,887
1912 William Jennings Bryan talked on suffrage in the Christensen Garage (new and unused) to a large crowd - standing room only
1912 2nd hospital opened at 110 N. Lucas by Dr. T. J. O'Toole
1912 Major civic improvements: Out of the mud when brick pavements were laid over sand foundations; first street lights
1913 April 30: Disastrous fire destroyed 20 Eagle Grove buildings including old Armory, Princess Theatre, Odd Fellows Hall, Candy Kitchen, Quaker Oats Mill
1914 Present City Hall built
1915 Five miles of sewer pipes added to first nine laid previously
1917 Approx. 331 from Eagle Grove served in World War I
1919 Clarence Shurtz Post No. 304, American Legion organized
1920 West Side Grade School (Lincoln) torn down; present high school building erected on site
1920 Eagle Grove population peak: 4,433
1920's Railroad division headquarters moved to Mason City; major change in Eagle Grove economy and industry
1928 Eagle Grove Junior College established by Independent School District
1928 First exclusively 4-H District Fair held in Eagle Grove
1930 Eagle Grove population: 4071
1935 Eagle Grove swimming pool built
1937 Occidental Hotel stopped operating as a hotel; torn down in 1938
1940 Eagle Grove population: 4,024
1941 World War II - Many Eagle Grove young men served and gave their lives
1946 Airport Commission appointed
1947 Airport bond issue
1948 Present National Guard armory built; addition in 1951
1950 Eagle Grove population: 4,178
1950 \$1 1/2 million school bond issue
1950 Garfield (Old East Side) school torn down; Lela Howland elem. school built
1951 Gymnasium, shops and heating plant added to high school
1951 New mercury vapor street lights installed in business district and along Comm. Ave.
1952 Lincoln elementary school built at 201 N. Western
1952 Memorial Hall built by American Legion to honor all who died in World Wars I and II
1952-58 Sewage treatment system completed in four stages
1954 Last Chicago and North Western passenger made its run into Eagle Grove
1957 Post Office moved to new building at 119 S. Iowa
1958 Eagle Grove Community School District formed through reorganization
1960 Eagle Grove population: 4,281
1961 Junior High building erected at 1015 NW 2; changed to Middle School in 1967
1961 Public Library joined cooperative, North Iowa Library Extension
1963 Rotary Ann Home built
1965 Old brick pavements resurfaced from the Methodist Church to Fort Ave. Two blocks of original brick remain on Park Ave. on the west side of Central Park
1965 Last Chicago and Great Western passenger and mail trains through Eagle Grove
1966 Eagle Grove Junior College name changed to Iowa Central Community College, Eagle Grove campus; part of new nine-county area
1967 Community College building completed at 318 NW 3rd St.
1970 Year of new census

RECOLLECTIONS

"I remember when....." Magic has invested these words since time began as stories of life in place after place have passed from first to second and third generations.

This brochure is designed to preserve a few representative first-hand accounts of life in early Eagle Grove. It can be a starting-point for personal reminiscences for older residents and a source of information for younger ones.

The ink of most written sources is dim and the yellowed pages crumble. Eyesight may blur and hands tremble, but voices from the past crackle and boom with vitality and humor as they "remember Eagle Grove when....."

EARLY PHYSICIAN

Dr. S. W. Moorhead was one of the earliest Eagle Grove physicians, arriving about a year later than Dr. C. L. Morse. His office was on Fifth street on the East Side. The family then consisted of his wife and two sons, John and Frank. When he was 75 years old, he wrote a series of articles for a newspaper in Keokuk, Iowa. The following excerpts picture life in early Eagle Grove.

The situation as it stood then was to get into remunerative practice as soon as possible. I wrote to a number of postmasters in northern Iowa, requesting information as to the number of physicians and the outlook for a newcomer. Only one afforded me any encouragement.

The postmaster at Mason City wrote me that a new railroad town named Eagle Grove had sprung into existence in Wright county, and it was possible I might find what I was looking for there. "But," he added, "the impression is that the town is flying higher than it can root," and he kindly advised me to be careful. To Eagle Grove I went.

I found a straggling village made up of hastily erected store buildings and residences, most of them incomplete. The site of the town had been a cornfield in July, and I got there in December. Already it had a population of about 1,000. Most of the houses were innocent of plaster, in lieu of which building paper was tacked on to the studding. Many of the houses sheltered boarders as well as the owner's family. To remedy the shortage of bed clothes newspapers were pinned between sheets and quilts, and were highly efficacious in retaining the heat and excluding the cold.

Here and there was a stretch of sidewalk in front of a store, but for the most part sidewalks were conspicuous by reason of their absence. As long as the ground was frozen this didn't matter but when spring came the streets were a good deal like the present time. One noteworthy difference: There were no autos then to pull us out of the mud at from \$3.00 to \$6.00 a pull. The sidewalks were almost as bad as the streets. Most of the men wore rubber boots reaching up to the knees.

NORTHERN IOWAN BLIZZARDS

I don't know how it is now, but in those days they had blizzards in northern Iowa which were the real thing. They usually lasted three days or more, and while they continued it was dangerous to go out of the house. I recall one which was typical of others.

