

## CHAPTER III

## SOME WALNUT GOODIES

## Anecdotes and other items of interest

Some interesting observations noted by Editor A. P. Cramer in "The Walnut News" during the first year of publication, 1878:

"Walnut has the champion post-setter in the state, in the person of John Blackmore. Short time since, he set 175 posts, 2 feet and 8 inches deep, in 7 hours. If anyone thinks they can beat that, let them take a bet, which he is willing to make, to set 300 posts in ten hours."

"Our town is fast becoming popular for street and saloon rows, and unless our peace officers make themselves a little more numerous, someone will be killed. Of course this will give our town a nice name. Every man participating in these rows should be arrested and held until his innocence or guilt has been established; and then he should be dealt with accordingly. On last Saturday night there was a row; on Sunday morning another; in the afternoon another; and on Wednesday afternoon and night there was enough blood running to make up half a dozen first class rows."

"We believe there is no ordinance prohibiting the running at large of fleas, but think there is such a law extant in regard to the bologna sausage stock --hogs. But if there is not such an ordinance, there should be, as the hogs and pigs wallering around our streets create a stench strong enough to pale the cheek of a congressman."

(Such an ordinance was passed. A "pound" was formed for the disposal of the stray animals, by sale, the proceeds to be used to pay the marshal.)

"Walnut merchants, do you want trade? If you do, fix up. And to fix up you must put hitching posts in front of your store. Marshal Gilbreath says he will put them in the ground if you will furnish them. Three posts in front of your store will cost you forty-five cents. Can't you squander that amount?"

"They will keep on rooting around in the archives of the government till they find out Washington was just as bad as anyone. They have now found a pass book in which the Father of his Country kept an account of money won at cards. Next they will discover

that he and some other statesmen played three-card monte on the railroad trains. Well, there is one thing, George couldn't tell a lie if he tried, though he could soon learn if he was president now."

"The Indians out west of Ogden are laying for that idiot who is wheeling a wheelbarrow from New York to San Francisco. In about a week he will be found bald-headed, and his wheelbarrow will be on exhibition in a Sioux encampment as a curiosity sent by The Great White Father."

"It is a great thing for a man to be able to tell to the second the time when there will be an eclipse of the sun ten years hence, but it is a greater thing to be able to figure up how to sit on a corner and whittle dry-goods boxes and support a large family."

(Evidently this was a "dig" for someone, as Editor Cramer was quite frequent with his reprimands for local townspeople, often being brazen enough to mention names.)

The following article, taken from an 1879 issue of "The News", is a prime example:

"There are some boys in Walnut who have pure cussedness stamped plainly in every feature and in every action. Allen McGimsey is one of them. On last Monday just as school was dismissed for the day, he was near the school house exercising a blind horse, and for his own amusement began chasing the small children, keeping them from going home. The children gathered on the steps which form a gate to the yard, to get out of his reach and while they were standing there, this little imp urged his horse up on top of the steps, which are three feet high, and scared and knocked the children to the ground, bruising several of them."

"The horse was either urged or stumbled off the platform, and in falling, threw the boy, and severely bruised Ada Boiler, a little girl about 5 years old, and had it not been for the action of a brave little girl, Anna Hopper, who ran up to the horse and pulled Ada from under it, she would probably have been trampled to death."

"This is only one of a hundred of his tricks, and unless he switches off soon, he will darken the door of the penitentiary before many years. We have heard of considerable talk to send him to the reform school, and believe it to be the best thing that can be done with him."

Allen was the son of the drayman in Walnut at that time, and it is interesting to note that Mr. McGimsey did not reduce his advertising in The News after this article was printed.

A little on the lighter side is this article from the November 21 issue in 1878:

"Crabbe-Knauss -- in Monroe township; Shelby County, Nov. 13. Mr. P. D. Crabbe and Miss Rose Knauss, all of Shelby County."

This was rather a romantic affair. The couple, armed with a Shelby County license, wanted to be married at the Walnut House, but Rev. Lodge, who officiated, concluded that it would be illegal, so he took them over the line into Shelby County and married them on the open prairie in a buggy.

In Chapter One it was mentioned that the two major news events of 1879 were Walnut's first fire and a kidnapping. These were both of such a nature that I feel it would be indiscriminate to publish the details and to mention the names of the persons involved. I mention them only for historical purposes. The fire was in the jail, which was completely burned. An inmate of the jail was burned to death in the fire.

I do not mean the following article to be discriminatory either, as it is reprinted here only to give an idea of "life in the good old days" and for the hilarious way the account was written up by the editor:

"Walnut had a pretty good sized row on hand Saturday night, resulting in a broken leg for one man, a smashed hand to another, and bloody noses and black eyes ad libitum. It seems that the circus began at A. Bigelow's. Jim Fay and someone else was up there talking to Bigelow on nursery business, and in the course of the conversation Fay ventured the opinion, perhaps two or three times, that Bigelow was a liar. Bigelow differed with him on this subject, and to show how little confidence he placed in the assertion, he hauled off and struck him. The result of this little affair was that all parties were brought before Justice Frisbie for a breach of the peace."

"The plaintiff and defendant told the same story so that the justice considered that the defendant was provoked and fined him \$2.00 and costs. A short time after this, Bigelow went into Frank Pray's saloon to talk with Linfor; and Martin Barrett, A. McCormick, and M. McCormick, were standing by the bar, talking over the assault on Fay. When they caught sight of Bigelow, they dropped their glasses

and made for him. Linfor got in between the combatants, and while the blows were falling thick and fast, on his somewhat prominent abdomen, he whispered to Bigelow that the best thing he could do was get out, which advice was promptly taken."

"As the battle was now being waged on Linfor, John Morgan took a hand in the combat, and a fellow named Parker, who struck a blow in such a manner as to break his hand. Andrew McCormick had his leg broken and ankle put out of joint in the melee. Uncle Jimmy Woodhouse, who stopped in to rest on his way home from the post-office, got behind the bar when the fight became general and about everyone in the room took a hand in the ruction. Uncle Jimmy says it was a menagerie and a circus combined, and two grand allied shows under one roof to boot. McCormick was taken to the Walnut House where he still remains, and his injuries attended to by Dr. Hanna."

At other times guns were drawn, and several shootings took place.

In The News of 1882 we found the following item:

"Avoca has at last got a creamery to start up. A creamery, as we understand it, is a place where they make butter in a new-fangled manner, by taking all the hairs out. Maybe it will work, but we can't see what is going to hold the butter together; and even if it will stick without the use of hair, it seems the flavor would be destroyed by such a process. Well, those who want to eat the bald-headed butter can do so, -- we shall stick to the old-fashioned long-haired butter."

Walnut passed an ordinance in the spring of 1882 prohibiting anyone from Avoca to step foot within the corporate limits of Walnut. No, this wasn't the usual feuding -- it was because of the smallpox epidemic rampant in Avoca, and the town of Walnut was taking precautions to keep the dreaded disease out of the town.

However, some facetious fellow at Avoca made up the following handbill and sent it to the editor at Walnut:

"NOTICE: Be it ordained that any citizen of Avoca, known to have visited Walnut, shall, upon conviction thereof, be taken down and thrown in the creek, his property confiscated, and the family sent to the poor-house for 60 days. This is rendered necessary to prevent idiocy becoming contagious outside of said village of Walnut."

Signs of the times, 1888:

A. C. Kelley, a subscriber to The Walnut Bureau (the name was changed in 1883) wrote the following letter to Editor A. W. McCormack:

" 'Woman's work is never done' -- this is an old saying, and we often hear it quoted. I know there are some people who think that women have not much to do, and I wish to give such some plain facts from everyday life."

"I have been keeping account of one small part of housework for the year past. It is that of baking for a small family. During the year 1887 I baked 525 loaves of bread, 319 pies, 1060 cookies, and 30 cakes. This remember, is for a small family, and only one small part of a housekeeper's work."

November 18, 1892:

"Harvey Lewis did penance Saturday afternoon for his political judgment by giving Mart Blohm a wheelbarrow ride from the opera house to the grain office. The procession was headed by the band, and the exercises viewed by a goodly crowd. The oyster supper in the evening was the finale of the bet."

The opera house mentioned was the former Legion Hall, which occupied the space now covered by Walnut's new school addition. This of course, was a presidential election bet, Cleveland being elected for a second term, following Harrison.

Following is a composition written by an unknown Walnutite prior to 1900. It was furnished me by a local citizen who wishes to remain anonymous. I thought you might enjoy it.

#### "A Shattered Idol"

"How lovely she looked as before the piano she seated herself and preparing to sing, ran her hands over the keys. Was her voice soprano? Or maybe an alto? Perhaps a contralto. But I knew anyway that with music it would ring."

"A chord now and then, as if musing, the maiden would strike... and the music now loud, now low, would echo and echo with melody laden and heavenward....And then lower and lower, would flow away and would mix with the Zephyr's sweet blow."

