

CHAPTER VIII

BEARING PRECIOUS SEED

Churches of Walnut

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Psalms 126:6

Various histories of Walnut seem to disagree as to which was the first church built in Walnut. Some say the Catholic Church was the first, and others say the Presbyterian was the first. Why there is such a discrepancy in statements I cannot determine, as according to all available records, the Catholic Church (the original framebuilding) was built in 1874. The Presbyterian Church was started in 1877 and completed in 1878. Some histories claim the Catholic Church was begun in 1873 and completed in 1874, but it seems the Catholic was indeed, the first church edifice.

Father B. P. McMenemy, stationed at Council Bluffs, was the first priest to say Mass in Walnut. He came here in 1872, and offered Mass upstairs in the Vollstedt building, which was located on the N.E. corner of Central and Highland streets, on the site where Dr. Miller's veterinary office is now located.

St. Patrick's Church, a frame building, was built under the supervision of Rev. Fr. Bernard McMenemy in 1874, at a cost of \$3500. Walnut was then a mission of St. Francis of Council Bluffs. This building was located at the extreme east end of Highland Street.

Father McMenemy of Council Bluffs and Father Gaul of Atlantic ministered to the wants of the people of Walnut until the appointment and arrival of Father Dollard, in 1883, as resident pastor. During his pastorate, the rectory was built. Fathers Gleason, Renihan and Hansen relieved Father Dollard at times. In 1898 Rev. P. J. Moran was appointed pastor and served until February, 1904. Father P. F. Gaffney then became pastor of Walnut until his death in 1915.

Father Herman Albers was his successor in 1916, and he was followed by Father V. Cashman, until the latter's death in 1947. Father E. J. Schuman came to Walnut in 1947. In 1955, with the arrival of Father Joseph Schulte, plans were made to build a new St. Patrick's Church. The new location is at the north end of Central Street, known as the Boiler Estate.

The new brick church was started in the fall of 1957 and completed in October, 1958. The church was blessed and dedicated November 2, 1958 by Bishop E. C. Daly of Des Moines, Iowa.

The first burial plot for Catholics was on the Donald Stuart farm southeast of Walnut. Later a tract of seven acres was bought northeast of town and is the present cemetery. In 1936 a graveled road was established to it through a W.P.A. grant for the town and township.

One of the first baptisms in Walnut was that of Charles F. Stuart, son of Donald Stuart.

The history of the First Presbyterian Church goes back to the days of the early pioneers, when these Iowa prairies were first being settled. There was nothing in the semblance of a town, hardly enough to give promise of a fair-sized village, and the surrounding country was sparsely settled.

The first service by a Presbyterian minister was held in the summer of 1870 when arrangements were made whereby the waiting room of the depot, then called Walnut Creek Station, could be used as a meeting place.

As yet there was no organized society, nor was anything along this line realized until August 20, 1871 when Mr. and Mrs. Leander Lodge, Mrs. Abigail Woodhouse, Mrs. Annette Woodhouse and Mrs. S. A. Stevens were received as charter members, with Rev. M. Hughes as pastor. Mr. Lodge was elected and ordained as the first elder. Mrs. Abigail Woodhouse presented the church with the first communion service.

As time passed, services were moved from the depot to the rooms over Snyder's Carpenter Shop, located where Dr. Miller's office now stands.

The project of erecting a church was discussed and in 1877 the present edifice was started. It was completed on June 23, 1878 and dedicated at that time. Its original cost has been listed as \$4000.

The church was named the Walnut Presbyterian Church, and for some time pastors served Avoca and Walnut churches. In 1882 this was changed and Walnut shared the minister with the Shelby church. Later the pastor here served the Marne Presbyterian Church.

Following is an article taken from The Walnut News in 1879:

"The new carpet, bought by the proceeds of Prof. Ferguson's concert, has been put down in the church. The pulpit rostrum and front portion of the church is covered with a neat, three-ply ingrain carpet, and the rear part of the church and the center aisle is covered with India matting. Underneath the carpet and matting is laid good heavy felt paper. The two side aisles yet remain uncarpeted, on account of the funds running short. The ladies propose holding a social in the church for the purpose of raising money to carpet the two side aisles."

In 1919 a basement was added to the church and the entire building remodeled and redecorated. Originally, the church was built with a high front spire and several smaller spires in the typical late Victorian fashion. At this time there were no sidewalks and the church yard was surrounded by a low iron fence.

By 1927 the church was freed of all indebtedness for the basement, and previous to this year there had been \$4,000 paid for improvements. The records of Presbytery show that this church had received aid from the Home Mission Board for many years, if not during the entire time of its existence, until the beginning of the fiscal year in 1927, when the church became self-supporting.

Around 1945 the Methodist Church closed and from 1942 to 1946 Rev. Banker, a Methodist minister, served the Presbyterian Church as pastor. On Nov. 23, 1947, Rev. John DeBerg received the largest group ever taken into the church when 48 were received on confession of faith and 53 by letter, making a total of 101.

In 1950-51 Rev. DeBerg served as Moderator of the Synod of Iowa (the church equivalent of governor of the state).