The day began bright and clear and balmy. A few hours later clouds gathered and it began to snow. The flakes were large and soft and filled the air so that one could not see more than a few feet in front of himself. Still later the wind began to blow and it grew colder. Harder and harder blew the wind, and colder and colder it became until the air was filled with small icicles which hurled with force cut hands and face like so many small knives. Coincident with this came utter darkness to add to the terror of the scene and the helplessness of unsheltered man and beast.

Anything caught out in such a storm was pretty certain to perish, perhaps within a short distance of his doorstep.

Often after snowdrifts had formed the weather would moderate and soften the surface of the snow. This was invariably followed in the winter time by freezing temperature, and a crust would form of sufficient strength to bear up a team. Many a time I have driven over fences up to the door of houses and thought nothing of it.

DELIGHTS OF SPRINGTIME

With the coming of May and June the trials and discomforts of winter were forgotten in the enjoyment of the delights of the spring and summer seasons. In all its course the sun never shone on a fairer scene than those prairies presented at that time of year. Miles and miles of blue-stemmed prairie grass greeted the eye in all directions. Relieving the monotony of the green were millions upon millions of the bright blossoms of wild strawberries. Here and there along the streams and sometimes on the open prairie were wild plum trees whose bloom filled the air with never-to-be-forgotten fragrance. It was pure delight simply to live amidst such surroundings.

CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

Fred G. Brisbin, born in Eagle Grove in 1865, has lived here all of his life, presently at 304 S. Commercial. He attended school here, farmed, delivered milk, and ran a meat market, but is probably known best as a long-time stock buyer.

Fred Brisbin says: I remember my fourth birthday on July 28, 1869, as clearly as yesterday. We lived on a farm just east of Greenwood Park. My father took my sister, Lucy, and me down to the main road to watch the circus come to town. It was the famous, one-and-only Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus arriving in about 10 horse-drawn wagons from their Clarion stand of the day before. Almost all of the horses were dapple-gray. I can see them and the elephants yet. It took ten or twelve horses to pull the pole-wagon.

They came to Eagle Grove's Greenwood Park every two years on the same date regularly after that until about 1911. Each time we usually went to the afternoon performance rather than the evening one because right after supper they took down the cook tents, and then the horse tents, loaded them in wagons and started them on the way to be set up first at the next place. Watching that and all the animals in the tents around the Big Tent was a show in itself.

The whole circus toured Europe on the years in between coming here. They had never been charged for water in Eagle Grove, but one year the city charged them \$100. Ringling Brothers said they would never come back, and they didn't. They went on to Fort Dodge instead and hundreds of people from here went by horse-and-carriage, often rented from the livery stables, to see the circus every time it performed. Some rode the trains.

A FIRST AUTOMOBILE RIDE

Amy Schwenck Vorre's grandfather, Hyacinth Schwenck, came to the home where she has lived for 30 years just three miles west of Eagle Grove in October, 1872. The family came from Minnesota by covered wagon. Amy's father, Charlie, helped his seven brothers and sisters drive the stock along the way. They all lived in a log cabin until 1877 when they built the present house.

When asked about early memories, Mrs. Vorre responded immediately.

I have a very vivid picture of my first automobile ride. As I look back, it must have been about 65 years ago. Mr. Fitzmaurice, president of the Merchant's National Bank, lived where the county home is located now. Many mornings in the spring of the year, he would drive out toward the Wasem bridge and perhaps on to the Derscheid school house and then return the same way.

I, a timid, freckle-faced little country girl, would come up the road from my home south of Rose Hill cemetery on my way to school. This particular morning that I remember was pure delight—warm sun, meadow larks singing, grass in the field stirring in the breeze. There I came with books and dinner pail swinging gaily along!

Mr. Fitzmaurice saw me, stopped and asked if I would like to ride! I could hardly believe my ears, but I climbed up on the seat beside him, sitting still as a mouse but bursting with pride and joy. Me, Amy, riding in an auto—and with a banker!

Often after that, he would wait if he saw me coming and proceed to drive me up to the schoolhouse. The other kids were "green with envy." They wanted a ride but he just drove away. Years later he came back for a visit and inquired about me.

BROADWAY CEREMONY

Ida Belle Cole Fisher came to Eagle Grove with her family in 1882. Her father, Henry Cole, was an early teacher here. She has had a long civic and school-related career in Eagle Grove and still answers accurately, and without hesitation, questions concerning almost anything of early history. She has lived at the Rotary Ann Home almost since it opened in 1963.

Always an avid reader, she still reads by "listening." An Equality Club member since 1896, she helped to start the public library, and was a long-time member and president of the board. She was the "write-in" candidate in one rousing school board election and served many years, even acting as superintendent in one emergency.

Mrs. Fisher has been one of the most popular speakers on Eagle Grove lore through the years. She often departed from her written notes to tell her favorite story strictly "off the record." She has finally allowed it to be placed on the record and here it is:

We were very dignified in early days, and we were very civic-minded. Fannie Filkins was president of Equality Club when we had a fountain placed at the Merchants National Bank corner. We were especially dignified and proud the day that we gathered for a little ceremony to watch Mr. Carlton from the waterworks plant turn on the water.