"As she sat there so lovely, her flashing eyes darting, I harked for the music I knew soon must come. Her bosom upheaved and her ruby lips parting, the music I longed for came! No, you are wrong, for she shrieked, 'Holy Moses, I've swallowed my gum.' "

January 17, 1902:

"A wager between Pat Murray and Grote Bros. of Marne, over the time which a team could be driven from Marne to the schoolhouse east of Avoca, about 13 miles, resulted in a spirited drive in which the distance was covered in 59 minutes."

"A remarkable difference in the time of the watches carried by the two men also developed. Grote's watch gave the time on the journey as 59 minutes, while the one carried by Murray showed 64 minutes. Both watches were set exactly the same before the start from Marne and were said to have been the same when they passed through Walnut."

"After an hour's jangle, in which about half the men in Walnut took part, the wager was paid over to Grote who held the 59 minute watch."

A curfew ordinance was passed in 1902 where by no child under 17 years of age was allowed on the streets between the hours of 8:00 pm and 5:00 am. Curfew bell was rung at 8:00 each night.

Tsk, tsk, boys will be boys. Even back in 1902 -- as witness this item from The Bureau:

"Sievers and Crane are sporting new hats since Tuesday -- nothing unusual about this -- they have had new hats before -- but the old hats were discarded, not through choice, but by necessity, and thereby hangs a tale."

"It is alleged that said Sievers and Crane run short of smoking tobacco and seemed to be desperately up against it when they got their eyes, and incidentally their hands, upon an umbrella belonging to Louis Neff. They lost no time in making a run to Ware's restaurant where they jointly and severally hocked the umbrella for a supply of Duke's Mixture. They were quietly smoking the pipe of peace and contentment when Neff discovered his loss and spotted the perpetrators. He ran them into the post-office and relieved them of their lids which he took to the restaurant and redeemed his umbrella."

"Now the said S and C were up against it again -- they were minus their hats -- and why they were not redeemed is some what of a mystery which has not been satisfactorily explained, but it is hinted by some their credit is good at the clothing store and --Ware does a cash business."

The annual masquerade ball of the German Verein was held February 19, 1904. Mrs. M. Pfeifer of Council Bluffs was at the hall in the afternoon with a large variety of costumes, ranging in price from 75¢ up, for use during the evening. Premiums amounting to \$16. were given for best characters represented.

Winners in the masquerade ball were:

LADIES: Best masque, Miss Katie Sell; Best character, Miss Lena Reimer and Mrs. Henry Rossmann; Second best masque, Miss Agnes Petersen; Second best character, Miss Dora Sell.

MEN: Best masque, Henry Kause; Best character, Harry Koll; Second best masque, Pat Murray; Second best character, Adolph Paulson.

George Mickel completed construction of his automobile in September of 1904. According to The Bureau, "The machine is a beauty and is equal in every respect to any high-grade factory product. It is driven by an eight horsepower gasoline engine and under favorable conditions can attain a speed of 30 mph. With the exception of a few parts, the entire machine was made in Walnut."

March 24, 1905:

"Mr. Detlef Peters of Walnut received last week from his patent attorneys, Orwig and Lane of Des Moines, a notice stating that his patent on an Automatic Machine which is capable of use for various purposes, had been allowed."

"Mr. Peters' invention is a machine with which tires may be set, a trip hammer may be driven, a grind stone operated, and washers made, as well as accomplishing numerous other results."

Pfengsten, or Ring Ride Day, had been celebrated in Walnut for quite a number of years. It was always in the spring and celebrated Whitsunday. Dancing and various amusements were provided for the day, under the direction of the German Verein. Bands furnished music.

The following article was printed in The Bureau in 1905. It explains the origin of Ring Ride Day, so concerns Walnut history indirectly.

"The celebration of Pfengsten, or Ring Ride Day, as it is given in Walnut each year, appears to have been one of the gala days of the early settlers of this country. The following article from The New York Tribune gives an account of the festivities of the days as practiced by the early settlers of that state:

'Next to New Year's Day, Paus and Pinkster were the more popular and generally observed holidays of the Old Dutch in the Mohawk Valley. Paus was Easter and Pinkster was Whitsunday.'

'Pinkster was particularly a gala day, when young and old gave themselves up to jollity and fun.'

'The joys of the day began in the morning with sports, outdoor games, and contests, and ended late at night with dancing and indoor games. There were "egg-butting" and "riding the ring". The latter sport was probably a rural adaptation of the tournaments of the days of chivalry. The necessary arrangement was a cord tied across the road just above the heads of the horsemen. From this cord was suspended a finger ring. Each horseman was provided with a short, sharp-pointed stick about the size of a meat skewer, which was held between the first finger and thumb. The competitors were obliged to ride at full gallop and try to thrust their lance through the ring and carry it off three times.'

'When one had done this, he was chased by all the other contestants. If he succeeded in reaching the goal without being caught, he was the winner. The prize was the payment by the other contestants of the bill for himself and his best girl at the dance and supper to be given in the evening. If he was caught, he was obliged to foot the bill for his captor and his best girl.'

'For a week before Pinkster, the inhabitants began to make ready for the festival by erecting booths of boughs from the trees and shrubs on a place in or near the village, chosen because of its convenience and beauty.'

'In these booths the tables were set with good things to eat and drink. Besides the "egg-butting" and "riding the ring", there were impromptu horse races, wrestling matches and occasional scraps.'

'Pinkster was a great occasion for slaves. On this day they had unusual liberty to enjoy themselves according to their own ideas. One way of doing so was a dance, which was no doubt a relic of the many religious dances brought from Africa by captured slaves. The music was obtained from a large drumlike instrument, four or five feet long and a foot in diameter, covered at either end by stretched sheepskin. This was held between the legs of the largest and oldest slave in the community.'

'This drum he would beat with palms and fingers, and all the time he sang a wordless song, which as the excitement increased, would become wild and weird and was accompanied by muscular contortions,

wagging and twisting of the head and rolling of the eyes. One after another of the slaves would join in the dance as the spirit moved him or her to do so, until the musician was surrounded by a ring of black and yellow twisting, hysterical negroes, who for the time being were thousands of miles away in superstitious Africa. One by one, they would fall to the ground, exhausted, when their places would be taken by others who were just beginning to feel the moving of the spirit. It was not unusual for this wild dance to last two days.'

The following article is reprinted from the "Treyner Record" in the spring of 1908:

"George W. Adams of Walnut, who is the main promoter of the new railroad which is projected through this territory, was in town Monday night. A meeting of farmers and townspeople was called so he would have an opportunity to explain his plans and the meeting was quite generally attended."

"Mr. Adams devoted considerable time to explaining his plans and answering questions and created quite a favorable impression. The proposition as explained by him is to sell stock in the company to people along the line and to only require the payment of five dollars cash at the time the subscription is made. The balance of the amount is not payable until the road is actually in operation. Advance subscriptions to stock are necessary in order to provide a basis for selling bonds and the money received from the bonds will be used to build the road."

"It is estimated that the road can be built at an average of from twenty thousand to thirty thousand dollars per mile; it depends on whether the company owns all equipment or makes traffic arrangements with other roads so that they will supply a large share of the freight cars that are used."

"A Chicago firm has signified a willingness to buy the bonds at a reasonable figure and it is likely that a large share of the right-of-way will be donated."

"A railroad is one of the greatest needs of this section of the country, and the people are willing to give any reasonable amount of encouragement to get one."

However, as with most progressive undertakings, there was a lot of con as well as pro to the proposed railroad, as witness the following poem sent to The Bureau by Editor Hills of The Oakland Acorn:

"WHEN ADAMS BUILDS HIS ROAD"

"Every citizen of Carson  
Is puffed by like a toad;  
Thinking of his blissful future  
When Adams builds his road.

From the Nishna to Keg Creek  
May be hauled the biggest load,  
On rails of strongest bessemer  
When Adams builds his road.

The thirsty ones of Carson  
No good it does them bode;  
May get supplies from Treynor  
When Adams builds his road."

"The capitalists will back it  
When the people assume the load;  
The farmers the bill will pay  
If Adams builds his road."

Editor Wayne's comeback was:

"And Hills of The Acorn  
As the knocker's usual mode,  
Will want free transportation  
When Adams builds his road."

Of course Editor Hills couldn't let this pass, so his answer was reprinted in a later issue of The Bureau:

"Up in heaven many decades  
Hills will have sung the angel's ode;  
He'll use wings for transportation  
When Adams builds his road."

And Editor Wayne's repartee:

"Hills heavenly resolutions  
As Hills old Satan goads,  
May get his transportation scorched  
When Adams builds his road."

"And all his odes to Heaven  
With wings to match his mode  
Will be one of Hills' pipe dreams  
For Adams will build the road."

Then I guess they both let it go at that. Much work was accomplished this year, and a lot of the skeptics began to change their minds.

Mayor W. E. Fraser issued the following proclamation in regard to drivers of motor vehicles:

"The law provides that when running after dark, all machines must display one or more lamps showing white light visible within a reasonable distance in front, and a red light behind; it also provides that a bell must be rung or a horn blown on approaching each and every street intersection, bridge, sharp curve, or steep descent; and that you must regulate your rate of speed so as not to endanger the life or limb of anyone, and in no event in the closely settled portions of the town at a greater speed than 10 mph."

The price of land was going up. It had been on a steady rise since the first years when Walnut was being settled, when the average price was \$8. per acre. In May, 1908, the following transaction was recorded:

"A deal was consummated last week whereby Gus and Mangnus Sievers became the owners of the old Alec Admas farm of 280 acres, owned by A. J. Stuart and located southwest of Walnut. The sale was made through the E. Slade Land Co., of Avoca, consideration, \$108. per acre."

Regular excursions to the West for the purpose of examining land in anticipation of buying were made in 1908 and for several years previous. Excursions had been made to the "Rosebud Reservations" in South Dakota, and now trips were being made to Texas. Local agents for this Texas land were A. M. Jacobsen, P. C. Meredith, F. P. Dilger, and A. J. McColl. Those making the excursion in May, 1908, were: Peter Hansen, Frank Bauer, Henry Reyelt, Wm. Bauer, John Bauer, Fred Hansen, Adolph Waltman, Rudolph Reyelt, Wm. Reyelt, John Leopold, Louis Leopold, Peter Thompson, Jr., Bluford Chambliss and John Hansen.

The "Model T. Ford" advertised in 1910 was priced at \$980. The price included "over \$300 worth of needed equipment that you must buy as 'extras' for most other cars... magneto, windshield, extension top, two 6" gas lamps, tail lamp, tubular horn, generator, two oil side lamps, speedometer, Kit of tools, and air pump."

On June 30, 1911 Mrs. G. W. Adams left for Council Bluffs where she was a passenger on the first trip of the Iowa and Omaha Short Line, which Mr. Adams had been two years in building from Council Bluffs to Treynor. She also assisted the Colonel at the big celebration which

was held that day in Treynor. In November Col. Adams purchased the Atlantic Northern and Southern Railway.

December 8, 1911:

"A. J. HANSEN INVENTS ROAD GRADER"--- "Mr. A. J. Hansen of Walnut has just been notified by his attorneys, Orwig and Bair of Des Moines, that his application for patent on a road grader has been allowed by the U.S. Patent Office."

"Mr. Hansen's invention consists of a frame mounted on wheels, and a plough or scraper carried at one side of the frame. A conveyor is mounted on the machine and arranged to receive material from the plough and carry it to one side and deposit it at various distances from the plough as the operator may desire."

"Mr. Hansen's machine is arranged so that the conveyor runs close to the ground, making it unnecessary to elevate dirt to any great height and enabling him to run his machine with a minimum of power. The machine is equipped with a scraping device which may be set to remove dirt or similar material from the conveyor at any suitable point. The plough is adjustable so that it may be used to cut a conveyor of varying depth."

January 26, 1912:

"MRS. MARY GIBBONS INVENTS CORN HUSKER" --- Mrs. Mary Gibbons of this city, has just been notified by her attorneys, Orwig and Bair of Des Moines, that her application for patent on a corn harvester has been allowed by the U.S. Patent Office.

"Mrs. Gibbons' harvester strips the ears of corn and the leaves and soft upper parts of the stalk from the standing corn, cleans the husks from the ears, delivers the corn to a wagon bed, and bales the husks and leaves."

"The corn is stripped from the stalk by means of two traveling canvases opposite each other, in which are mounted a series of pins. The corn is husked by means of husking rollers, and the leaves and husks are dropped into a box where they are compressed by a plunger into a bale and bound with ordinary binding twine."

"Mrs. Gibbons has received much favorable comment on her invention, and has under consideration various propositions for putting it on the market."

August 8, 1912:

"GENERAL KELLEY IN WALNUT" --- "General Kelley, of "Kelley Army fame" who is touring the country and making open air speeches in the interest of Bull Moosevelt, was in this city Friday afternoon and evening. In the evening he spoke from a wagon on Main Street, and drew quite a large crowd."

"Our readers will remember Kelley and his army marching through Walnut eighteen years ago on their trip across the state. While here, his army camped for dinner in Coats' pasture, now owned by Jens Larsen and the Walnut Cement Stone Tile Works. On that occasion the invincible Bill Hill boiled two sixty-gallon kettles of eggs, or more than 140 dozen. The eggs were taken up in a large clothes basket, and filled it heaping five times."

The first Chatauqua was held in Walnut in July, 1913. The first Sauerkraut Day was also held this year, in September, sponsored by the Walnut Community Club. Walnut had not had a street fair or carnival for the past 5 years.

The following story is a little humorous, a little psychological, a little interesting. However, I shall withhold names for obvious reasons:

"Quite a scandal was created in Walnut a few mornings ago" (March, 1915)"by one of the well-known citizens beating up his wife. Several of the neighbors claim to have seen the incident. It was at least 5:30 in the morning and eyewitnesses declare that he not only beat up his wife -- but actually had the fire going and the coffee pot on before the surprised lady got to the kitchen and fully realized how badly she was beaten."

September 23, 1915:

"WALNUT BOY APPRENTICED TO CASS FARMER" -- "For the first time in perhaps thirty years, there was filed Tuesday in district court an article of indenture, apprenticing 9 year old Clarence Ehmke, son of Mrs. Lena Ehmke of Pottawattamie County, to Andy C. Theile of Cass County, until he arrives at the age of 21 years."

"Years ago articles of indenturing children in apprenticeship were of common occurrence, but in recent years they have been practically totally abandoned. Boys were apprenticed to farmers as to mechanics and tradesmen, who contracted to furnish them board, lodging and clothing, as well as training in their adopted trade, in return for their services until they reached the age of maturity."

"Clarence Ehmke is to be indentured to Theile until his twenty-first birthday, to receive his board and clothing and four months schooling each year, and at the close of his apprenticeship to be paid \$500 in cash with which to start his battle in life. He is bound to give his employer the same dutiful service he would give his parents, and in all ways obey him as he would his father."

"It is stated by men of mature years that apprenticeship fell into discredit because of the frequency with which employers neglected their end of the contract, and tales of cruelty unbelievable to apprentice boys were freely bandied about the court house on filing of the indenture Tuesday."

"The farmer who indentures the Ehmke boy is said to be well-to-do and attached to the lad, who is predicted to have a bright future before him on account of his connection with his master."

The year 1917 was perhaps one of the most dramatic in Walnut's history. On a cold January day another devastating fire broke out. In February a disastrous train wreck occurred, Walnut lending a willing hand and sympathetic heart to its victims. The summer of 1917 burned over the U.S., adding its heat to the fiery passion already spreading the country. The U.S. had entered World War I and propaganda artists were fanning the tempers of its people. Walnut organized a cooperative Garden Club to relieve the food shortage. Many of her sons were sent to war. The Kaiser was hung in effigy. Families of German descent were in danger for their very lives. At least one German became a "man without a country". The German Bank of Walnut changed its name to "American State" to meet public opinion.

But Walnut had its triumphs too, that year, for the world's heavyweight wrestling champion married one of her native daughters and chose Walnut for his home ... and on February 1, Raymond McDermott was announced best producer of yellow corn in the state of Iowa.

The famed Caddock-Stecher match was held in Omaha on April 9, 1917. Caddock was described as "the wrestler with a thousand holds" and was said to have more extensive knowledge of wrestling than any other living grappler. Caddock weighed around 190 pounds, while Stecher topped 200. As you all know, this was the championship match and Earl came home that night heavyweight wrestling champion of the world.

Stecher took the first fall in one hour, 22 minutes, 5 seconds, and Caddock won the second fall in one hour, 40 minutes, 10 seconds. However, when the time was called for the third and deciding fall,

Stecher refused to go on, and the referee awarded the match to Caddock. Caddock held the world's heavyweight championship for three years.

A biographical sketch of Earl Caddock will be found in Chapter V.

Roy H. Myers was the first Walnut boy to reach France, October 10, 1917.

Leo Mayne Thompson was the first soldier from this community to lose his life in the service of his country. He died from pneumonia while at Ft. Logan, Denver, Colorado. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Thompson.

November 14, 1918: ARMISTICE

"BIG PEACE CELEBRATION" -- "It's over, over there." "Monday morning, when the news reached Walnut that the World War was over and the victory won by the United States and her allies, the town simply went mad in a delirious frenzy of joy."

"At about three o'clock in the morning the news came that the armistice had been signed. Immediately bells began to ring all over town, and the noise increased in volume until daybreak, and the real opening of the day's celebration began."

"The city was a bedlam of ear-splitting noise all day. All the fourth of July celebrations ever held in Walnut, if put together, would not equal the big jubilee pulled off."

"The Avoca band boys came down and joined our band in the morning and dispersed some patriotic music, parading Main Street until they were exhausted. The ladies formed a musical parade, armed with tin pans and spoons and carrying 'Old Glory', paraded the streets all morning. Speeches were made, wild enthusiasm ran high, and the people expressed their deepest feelings by doing the noisiest and most active things they could think of. An effigy of the Kaiser was suspended by a wire over the street, and then shot down, dragged in the dirt, and finally burned."