It was no ordinary fountain. We were also very humane. It had a place at the top for people to drink, and a bowl up a way from the bottom for dogs to drink.

The ceremony was completed and we all turned to go when Fannie, the most dignified one of our whole group, saw a dog headed in our direction. She said, "Oh, look, here comes a dog. Let's wait and watch him take the first drink."

The dog stopped at the fountain, but he didn't drink!

WAR VETERAN IS VETERAN SCOUT

Howard V. Schoonover, born in 1880, almost a life-long resident of Eagle Grove, is probably best-known today as a Spanish-American War Veteran. In his business, he was predominantly associated with foods in some way, selling them in a restaurant, at retail and as a traveling representative for wholesalers. Though retired, he is still much in demand as a speaker.

He started the Boy Scouts in Eagle Grove in 1911. As he recalls, only one person offered some help. Mrs. Belle Miller, librarian, offered the library meeting room but fifty boys needed more room.

She was able to help though by letting the boys do some volunteer work for her. Mr. Schoonover says that he can still see a detail of eight boys from the East side marching down Broadway in their official uniforms on their way to the library. The uniforms cost \$1.98, wholesale, at Leuthold & Hinkleys and consisted of canvas leggings, laced-below-the-knee khaki trousers, wool blouses and World War I-style campaign hats.

LONG-LIVED FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Lewis E. Wilson, teacher, school board member, state representative, funeral director, is the only living past president of the Iowa State Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association, to name only a few of his activities. He is currently compiling a history of Eagle Grove.

He says that in 1902, little did he realize that Eagle Grove would be his home for the next 68 years. His moving to the "large" town from a Nebraska cattle ranch and attending a "large" school remains in his memory as "most thrilling." He thought that the two young girls who served his first breakfast in Eagle Grove were the prettiest he had ever seen. These girls are now Mrs. Fred Cotton and Mrs. Frank Hall. His family stayed temporarily at the Revere House, run by Mrs. Bowes, John Henneberry's grandmother.

UNEXPECTED DUNKING

Mrs. E. A. Howland and her husband ran the Cadwell House, first hotel. She told that the sidewalks were "literally up on stilts, the sidewalks were three and four feet high on Broadway. The streets were not lighted and one night during a hard rain, she and her husband both fell off a sidewalk into two feet of water." (Their daughter, Lela, graduated from high school in Eagle Grove and served the schools as teacher and principal for 43 years. Lela Howland school is named to honor her.)

No Turn Signals

J. W. McGrath, pioneer lawyer and father of Evert and Earl McGrath, related that the high sidewalks gave him difficulty after dark also. He "turned one night before the sidewalk did and fell into a ditch, along side." He cut his nose and face severely and, after that like his "good friend, Diogenes....went about after dark carrying a lantern" and, in his words, "sporting a Hebrew nose."

A PLUG FOR 50-50 MIX

A. H. Barnes once reported that "There was a man over on 5th street, ostensibly running a drug store, but his merchandise was mostly confined to a barrel which when he purchased and began business was full of well ripened 'ol bourbon."

Howard Schoonover elaborates by telling that J. Johnson, old Civil War soldier, ran errands for Smith's drug store. Part of his duty was to make regular trips to the round house to fill a five-gallon jug with condensed steam—the only genuine soft water in town. It was used for "medicinal" purposes and was handy for the man who did the mixing which involved his original barrel. The "mix" consisted of a 10-cent plug of chewing tobacco and a 50-50 proportion of soft water and 80-grain alcohol.

By this method, the original stock "never lost in flavor or grew in quantity less" as Mr. Barnes had put it.

THE HEDDON HOME

When the Northwestern Railroad was being built, it might have gone through Goldfield, but Mr. Hewett gave the ground for the railroad yards, depot, and the Occidental Hotel. Therefore, that was the beginning of the West Side of Eagle Grove.

Mr. Hewett also gave the city the street called Broadway and designated that it be built very wide. It was he, too, that gave Eagle Grove Hewett's Park—and asked that no saloons be built in this city. And, of course, there were no beer gardens here until after his death.

By donating so much ground, Mr. Hewett profited because the city grew and, since he owned nearly all the property on the West Side, he profited by selling lots.

His home was very large and still is a lovely place to live. The block south of the Hewett home (now the Heddon residence) was a large front yard. There, where were once the formal gardens, stands the Hobbet place - (905 W. Broadway).

Inside the Hewett home - right in front of the bay windows, was a flowing well. Yes, a flowing well in the living room - a fountain with goldfish and lilies. Of course, those were the days of no sanitary plumbing, so Mr. Hewett had an enclosure built from his large house to the little house in the back.

There was a pond fed by the flowing well to the south of the house, resplendent in summer with water lilies, and used as a skating pond in winter.

A FINE BANQUET TO HOMER A. MILLER

The reception and banquet tendered to Homer A. Miller, banker, last evening by the business men of the city of Eagle Grove was the most fitting testimonial that Mr. Miller can carry with him to Des Moines of the honor and esteem in which he is held.