"The public schools did not try to open, and business houses were closed early in the morning and remained closed all day. In the afternoon our band boys joined the Avoca band, and with hundreds of Walnut folk went to Avoca and continued the celebration all afternoon."

"The jubilee closed with a grand ball in the evening at the Walnut Amusement Hall. The dance was well attended and well conducted, everything going nicely."

"All in attendance seemed to enjoy the Kaiser's entrance into Hell. However, they learned later from Avoca that Hell had absolutely refused the Kaiser admittance and that the old devil was roaming, without a home and without a single friend, since the devil himself had discarded him."

Highway 83 was graveled in the fall of 1931, "getting Walnut out of the mud" as Editor Wayne put it.

Signs of the times, 1933:

"A. G. Evans will work this summer for Art Goy, Farragut farmer, for 160 bushels of corn per month, or its equivalent in cash at the market price. At present, this amounts to \$20. The hired man will also be furnished a tenant house, milk and eggs."

The Walnut Commercial Club sent a telegram to President Roosevelt approving and giving notice of their adoption of the blanket code of N.R.A.

"FALL FESTIVAL A GRAND SUCCESS" -- Walnut's fall festival of 1933 is now only a memory, yet it set a high mark for future festivals to shoot at. The gay 90's were never gayer, the skies never bluer, and the crowds never happier than the days of September 20 and 21, 1933. Large crowds thronged the streets, with the high mark set on Wednesday evening when the attendance was estimated between four and five thousand -- one of the largest crowds Walnut ever entertained.

"The old-time parade, colorful and old-fashioned, representing the gayest of the gay days of the early nineties in costumes, customs, and 'rigs', was the feature of the celebration. Prizes were awarded as follows: Federated Club won first with their float, four ladies in old-time costumes driving a team hitched to an old-fashioned carriage. The second prize went to a group of ladies, their float representing an old-fashioned wedding. Third place was given the "Little Dietche Band".

"Old-fashioned couple -- Mrs. George Struthers and Myrtle Thompson, first. best old-fashioned girl, Rondo Emmons, second."

"The team pulling contest was witnessed by a large crowd each afternoon. In the contest between teams under 3,000 pounds, George Rossmann's team won first and Truman Reimer's team second, pulling a dead load of 4500 pounds. On Thursday in the contest between teams over 3,000 pounds, Roy Burkey's team won first, George Rossmann's second, and the team driven by Hubert Sievers, third. Weight pulled was 5,000 pounds.

"In the horseshoe pitching contest, Albert Griffith won first.

"Tap-dancing numbers were put on by Myrtle Forbes, Norma Jean Fischer, Shirley Petersen and Rose Ann Rieck. Miss Ada spies of Massena gave her popular program on acrobatic dancing. Three bands participated in the entertainment, Katherine Sell's band, the Walnut band, and the Lincoln Township band. On Wednesday evening, the Junior Drum and Bugle Corps of Harlan presented a half-hour program.

"The public wedding and old-time reception, presented on the platform Thursday afternoon, was pronounced the best feature of the whole show."

"Walnut's popular announcer, C. A. Osler had charge of the programs and was master of ceremonies, and did a mighty good job of it. Walter Winchell has nothing on 'Red'."

Highway 83 was spread with black-top in the summer of 1934.

September 17, 1935:

"George Gross shipped 900 head of hogs to Des Moines Monday night. It required 16 cars to haul the hogs to market, two of which were double-deckers. "The shipment was one of the largest ever shipped from this section by a single person in the history of the Rock Island Road."

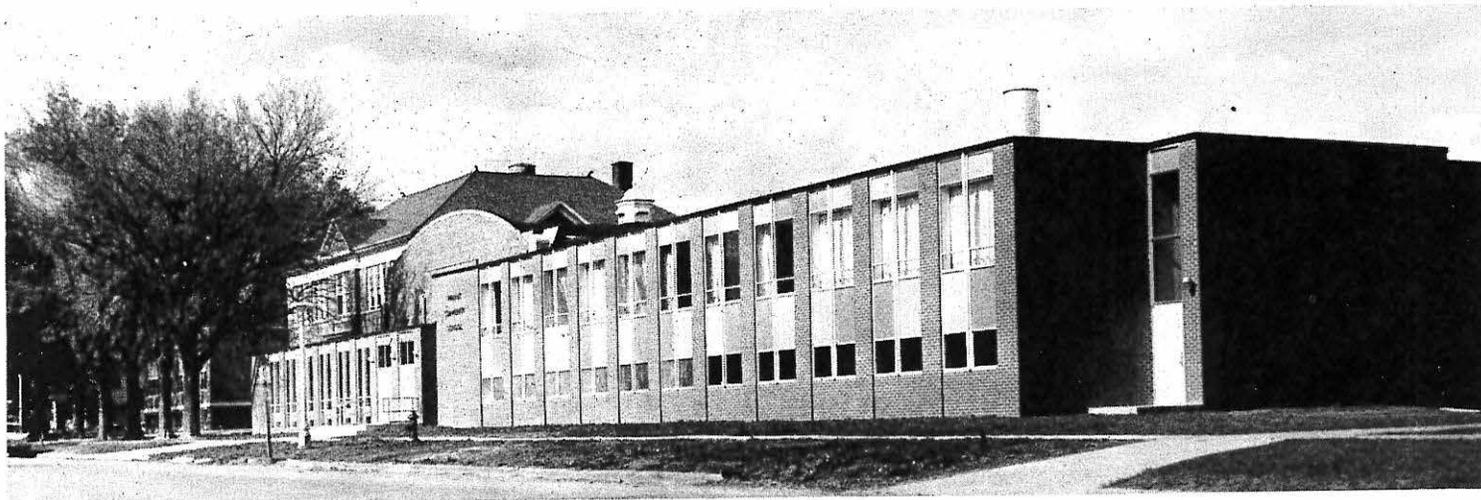
As you all know, Mr. Gross was and still is one of the largest cattle feeders in this section of the country. There were quite a number of articles in the old papers concerning his shipments -- and it was such a common occurrence for him to top the market, it almost ceased to be news. I chose the above article to reprint in the history, as Mr. Gross certainly has a definite place in the history of our town.

Walnut had another gigantic fall festival in 1938, which included dedication of the new \$65,000 viaduct which had just been completed. Miss Sharlene Osler cut the ribbon in the ceremonies. There were 40 floats in the parade that year. Jo Ann Moritz, three-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Will Moritz, was the center of attraction in the kiddie parade in her clown suit and leading her pet dog on a leash. J. D. Rockwell, local tinsmith, attracted wide attention as a metal robot in the parade.