An even hundred men sat down to the banquet which was served at the Occidental Hotel. Landlord Insel under whose supervision the affair was, had arranged things in perfect order. The tables were set in the shape of a letter "E" and were handsomely decorated with flowers and foliage while the appointments of the table were excellent. In one corner of the spacious banquet hall a platform had been built and completely covered with holly and palm leaves. From this handsome retreat the music of an excellent orchestra, under the conductorship of Prof. Eddie was sent rolling out over the room.

At 10:30 the guests were admitted to the hall. Mr. Miller occupied the seat of honor at the right of the toastmaster with Auditor of State McCarthy to the latter's left. The other speakers were ranged along the head and sides of the table in the best positions to be seen and heard and the other guests took their places quickly at the board.

Rev. F. W. Ginn said a short grace and the banquet was soon at its height. The menu comprised ten courses. It was gotten up in a most elaborate manner and included such a variety of dainties as Eagle Grove has not seen in her history. Mr. Insel personally directed the serving of it and with a large corps of waiters carried forward the work with a master's hand. The discussion of the menu consumed about three hours and was most heartily appreciated by all.

At the conclusion of this part of the evening's entertainment, the rendering of a list of most excellent toasts began, Ralph W. Hayes acting as toastmaster.

TIMES, 1900

TWO MEN LIVE TO 101

W. E. Warnes came to Eagle Grove in 1884 and began a life of service to the community almost immediately as Sunday school teacher, continuing well into his nineties. He served on the library board from 1922 to 1951 even though he retired from the railroad in 1926 after 40 years. He observed once that surfacing Broadway remained as "outstanding in his many years" here.

Mrs. Sara Muhleman reported an "outstanding" event that he couldn't have anticipated. In 1957 when pioneer doctor C. L. Morse died at 101 years of age, in the Friendship Haven services Mr. Warnes "read" from memory "in a beautiful strong and steady voice all of John 14 and told of a few incidents in his long acquaintance with Dr. Morse." She added, "I wonder if any one has heard before of a service where a man 101 years of age was able to assist in services for a friend a few months older than he."

Milliner is General Distributor

Mrs. Margaret Cole came to Eagle Grove in 1882 with her sister and started a millinery store...a profitable business. "There were no clubs and societies and the millinery store was a sort of social center where the news of the community was talked over and prepared for general distribution."

EAGLE RECORD



Telling It Like It Was

(adv.)

New Goods
Low Prices
Dry Goods and Clothing
Hats, Caps, Boots, & Shoes
Ladies' and Gents' Furnishings Goods,
Trunks & Valises
Crockery and Glassware
and Last, but not Least
Groceries

That we can sell at prices that defy competition. We wish it distinctly understood that we will NOT be undersold! and invite the attention of Close Cash Buyers. Farm produce, a Legal Tender for goods.

Yours respectfully,
A. Wright & Son

(Times, 1883)

CARRIE NATION ON DECK

Arrived in Eagle Grove on the Late Train None the Worse for Wear.

Carrie Nation, from Kansas, she of saloon-smashing notoriety and who was scheduled to deliver one of her lectures at the M. E. church Monday evening, failed to arrive until the night train at 9:40. She was at once taken to the church, where a large number of anxious and curious citizens had been waiting since supper time to get a glimpse of the lady who has been in jail eleven times and whose initials spell CAN.

(Times-Gazette 1903)

OUR MERCHANTS

Our merchants complain if a party buys groceries, meats, or goods of any kind, at some other town, but they forget that responsible men of their own town represent the best insurance companies in the world, whose rates are on that account as low as any other company, and insure with a tramp insurance agent, and call it square dealing.

S. B. Hewett and Daniel Fosselman represent the best companies in the world, companies that went through the Chicago fire without trembling—why not secure the best. Rates are made by State board and cannot be under bid by a safe company doing business in Iowa. When you burn out it, the time you want insurance safe.

(Times, 1883)

Please read this—

Do not think our stock the same as last fall. Then we did not know what the people wanted, but now we do, and have a good stock. (adv.)

(Times, 1883)

NEED CREAMERY

Eagle Grove needs and must have a creamery by another year. This thing of sending our cream to neighboring towns to be churned is poor economy, no less than a reflection upon our public-spiritedness and enterprise.

(Times, 1883)

ANSWER IT HONESTLY

Are the statements of Eagle Grove citizens Not more Reliable Than Those of Utter Strangers?

This is a vital question. It is fraught with interest to Eagle Grove. It permits only one answer. It cannot be evaded or ignored. An Eagle Grove citizen's statement is reliable.

An utter stranger's doubtful. Home proof is the best proof. (advertisement for Doane's Kidney Pills sold by Adams & Grubb's drug store, Eagle Grove, which W. C. Royce, carpenter, says, "are a remedy which acts up to the representations made for it.")

(Times-Gazette, 1903)

Library Cornerstone

Hazel Prehm remembers that Maude Lee (Hathaway) was her teacher when the cornerstone of the library was laid in 1903. Her whole class marched the two blocks from school and placed money in the cornerstone. There were many children there.