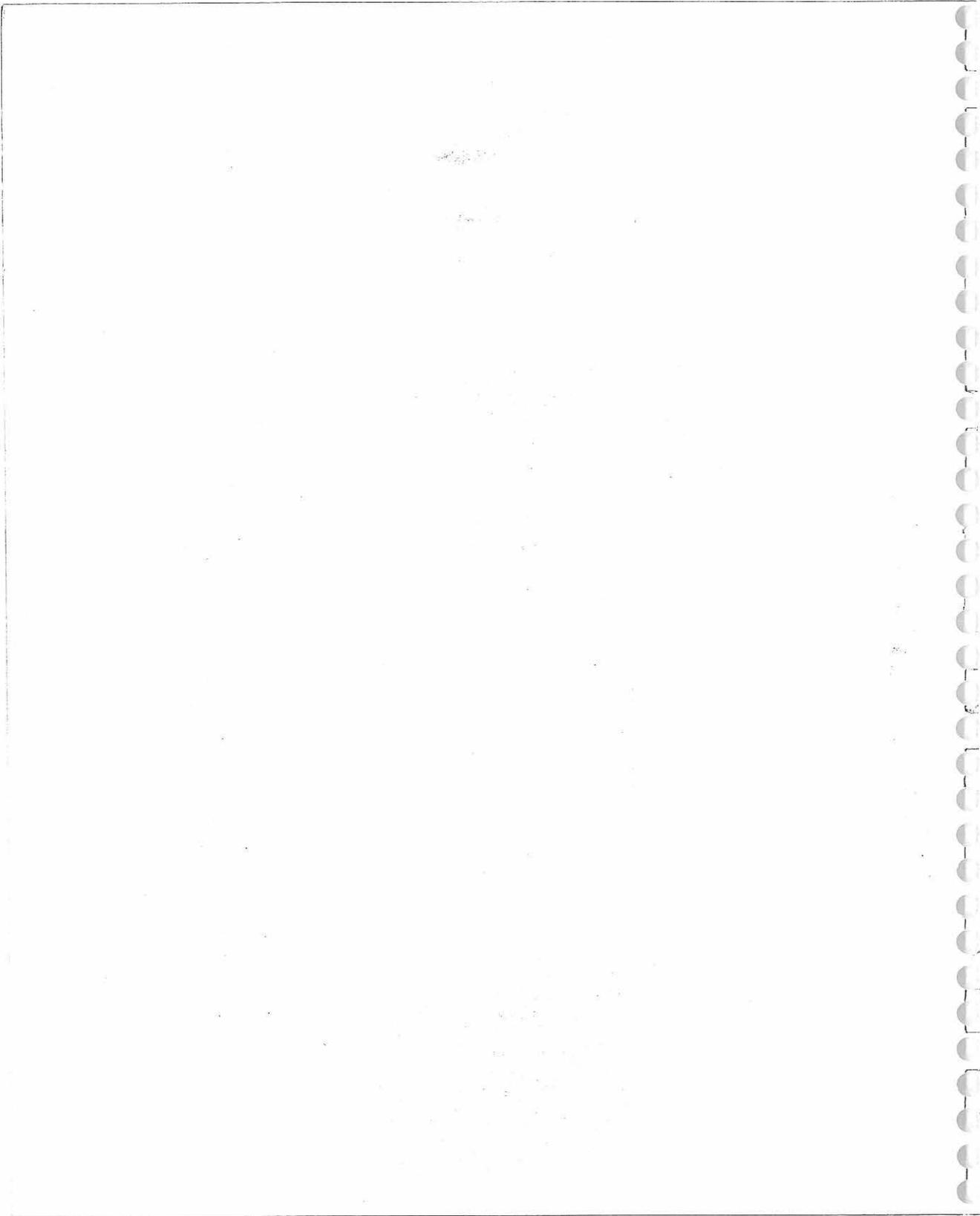
## Part II

# Walnut Branches Out



Walnut Bureau Photo

Walnut Community School. Original brick building erected in 1913 is in center of picture. First addition (grade) at extreme left, new high school addition at right.



## CHAPTER IV

## ALONG THE MAIN BRANCH

## A history of the buildings in Walnut

The entire west side of Central Street was destroyed by fire in 1881. There were sixteen buildings lost. A complete listing of the buildings burned was not given in The Bureau account, but among those burned were Jack Casey's saloon, Lebeck Bros., Dr. Barber's drug store, and Stowe's jewelry.

Many rebuilt with brick structures, and a brick yard was started the following summer to supply the brick needed. A Clay bed was discovered near Walnut to supply the clay and corn was used, as the cheapest fuel, for firing. According to the old-timers, this bed was located near the present Raymond Suhr residence. A Mr. Bartlett started the yard here.

The accounts of the rebuilding are sketchy and incomplete, there fore a complete and accurate record cannot be given here.

W. F. Burke began the erection of a brick building, 20' by 70' on his lot on the west side of Central Street, in 1882. This is the present vacant building located next to "Hank and Dort's Recreation", and formerly occupied by Ray's Feed Service. There were then only three vacancies left by the fire on that side of the street. Stowe, the jeweler, had rebuilt.

Julius Hector and George Ronna erected a large double store, 42' by 70', in the same year. This is the present Osler Show building, occupied in the 20's and 30's by Madsen Bros. Dept. Store and was at one time, a roller skating rink.

The old Legion Hall, built as an opera house, was erected in 1884. This building was torn down to make way for the new school addition. The following account is taken from the January 10 issue of the Walnut Bureau, in 1884:

"A stock company has been formed by several of our enterprising citizens with the view of erecting an opera house in Walnut. Nineteen hundred dollars have already been raised and from \$600 to \$1100 more is needed as a starter. The object is to erect a \$2500 or \$3000 structure, as funds will permit."

Members of the corporations were: A.S. Avery, I.T. Spangler, J.H. Henry, J.C. Spangler, O.M. Bruce, R.L. Craig, and J.H. Crommett. The first company to appear in the opera house, upon completion, was the Buchanan Comedy Company, which opened the opera house August 18, 1884.

Carstensen Bros. built a brick building, 52' by 80', two stories high, on the lot where the telephone office now stands, in 1884. The ground floor was occupied in the manufacture of the famous Lund Harrow and its patent reversible tooth and general blacksmithing. The upper story was fitted up in office apartments and "supplied with every practical convenience".

In 1884 O. C. Zinn erected a building suitable for the display of his jewelry stock. This building was located just south of Larsen Furnace and Tin, on part of the lot now occupied by Braden's.

W. E. Fraser erected a building to be used for his restaurant which occupied the other half of the lot now covered by Braden's. The building was 20' by 46', one story, chiefly brick.

In 1887 Walnut suffered two major fires, within 100 days. On Tuesday morning, August 16, seventeen buildings on lower Central Street and Pearl were burned:

Clayton and Schofield elevator, office and coal sheds.  
 E. E. Mickel, hardware and implements. Rebuilt.  
 Rock Island Depot. Rebuilt.  
 Stowe and Burg, blacksmith and wagon shop.  
 C. F. Jacobsen, cigar factory, residence, and billiard hall, also barn. Did not rebuild.  
 Green, vacant building.  
 Spangler and Koll, office building, implement building, coal sheds.  
 I.T. Spangler, elevator and office. Rebuilt.  
 J. Burmeister, hotel. Rebuilt.  
 Residence owned by Gustav Diedrich and occupied by William Thomas.  
 Green Bay Lumber Co. Rebuilt.

On November 16, another fire broke out and consumed eight buildings on the east side of Central Street. The fire originated from a defective flue in the kitchen of the Central House, the only remaining hotel, since Burmeister's was burned in the previous fire.

From the hotel the fire spread to two small buildings south (shoe shop and law office) and adjoining the bank, a fireproof brick.

(The building in which Dr. Weir, dentist, is now located.) Then the flames slowly worked their way north, burning Ross' Restaurant, John Matson's Billiard Hall, Franzen's Restaurant, and Frohm's Temperance saloon. Blohm Bros. Meat Market was torn down and carried into the street, and this was attributed to checking the fire.

In 1890 John Burmeister began excavating for his new hotel. It contained an office, parlor, ladies' parlor, and nine bedrooms. On January 19, 1891, the new hotel, "The St. Rose House", was opened to the public. This was the old hotel formerly located just north of Green Bay Lumber Co. It was torn down in the late 50's.

In 1891 the Presbyterian Church parsonage was built. A Mr. Wilmarth was the carpenter. This is the present Lorenz Fix residence.

Chris Buttenschon erected his house, just south of town, in 1892, at a cost of \$2800.

In 1894 W. S. Packard erected the brick building adjoining the old Exchange State Bank building. It was completed in 1899, and was known as the I.O.O.F. Opera House.

In June, 1896, Walnut suffered another disastrous fire which destroyed much of the upper end of Central Street (See Chapter 6 for details.) Following this fire Herman Moritz built two brick buildings occupied by his meat shop and locker plant.

It was following this fire that the present waterworks and the old standpipe were installed. (See Chapter V.)

In the April 5, 1901 issue of the Walnut Bureau, it was noted that "T.J. Thompson is making arrangements to build a brick building on the lot he recently purchased from W. F. Burke." However, I have been unable to determine just which building this item has reference to.

In 1901, in November, the contract for the erection of the Methodist parsonage was let to Bouchey and Coats. This is the house directly east of Dr. Weber's office, and is presently occupied by Mrs. Bertha Henningsen.

In January, 1902 the large shed of the H. O. Seiffert Lumber Co. was completed. The new shed was 60' by 100', had room for two piles of lumber on each side, a big loft above for sash, doors, mouldings, etc., and ample room was provided in the driveway for long dimension timber. According to The Bureau, it was one of the most complete sheds in the county, and the company figured to be able to store from 150 to 250 thousand feet of lumber. Seiffert Lumber Co. had been in operation in Walnut since 1883.

In August of 1902, George Mickel was completing the work on his residence in the east part of town.

At this same time workmen were excavating the basement of the new Comer building, which was completed in December, 1902. Lars Petersen's grocery is presently located in this building.

In March, 1904 bids were received on the electric light plant to be built in Walnut. The bids were upon two distinct propositions: the erection of the power house, and the plant and necessary machinery.

#### BIDS ON POWER HOUSE

Barres, Bisley and Co., Council Bluffs, \$1750.  
 Haver and Wilmarth, Walnut, \$1547.  
 D. W. Clay, Walnut \$1850.  
 Parker and Thompson, Walnut, \$1445.

The lowest bidders were Parker and Thompson, and the council let the contract to them for \$1445. The building was to be a one-story brick, built upon plans and specifications drawn up by W. G. Mack, engineer in charge of construction.

#### BIDS FOR BUILDING PLANT AND PLACING MACHINERY

Electric Construction Machinery Co., Rock Island, Ill., \$9,121.  
 George W. Mason, St. Paul, Minn., \$11,763.  
 Westo Supply Co., St. Louis, Mo., \$9,097.52.  
 Electric Light and Telephone Co., Omaha, Nebr., \$9,663.  
 George H. Sethman & Co., Denver, Colorado, \$11,260.  
 Waterloo Electrical Supply Co., Waterloo, Iowa, \$9,041.43.  
 W. D. Lovell, Des Moines, Iowa, \$10,000.  
 Jas. A. Bortenlanger, Omaha, Nebraska, \$8,775.  
 Ernest Truman & Co., Chicago, Ill., \$8,666.

The contract was finally let to Jas. A. Bortenlanger of Omaha at his bid of \$8775, as it was considered to be the cheapest when the style of engine to be used was taken into consideration. One bid was under this one and that was for an engine much inferior to the one to be put in by Bortenlanger. The contracts called for the work to be completed and in working order on or before June 15.

The electric light plant was accepted in August and following is the account taken from the Walnut Bureau:

"At a special meeting of the town council held Friday night of last week, the electric light plant was formally accepted from the contractors."

"The plant in itself is one of the most complete little plants in this part of the state. It starts out with a few over 1,000 lights and there is no doubt but this number will be materially increased when the long nights come again."

"Walnut people as a rule are well pleased with the service to date, and especially so with the street lights which are an improvement the town has been sadly in need of for many years."

"At present the street lights consist of four large arcs in the business section and thirty-two large incandescent lights at the different street crossings which gives sufficient light to enable all crossings and sidewalks to be seen on the darkest of nights."

"The power to generate the current is composed of an Ames eighty horsepower high speed engine, which is fed by a ninety horsepower boiler, carrying a steam pressure of 125 pounds. The dynamo is a Westinghouse 50 kw and has a capacity of 1200 cp lights which under the meter system will mean close to 2,000 before the full capacity of the plant is reached."

In September, 1904, the old buildings of the Walnut Cooperative Creamery were torn down and the lumber taken to Avoca. The buildings (located east of town) were purchased by the Avoca Creamery when the cooperative creamery failed, and had stood idle since.

In October, 1904, The Walnut Bureau announced that "Dr. W. F. Brandt has decided to move the old post-office building out into the street for the present and erect in its place a two-story building, 20' x 50'. The new building will be built of hollow block concrete stone manufactured by J. B. Johannsen." This is the building presently occupied by the J. and L. Restaurant, so evidently Dr. Brandt changed his mind and erected a one-story building.

The post-office was moved, in December, from Central Street down near the cement stone factory where it was used as an office for that business. (This was located west of the present Louis Myers residence.)

In May, 1905, Charles R. Spangler built his residence on upper Central Street. Ted Thompson was the carpenter. Superintendent McIntosh resides there at present.

On May 19, 1911, Hansen Bros. started building their "River To River" garage. It was finished about a month later, and was located on the site of the present new Cities Service Station.

In 1911 a building committee was elected for the purpose of choosing a lot on which to erect a temple building for the Masonic Lodge. This committee consisted of S. R. Comer, Dr. Morris Moore, J. G. Thompson, Otto Ronna, and was headed by Soren Olesen.

Architect Peter Wind of Council Bluffs was secured to draw up the plans for the new temple, and the lot north of the German Bank (now Walnut State Bank) was purchased for the new building. Bigelow and Backus of Walnut received the contract for the building with Fred Bigelow superintendent of the work. Excavation was commenced in August and the work completed by the middle of December. The temple was dedicated on December 27, 1911. (See Chapter IX.) In 1911 the building was lighted by Tungsten electric lights and heated by two furnaces.

In April , 1912 Gust Wolf erected the building presently occupied by Clarence Jacobsen. Andy Backus was the contractor. When completed, it was used by Gust Wolf for his wagon shop, with Joe Thompson's pump, windmill, and repair business in the rear of the building.

The present Harry Walter Garage was built in February, 1913, by J. C. Vollstedt. Mr. Vollstedt also had the old frame pool hall (where present AMVET Hall is located) torn down and replaced by a new brick structure which was joined to the corner building. (Now Willoughby Laundromat.) Mr. Vollsteadt completed this building in the summer of 1913 and it was then used as a movie theater. (Walnut then had two movie theaters --"The Lyric" was located in the Opera House.)

The Exchange State Bank was remodeled in 1915. It had been established in 1875 by E. R. and C. R. Hinckley. In 1891 it was the only baking institution in the town of Walnut. Following is the unique and interesting account of the remodeling, taken from the June 17, 1915 issue of The Walnut Bureau:

"The Exchange State Bank have finished their remodeling. The old wooden stairs which stood on the outside of the building for 31 years, have been torn away and supplanted by circle steps of white cement, through the old doorway onto a sort of landing into a vestibule constructed of stucco, giving the banking rooms an easier, safer, and more convenient entrance."

"The entrance to The Bureau office (then located in the basement of the bank building) has been moved just around the corner to the east of the bank entrance, the old wooden floors torn out and concrete put in, and the rooms remodeled and replastered, giving The Bureau force a nice light and comfortable place to work."

"The banking room floors were lowered two feet, making the entrance to their rooms much easier, and give patrons more privacy while transacting their business than if they were closer to street level. They have installed new fixtures and have paneled their rooms with seven foot panels. These fixtures and panels are of the old-fashioned genuine Walnut."

"In selecting this wood for their building, they were fortunate to obtain a flitch of freak walnut, or a log of peculiar grain which the panel manufacturer was able to match, making peculiar figures out of the natural grain of the wood. When finished, they showed such beauty that they were photographed and these photographs are now being used by the manufacturer as demonstrations of what can be done with wood."

"Wood lovers from all parts of the country who saw these panels under construction remarked that they were the most beautiful pieces of workmanship that they had ever seen, being far superior to mahogany, cherry, quartered oak, or even marble."

In 1916 L. L. Hanson purchased the lot between Gust Wolf's Wagon Shop and the I. T. Spangler grain office and erected a 40' by 80' garage. This is the building where Carl Osler is presently located.

In 1917 A. J. Hansen began the erection of his garage at the corner of Pearl and Central, which was completed in 1918.

In 1918 George Mickel enlarged his garage, adding ten feet on the west and 20 ft. on the north. This is the building in which Mertz Implement is presently located and was built a few years prior to the enlargement, by George Mickel.

In 1920 E. C. Thompson purchased the John Andresen lot, the F. C. Deen Bakery before the building was destroyed by fire. Mr. Thompson built a brick building, one story high and 100 feet long, and is the one presently occupied by Holtz Tavern.

In 1924 John Glissmann was granted permission by the city council to build a Standard Oil Station on the west end of the lot occupied by the Raymond Wolf building. (A warehouse formerly stood on this lot.)

In 1927 the new artificial ice storage building was completed. It was located on the north side of the railroad tracks, just east of the depot. The building was 50' by 35', with a capacity of 40 tons of ice. It was built by the Artificial Ice Co. of Des Moines, who contracted Harry Nieman to handle their product.

In 1932 Caddock and Nelson built their garage (where Olsen Motors is now located) on the site occupied by the Beyer Oil Station.

In June, 1947, the Walnut Telephone Co. purchased the Pete Carstensen building just back of the bank, and moved their office and equipment into this building. The offices were formerly located above the bank. In 1950 the building was remodeled, making an attractive addition to the business district.

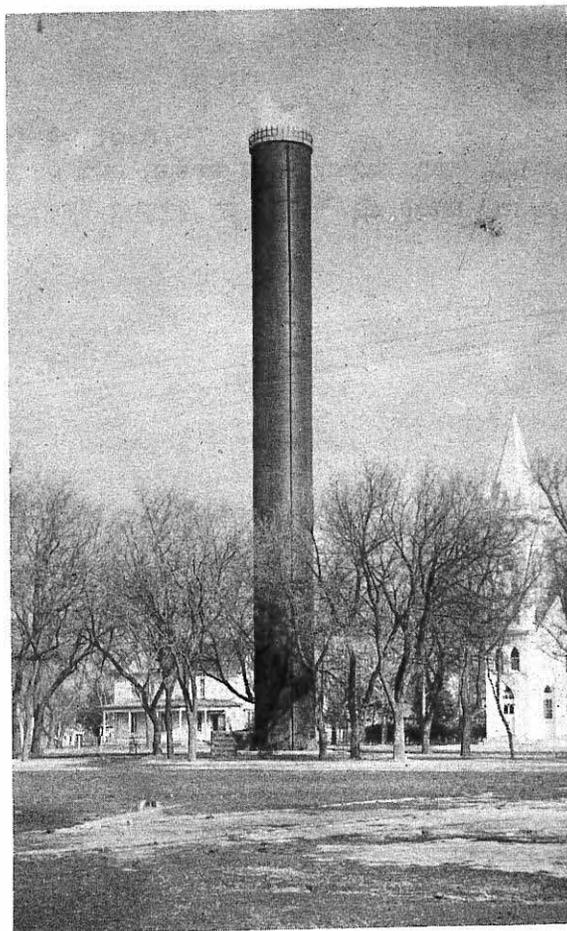
Glen Braden purchased the two lots directly north of the Raymon Wolf building and rebuilt a modern, enlarged brick structure covering the two lots in 1958. The new Legion building was also erected in this year, occupying the lots formerly owned by Herman Moritz.

In 1963 Don Walter built his new Cities Service Oil Station, and Ivan Christensen remodeled his building on the corner of Highland to be used as office for his insurance agency with living quarters in the rear.

The new addition to the fire station was begun in 1964 and is nearing completion. The new station was built in 1951.