Sunday Afternoon Stroll

Favorite Sunday afternoon excursion in early days was a stroll to the cemetery on the board walk that extended the entire distance.

ALWAYS MAKE LOVE

to your wife. Remember she is just as sweet and dainty now as when you used to hold her by the hand and look into her eyes and tell her she was your only love, your heart's delight. Half the petulance and distress that makes you so irritable comes from indigestion. You can cure it by taking Dr. Caldwell's Syrup and Pepsin. It is guaranteed by Anderson & Walters. (adv.)

(Evening Times, 1900)

BEADS! BEADS! BEADS!

'Tis Now the Fashion to Wear Beads. Weave Beads and Give Away Beads.

No young man is really popular unless he has a young lady friend who spends her waking moments fashioning for him a watch fob, or some other dainty personal ornament, just such as little feminine fingers can make.

(Evening Times, 1900)

PELICANS IN FLIGHT

September 17, 1903

Irvin Wildin came into town Thursday morning with a couple of birds he shot on his farm the day before out of a flock of about 200. They were full grown pelicans and measured 8 ft. 5 from tip to tip and 5 ft. 2 from tip of bill to tip of tail. The large pouches beneath their bills in which they carry their feed on their long flights were empty....The flock could easily have carried away 50 bushels of grain. L. Fothergill took them into his store where they were on exhibition.

(Eagle, 1903)

NON-RESIDENT TUITION AT \$1.75

Our school board has fixed the tuition of outside students at \$1.75 per month and will draw the line rigidly as to residence. Students who come into town during the school terms for the purpose of attending school will be compelled to pay tuition as non-residents. This action of the board is right and to be commended. The tuition is placed very low and will have to be paid by all not bonafide residents of the district. While our board only charges \$1.75 per month the Des Moines school charges \$4.80 per month in the high school and \$2.80 per month in the grades.

(Eagle, 1903)

"GO WEST, YOUNG MAN"

In 1870, people in Wright County felt, along with most Iowans, the dire need of attracting more settlers, both native-born Americans and foreigners. J. H. Stevenson prepared a typical booklet to present "the many inducements that the West holds out."

Robert D. Blue typed a copy from the original and presented it to the Public Library in 1963.

After a comprehensive, often humorous, account of the history and the "benefits and blessings" possible, a warning was issued "to the idler or the individual who is too much of a gentleman to put his hand to the plow, or who considers himself above earning an honest dollar by the sweat of his brow; or the person who takes the world easy and says it owes him a living and he is bound to have it, work or no work; or the fop who thinks he must undergo the manipulation of the barber daily, who must have his hair artistically dressed, his boots highly polished, his necktie on just so, and his clothes neatly brushed before making his appearance even though his pockets are without a dollar, to all such as these the people of Wright County say, keep away, we don't want you. We have no toleration for any such; it is men who are not afraid to work; men who consider it no disgrace to pull off their coats and go at whatever work they find to do by which they can earn an honest dollar; men with strong arms and willing hands. All such as these will meet with a welcome "all hail," from the people of Wright County—a county destined to be one of the most flourishing counties in the State of Iowa whose past history is one of enviable glory and honor."

Years later, Dr. S. W. Moorhead wrote "Had my foresight been one-fortieth part as good as my hindsight I would have invested my earnings in Wright County real estate. Land around Eagle Grove, anywhere in the county in fact, could then be bought for \$10 an acre."

"Do fairy stories always start, 'Once upon a time'?"

"No, many of them start, 'Mother, I have to do some studying at the library tonight.'"
(Eaglet, 1923)

Humor: (1920 Eaglet)

1st employer: We can't get girls to work in our factory for love nor money.

2nd employer: Well, we're up against it, too, but we've only tried money, so far.

"She claims he was a four-letter man in college".

"He was—Y.M.C.A."

(Eaglet, 1926)

NEVER EXPLAIN! Your friends don't need it and your enemies won't believe you anyway.

(Sup't. C. L. McDowell's office motto)

Passenger: What makes this train so slow? Irate conductor: If you don't like it, get off and walk!

Passenger: I would, only I'm not expected until train time..

COMPOSITION ABOUT LIFE:

Life is a four-letter word. Three-fourths of it is "lie" and one-half is "it."

(Eaglet, 1926)

1st boy: I'm a little stiff from vaulting.

2nd boy: Oh, I thought you were from Vincent!

The latest Scotch football yell:
GET THAT QUARTERBACK.

Man's hair turns gray before woman's. That's known in every clime.

The explanation's easy, for

He wears his all the time.

(Eaglet, 1923)

"Are you the same barber who was here last time I had a haircut?"

"I don't think so. I wasn't here a year ago."
(Eaglet, 1926)

(DRAMATIC CLIMAX IN CLASS PLAY)— (1909)

"When last I saw you, you wore short hair and long dresses."

BRIGGS' WORD

John E. Briggs, '09, was Professor of Political Science at S. U. I. in 1930 and telephoned Jack Logan, Eagle Grove superintendent of schools, to recommend a young graduate assistant receiving his master's degree in history. Jack Logan said, "Your word is good enough for me," and he hired Carl Thorson to teach in the high school and Junior college.

Steamers on the Boone!

Promoters of early Eagle Grove sent handbills back East with pictures of steamers on the Boone River as proof that it was navigable.

FormalAttire

Men attended Sunday morning church services in long black frock coats and striped trousers in early Eagle Grove.

The First was Also Last

Mrs. Amy (Scott) Donly, Mrs. Evert McGrath's mother rode the first passenger train into Eagle Grove at nine years old. (And 73 years later rode the last one.)

LIBRARY HISTORY

Erecting a handsome library building in 1903 was a natural outcropping of a love for books and respect for knowledge and culture of the pioneer settlers of the Eagle Grove area.

Many of the first books were gifts from private libraries. Perhaps the earliest collection of books around here that was called a library was at Bach Grove near Woolstock. Private book borrowing and lending were common.

Adult education began in Eagle Grove in evening classes held in homes under "able" teachers for members of the Political Equality Club organized in 1893. The "Political" was dropped when the suffrage interest cooled.

According to Mr. Eugene Schaffter, later a state senator, "Here in Eagle Grove, the first attempt at a library was made about 1885 or 6, and a small collection of books was paid for by subscription, and installed, I believe, in the post office building. This collection soon dissolved by operation of natural laws. Later, the women of Eagle Grove made a considerable collection of books which was kept over Packman's store, and later in Dr. McGrath's office, and was extensively used. In 1901, a Des Moines insurance and investment company offered to place a library of books here if they could sell a certain amount of bonds. We secured 250 volumes, which on January 18, 1902, were installed in the Masonic reception room as the first genuinely free public library of Eagle Grove."

The community meeting approach was as popular at the turn of the century as it is today. Mr. Schaffter reported that "February 18, 1902, about one hundred of our prominent business men assembled at a banquet in the opera house, for the special purpose of contriving things for the public good, and about \$800 was subscribed at once for the library project.

The council approved an application to submit the question of establishing and maintaining a free public library to the people and the issue carried by a large majority.

Finding the right person in the right place to help was the next step. Mr. Andrew Carnegie was making donations to enterprising groups to establish libraries. Therefore, someone approached him directly and through Col. Henderson, then speaker of the House of Representatives. In April, 1902, Mr. Carnegie offered to donate \$10,000 for the erection of a building upon the usual terms of furnishing a proper site and continuing support of at least \$1,000 a year.

Mayor Schaffter appointed a library board of trustees, including himself, and Mrs. Belle Miller, librarian of the various collections.

One hundred forty signers pledged a total of \$2,040, some in labor and books. Equality Club tag day raised funds. An architect was engaged, and it was possible to lay the cornerstone on June 20, 1903, with the Hon Johnathan P. Dolliver delivering the address. The building was completed that summer and Iowa Governor A. B. Cummins spoke at the dedication ceremonies in the Methodist Church on September 15.

The tax support remained under \$3,000 until 1940, under \$5,000 until mid-1950s, and the building remained the same for almost 50 years. Then a long-range plan of major improvements began with complete redecoration, and new floor covering, lighting system, front door, furniture and blinds upstairs.

Exterior cleaning, community room remodeling, front canopy and air-conditioning followed. The appropriation gradually reached \$13,000 and stabilized, more or less.

However, there is more early history to tell.

A book shower and evening reception gave everyone a chance to inspect the new library. "Frappe was served by different ladies, and floral decorations were profuse. Dr. McCall entertained...with the pianola." Whether or not there is any conclusion to draw about the relative values, the fruit for the frappe cost \$1.89, but the pianola rental cost \$7.00.

Throughout the years the library has been the scene of other public events. In 1905 there was an Easter "sociable" with an elaborate program to raise money through a 25 cent admission fee. Two others raised additional funds in 1906. There was an "Evening with the Poet" (Riley) one year, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Andrew Carnegie's birthday, and two exhibits of local artists, years apart. In 1953 the community celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication of the library, and honored Mrs. Will Fisher in 1959 when she retired as library trustee. In recent years, public events have been features of Book Week and Library Week.

Over the years the worst library building troubles have come from both the top and bottom—literally. Keeping a dry roof over their heads occupied much board meeting time almost from the beginning, and bills for repairs were quite regular and predictable. A new roof in 1965, fortunately, is still satisfactory.

Trouble at the bottom caused the disastrous explosion in 1940 when gas leaked into the building through an abandoned steam-line and exploded.

Mrs. D. L. Miller resigned her position as trustee and accepted that of librarian in 1903 provisionally. She wanted to be free to resign in six months, she remained until 1913. Then Miss Elsie Dann promised to be librarian only until a "regular" one could be found. She stayed until 1920. Only two others, Mrs. A. F. Lukensmeyer and Mrs. George Paine, served as librarians before 1961.

Mrs. Miller's first library-helper, her twelve-year-old neighbor Marie Stultz, (Mrs. Marie Johnson) is still an avid reader and still visits the Eagle Grove library least once a week.

There have been 19 student and 12 adult assistants in the history of the library. Mrs. Ann Ganong and Mrs. Harriett Jorstad were acting librarians for short periods in the late 1950's.