Of the business houses that remain standing today, the Walnut State Bank building is the oldest. It was built in 1879 by J. B. Johannsen and Carstensen Bros. It was originally known as the German Bank and later as the American State Bank. The Pottawattamie County History of 1891 asserts that in that year the only bank in Walnut was the exchange State Bank, but since Mr. Johannsen operated an insurance and real estate business, the building was evidently used for other purposes than banking prior to 1891. The earliest record I have found of the German Bank, was when it was purchased in 1901 by Jurgen F. Ronna and his son, Otto.

Of course the most recent and beautiful works of architecture in Walnut is the Peace Haven Home for the retired. This is dealt with fully in the final chapter of this book.

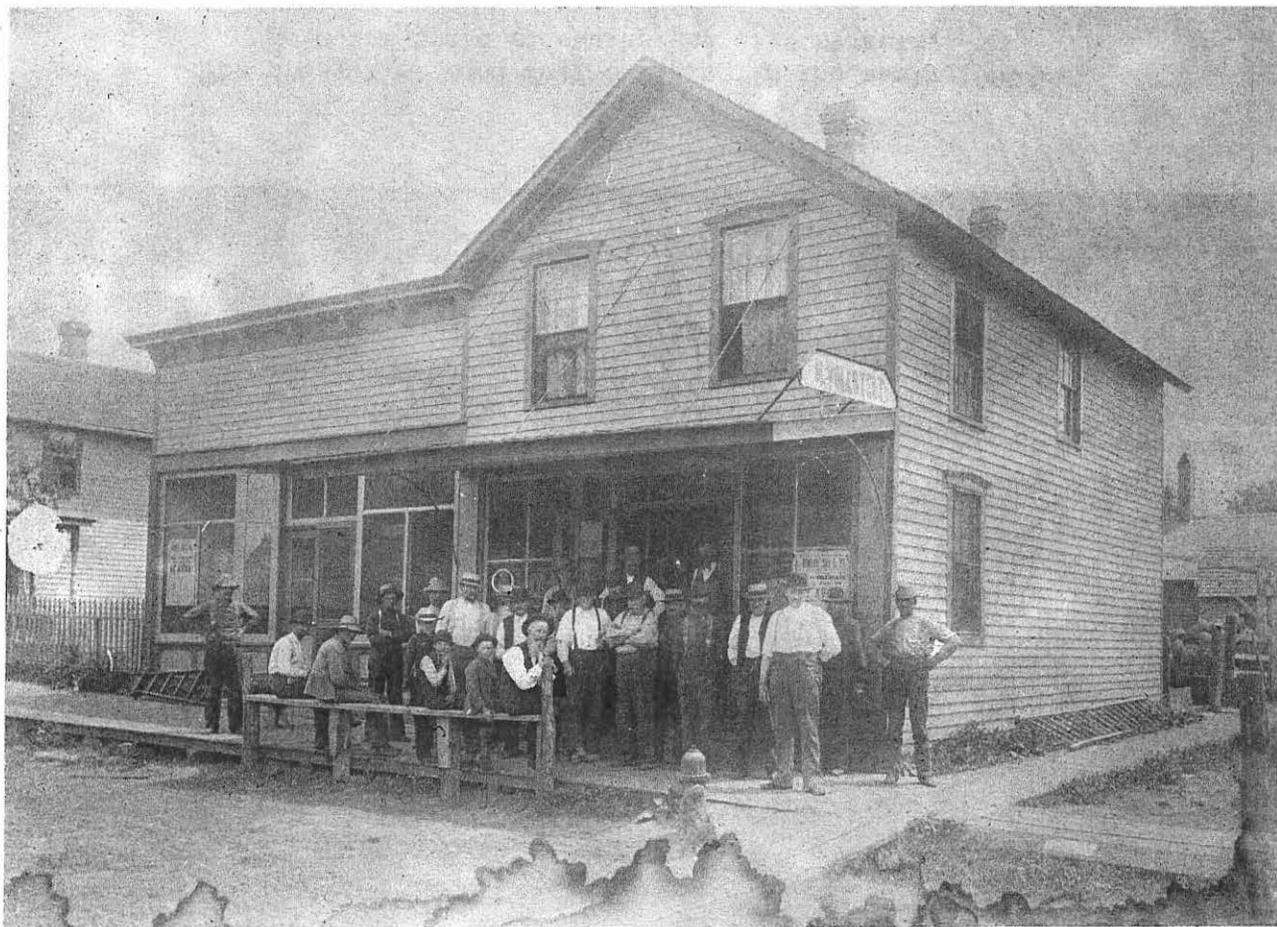


Standpipe on the northeast corner of the school grounds. This was removed in June, 1961, and a new water tower erected at the park in the north end of town. Standpipe was erected in 1886.

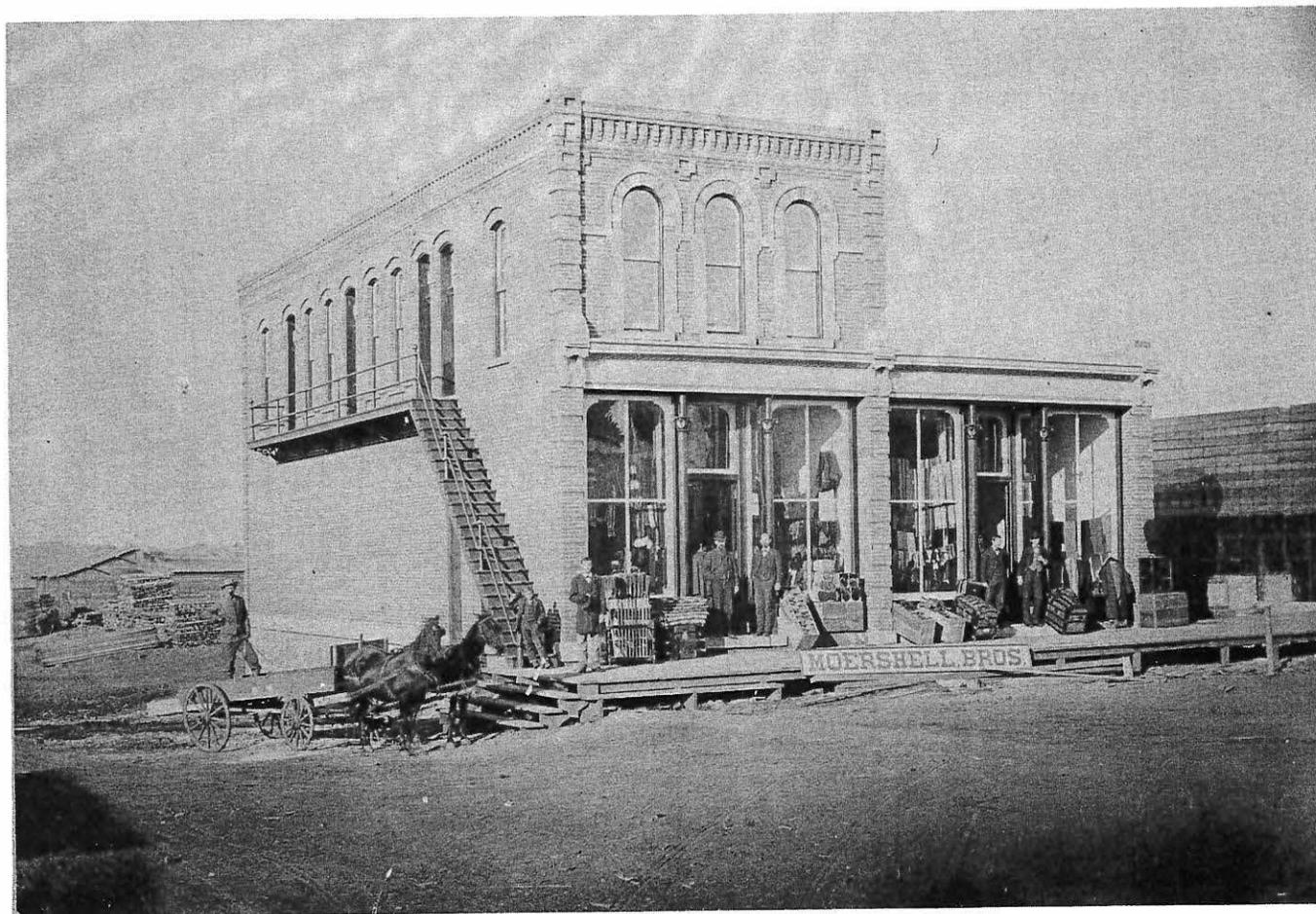
2a



Old Walnut Hotel, built in 1890, by John Burmeister. It was located next to the Green Bay Lumber Co. The hotel was torn down in the late 1950's.