Since the beginning the trustees have shown interest in professionalism. In 1905, they employed an Iowa Library Commission member to classify books for them. Early librarians joined the Iowa Library Association and sometimes the American Library Association. In 1917 they started attending district and state meetings.

In 1961 the library took a dramatic and far-reaching step when it joined 16 libraries in a cooperative with headquarters in Mason City. The number has grown to 58 now and the services have adjusted to changing needs with remarkable speed and ease.

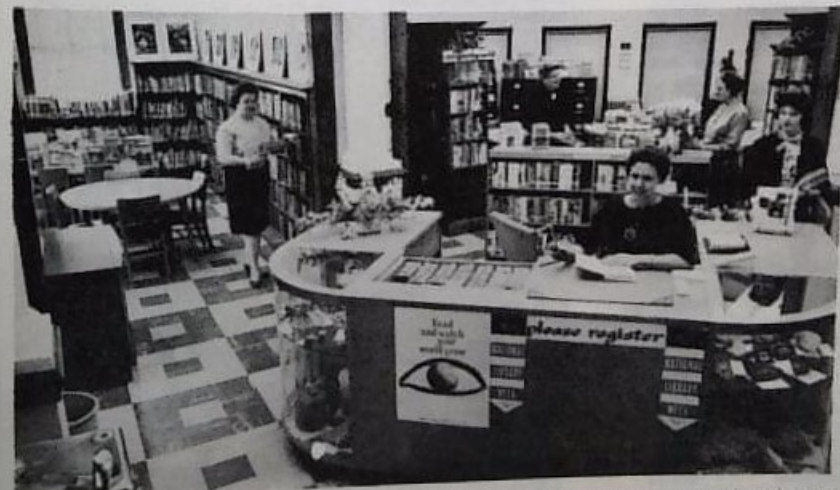
The Equality Club maintained the library as a major project for many years. It furnished the basement room and held its meetings there. It gave the first trees and shrubs in 1908, and made other contributions. In 1938, it presented the Pioneer Woman plaque and gave \$500, the proceeds of the very successful lyceum series which it had sponsored for 26 years. That amount with interest accrued was applied in 1958 to the purchase of the present library furniture. Since 1947 books have been given in memory of all deceased members.

Many other clubs have made fine gifts of books, furniture, framed pictures, magazine subscriptions, and money even though the library has not been their major project. All have added greatly to the quality of the library.

Mr. John R. Smith and Miss Elsie Dann each left \$1,000 bequests. Many individuals and organizations have presented memorial books. This continuing interest carries on the spirit which motivated the early founders.



Early free public reading room in Eagle Grove, probably located in the Masonic Hall; books moved to new library in 1903.



1962 Library Week displays. General view of library interior shows major changes in furnishings and arrangement started when Mrs. Paine became librarian in 1951 and continued to late 1960s.

Staff pictured from left to right: L. Smith, K. Kliver, F. Thorson, H. Jorstad, C. Martens.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES 1902-1970

+ indicates served as president
++ indicates expiration of term
when nine-member board was
reduced to five (1915)

+ J. R. Smith 1902-12
++ Everett C. Platt 1912

Eugene Schaffter 1902-14
L. G. Focht 1916-22
+ Mrs. W. R. Blake 1922-41
Miss Mary Hobbel 1941-48
Mrs. L. D. MacNaughton 1948-57
+ Mrs. C. E. Thorson 1957-61
+ Mrs. Dale Harding 1961-64
+ Mrs. David Varland 1964-68
Mrs. Russell Knutson 1968-70
Mrs. M. B. Crabbe 1970--

+ A. H. Barnes 1902-40
C. A. Kastler 1940-56
+ John Reider 1956-62
+ Wallace Long 1962-68
+ Mrs. Jay McCollough 1968--

++ J. H. Howell 1902

Mrs. D. L. Miller 1902-02
Mrs. O. A. Young 1902-10
Mrs. Ward Barnes 1910-13
++ Mrs. Will Fisher 1913

Mrs. R. W. Hayes 1902-03
Mrs. C. E. Hanson 1903-04
Rev. Father J. J. Garland
1904-10

Mrs. J. W. Henneberry 1910-32
Mrs. J. H. Howell 1922-54
Mrs. M. J. Schaeferle 1926-57
+ Mrs. Evert McGrath 1957-62
+ Mrs. Harold Duer 1962-65
Mrs. John Mulder 1965-68
+ Lawrence McCoy 1968-69
Lyle Wilson 1969--

Mrs. E. D. Mineah 1902-10
++ Mrs. R. M. Smallpage 1910

Mrs. C. H. Morse 1902-10
Mrs. Joseph Holman 1910-22
+ Mrs. Will Fisher 1922-59
+ Mrs. E. D. Carter 1939-64
Mrs. Lyle Leider 1964-65
+ Mrs. C. G. Loux 1965--

T. O. Douglas 1902-02
George Carlton 1902-06
Mrs. J. S. Keith 1906-22
W. E. Warnes 1922-51
+ Russell Blue 1951-62
James Zigrang 1962-64
Richard Tomke 1964-68
Tom Anderson 1968-70
Rev. A. E. Windahl 1970--

PUBLIC LIBRARIANS 1903-1970

Belle Y. (Mrs. D. L.) Miller
1903-13

Miss Elsie Dann 1913-20

Abbie (Mrs. A. F.) Lukensmeyer
1920-51

Miriam (Mrs. G. F.) Paine
1951-61

Frances (Mrs. C. E.) Thorson
1961--

SUPERINTENDENTS OF EAGLE GROVE SCHOOLS

Miss Jennie Rudolph 1886-87
A. L. Troutman 1887-88
Byron Lewis 1888-89
J. G. Grundy 1889-1905
L. G. Focht 1905-11
W. H. Pye 1911-16
H. B. Nielson 1916-18
W. H. Fasold 1918-22
Jack Logan 1922-31
C. L. McDowell 1931-44
R. W. Gibson 1944-54
Edwin Barbour 1954-66
John T. Gannon 1965-

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Miss Jennie Rudolph 1886-87
Mrs. J. G. Grundy 1901-05
Adeleida Boden 1905-09
Starr Wilson 1909-10
Bessie Ingham-Lineback
1910-12
Clara Erickson 1912-13
W. A. Pye 1913-16
L. H. Ladd 1916-17
Frances M. Camp 1917-23
A. O. Setzeplandt 1923-24
William H. Payne 1924-28
Erwin W. Opperman 1928-29
Clifford Beem 1929-35
D. L. Wood 1935-37
Roger Berry 1937-43
A. M. Qui...ard 1943-52
Edwin Barbour 1952-54
Robert S. Wolfe 1954-

JUNIOR COLLEGE DEANS

Erwin W. Opperman 1928-30
Harold Hahn 1930-32
Byron Boatman 1932-35
Irvin Parrill 1935-36
Gerald Shepherd 1936-41
Benjamin Davis 1941-43
(College closed) 1943-45
Carl Thorson 1945-

CITY RECORDERS 1882-1893 CITY CLERKS 1893-1970

C. A. Schaffter 1882-84
H. Hodge 1884-85
M. T. Heath 1885-86
C. A. Schaffter 1886-1895
Eugene Schaffter 1894-95
J. W. Henneberry 1895-96
Wm. Southwell 1896-97
Porter Donly 1896-1903
L. J. Clarke 1903-05
H. B. Hallock 1905-08
Sam Middleton 1908-21
J. K. Baker 1921-29
Julia Roseland 1929-35
A. C. Larson 1935-41
Earl J. McGrath 1941-68
Paul Niebur 1968-

MAYORS

E. M. Scott 1882-84
S. T. Chase 1884-85
C. O. Bailey 1885-86
G. E. Boynton 1886-87
E. A. Howland 1887-88
D. C. Filkins 1889-91
F. W. Pillsbury 1891-95
G. Hutchings 1895-97
J. S. Fort 1897-1901
Eugene Schaffter 1901-03
M. K. Donovan 1903-07
A. Yearous 1907-09
W. R. Blake 1909-15
J. S. Fort 1915-21
G. W. Baker 1921-29
L. E. Beer 1929-33
F. E. Cole 1933-35
L. E. Beer 1935-37
J. H. Martin 1937-47
Harry Schoonover 1947-51
Don Mitchell 1951-55
George Heard 1955-58
H. Max Groves 1958-62
A. H. Wesselink 1962-66
Wallace Larson 1966-68
Bruce Middleton 1968-69
Kenneth Brauman 1969-

Public Library Sources of Eagle Grove History

Atlas of State of Iowa, 1875

Birdsall, Hon. B. P., editor, History of Wright County, Iowa, 1915

.Biographical Record and Portrait Album of

Hamilton and Wright Counties, Iowa, 1889

City of Eagle Grove, Revised Ordinances, 1920 and 1944; City Code, 1969

History of the Origin of the Place Names, 1908

Iowa Press Association, Who's Who in Iowa, 1940

Paine, Nathaniel Baker, Pioneer Poems, 1926

Standard Atlas of Wright County, 1912

Stevenson, J. H., History and Business Directory of Wright County, 1870

Bound volumes of Eagle Grove Eagle

High school annuals: 1909 to the present

Iowa Official Registers

Scrapbooks of dated and undated clippings

Vertical File materials

CREDITS

"My Tom Sawyer Town," John Reider
Original watercolors, Ford Times Art Collection
Cover photograph, Richard Gilbert
Photos and printing, Eagle Grove Eagle

In compiling this booklet, I have tried to seek out representative items that truly reflect early times as well as those that are interesting or useful for reference.

I have tried also to check facts and dates for accuracy. However, glaring errors are bound to show up, and I take full responsibility for any that do.

Omissions are already evident. Space is lacking even to cite many events and to name countless people, both living and dead, whose lives are closely interwoven with the life of this community.

Everyone to whom I turned for help was exceptionally generous with his enthusiasm, encouragement and time. To each of them I say a most sincere "Thank you."

The library trustees and I consider this project only a beginning. We hope that it will give incentive to many readers to preserve their own recollections of Eagle Grove or of some other place, in some form, somewhere-- soon.

Frances Thorson, Compiler

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