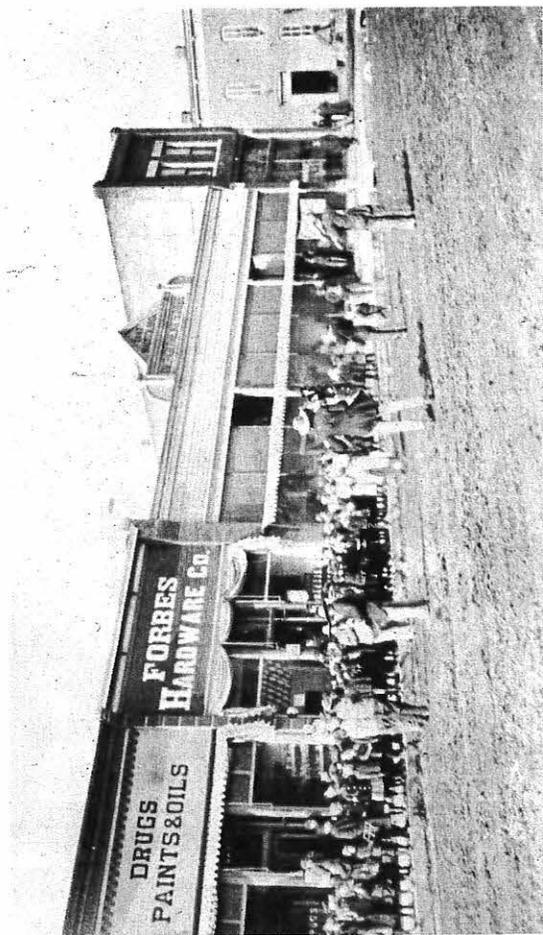
Old Vollstedt building located where Willoughby Laundromat now stands. In the picture are: (left to right) Doug Polkinharn, Bill Dixon, Fred Glissman, Carson Hansen, Otto Volstedt, John McKee, Otto Rapenn, Wm. Baur, Jim Howard, Vincent Cleveland, John Kaus, Andrew Helman, John Andersen Sr., Sam Welty, Anthony Kelley, Chas. Neff, Emory Deen, Henry Namany, Jerry Volstedt, Joe Long. Taken July 5, 1897.



The present Raymond Wolf building in the early 1900's.  
Note the board sidewalks and dirt streets.



The German Bank building in an early day. Note the Masonic Temple has not yet been erected, so the picture is prior to 1911. This is the building, prior to remodelling, in which the Walnut State Bank and adjoining telephone office are located.

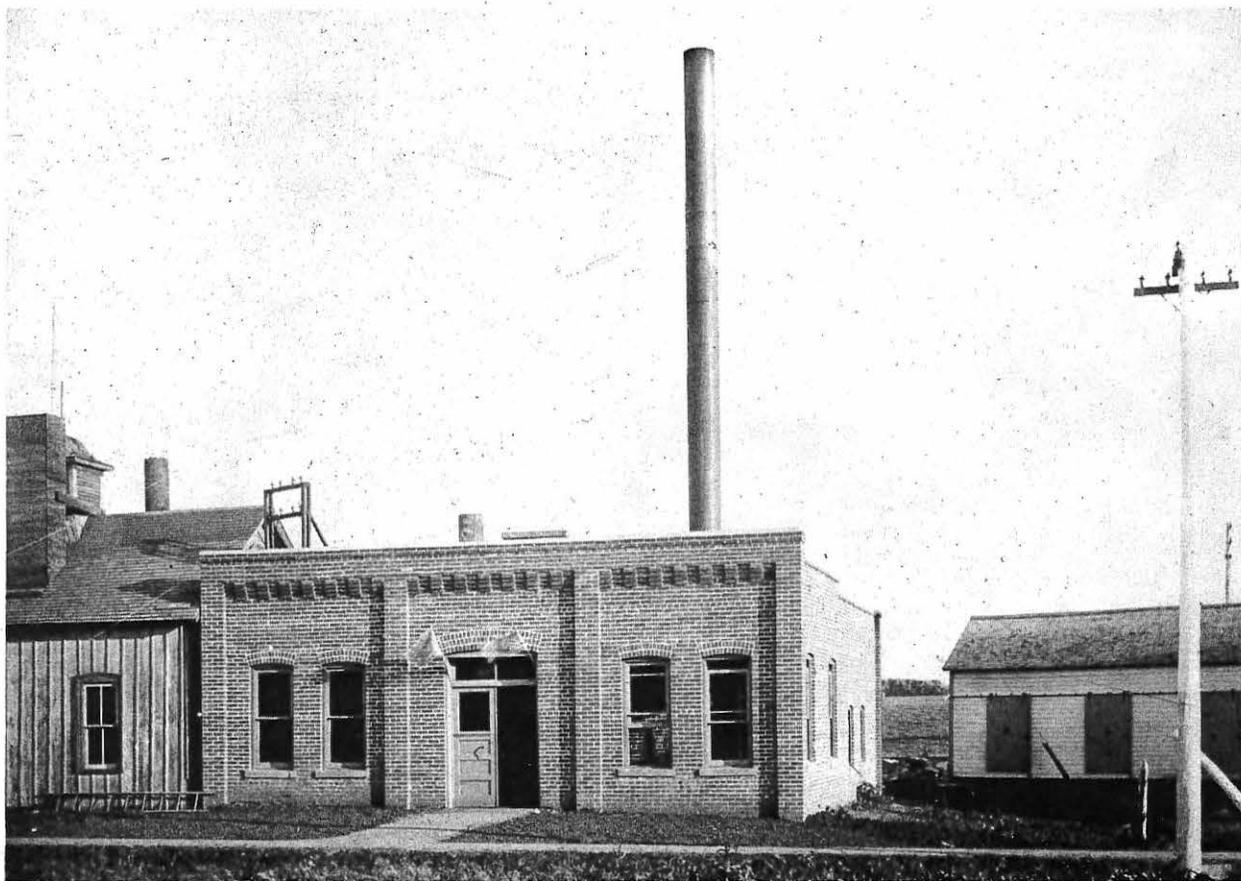


An early view of the west side of Main Street.

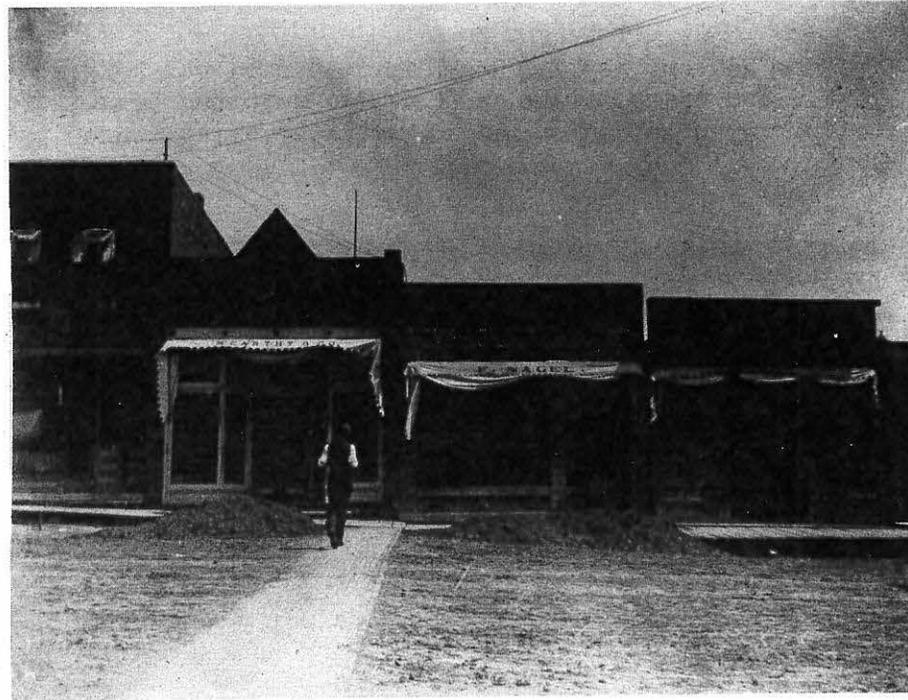


South view of the bank building, showing Carstensen's Blacksmith Shop. Note the hitching posts.

8a



Old Walnut waterworks, located on present site of the light plant.



An early view of what is now (from left) Gibson Barber Shop and Carol's Hair Fashions, Post Office, J & L Cafe, and Oldehoff Plumbing. F. Nagel was a shoe store and was here in 1904. Note the brick crossing and board sidewalks.



The old German Hall, later known as the Legion Hall. Note this was taken prior to building of the gymnasium, on the north (left) side. This building was torn down to make way for the new school addition.



Walnut's Main Street sometime between 1904 when cement sidewalks were put in and 1915 when the brick paving was installed. Note the Lyric Theater at right, and the "Millinery" sign at present location of Hancock Electric.

12a



4th of July celebration on Main Street, around 1904.  
Note that street lights have not been installed.



4th of July celebration, before 1910. Sign on building at left reads "The White House, R. A. Brindley, prop." Mr. Brindley sold his restaurant in 1910. Note the many flags and the dirt road south of town.



4th of July celebration prior to 1910. Note the White House Restaurant in right background. Ivan Christensen building is in foreground. Note the hanging "arc light".



An early picture of Wm. Carstensen home. Building at extreme left was the first uptown post office.



German Band on Main Street.  
Note Madsen's Store on left, and cement sidewalks and gutter.