In 1950 the church was again renovated, with new interior walls, floor, pews, and other changes effected. In 1951 the church celebrated its 80th anniversary, and at that time, had a membership of 203 adults and 123 Sunday School members, with 58 members in the women's organization, then the ladies' aid. In 1955 a basement addition was completed to provide additional space for Sunday School.

At today's date, 1965, Mary Engleman and Bert Hammond hold the longest membership record in the church, both having joined in 1904. Mrs. Agartha Engleman Johnson and Mrs. Grace Seville Hammond (both now deceased) were next, having joined two years later.

Ministers serving the Presbyterian Church here are:

Rev. M. Hughes 1871 - 1874	Rev. J. D. Brewster 1911-1912
Rev. Andrew Herron 1874-1878	Rev. Joseph Cherry 1913-1916
Rev. George Lodge 1878-1882	Rev. J. S. Smith 1916-1917
Rev. J. Kennedy 1882-1885	Rev. W. W. Pfautz 1918-1919
Rev. R. E. Flickinger 1885-1887	Rev. Oliver Stephenson 1921-1927
Rev. R. N. Coulter 1887-1889	Rev. Thomas Hill 1928-1929
Rev. G. B. Reid 1889-1892	Rev. Arthur Rumbaugh 1929-1933
Rev. Tanner 1892-1894	Rev. R. Propst 1933-1934
Rev. J. B. Taylor 1894-1896	Rev. C. Burdine 1934-1936
Rev. J. M. Smith 1896-1898	Rev. David Cecil 1937-1938
Rev. Fred Grace 1898-1900	Rev. D. Hubler 1939-1940
Rev. A. Gilmore 1903-1905	Rev. Richard Chambers 1940-1941
Rev. A. Herron 1905-1907	Rev. M. A. Banker 1942-1946
Rev. John Orth 1907-1909	Rev. John DeBerg 1946-1961
Rev. D. H. Kramer 1909-1911	Rev. Wm. Kuechmann 1961 —

Previous to the building of their church, the Methodist of Walnut held services in the Presbyterian Church and Opera House (located on the corner of Central and Pearl Sts., next to where Dr. Weir is now located). The earliest records available state that on March 29, 1888, a meeting was held for the purpose of re-organizing and also to adopt articles of incorporation. The church was built this same year, during the pastorate of H. H. Shipman.

The work of the church progressed nicely, and in the year 1901-1902 the former parsonage was sold and a new one built on the lot east of the church.

The following have served as pastors of this church since 1888: H. H. Shipman, R. T. Leary, E. M. Dugger, A. V. Knepper, A. H. Rush, Wm. Mercer, George Ladd, T. G. Allen, W. H. Rambo, W. A. Allen, H. C. Barrett, R. E. Saunders, P. A. Smith, A. O. Wright, H. D. Glassburn, W. C. Smith, E. R. Stroud, E. C. McGilvray, F. L. Shepherd, R. C. Buchanan, F. N. Reddinger, R. V. Felt, H. K. Morga, Clifford Cody, L. E. Colman, James Wilkins, Paul H. Hicks, W. L. Cunningham, W. W. Watson, Clement Rowe, Wm. Harding, Holliday, Gatch, C. F. Curtis, and Banker.

Regular church services were discontinued in the church about 1945. However, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Anderson were married there in November of 1946, and the last services to be held there was the AMVETS memorial service in 1951.

The church was sold in '51 to Dr. F. N. Weber, who has since remodeled it for his office. This building is located on the northeast corner of Central and Summitt Streets.

Since 1870 and before, emigrants from Germany, mostly from Schleswig-Holstein, settled in and around Walnut. German pastors from our neighboring towns held services occasionally, until 1897. Looking for a suitable pastor, the Germans of Walnut heard of a young man who only recently had come from their mother country, who was visiting a sister in Atlantic, Iowa. They engaged him as instructor and this is how H. E. Hansen came to Walnut. Little did this man realize that he was to be instrumental in the founding of a church. For after his arrival it was learned that he had completed studies in German universities for the Christian Ministry. All that he lacked was ordination.

In late November of 1897 the following group met in the office of a business establishment on Main Street to discuss the possibility of a church in this community: P. Karstens, J. Boeck, Otto Rapenn, John Andresen, C. L. Lebeck, J. Grantz, J. B. Johannsen, J. Ronna, Peter Simonsen and others. They appointed a group of solicitors to collect funds and by Christmas of that year the response was so encouraging that they planned to hold another meeting very soon. The first contributor was Henry Ohrt, and the highest amounts were received from Conrad Mueller and C. L. Lebeck.

On January 16, 1898 approximately 50 contributing members met, and by August of that year a new church building was completed and ready for use. Their first official act was to ordain their

"language teacher" for the Christian Ministry.

The congregation was organized and incorporated under the name German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Walnut, Iowa. The following accepted offices: P. Karstens, John Andresen, Chris Rossmann, P. F. Hansen, Otto Rapenn, A. Jacobsen. Those on the building committee were: Julius Beyer, H. Paasch, J. F. Ronna, C. L. Lebeck, Nic Petersen, Max Reimer.

After four years of successful work Emil Hansen was appointed traveling missionary for the Iowa district, and the congregation did not have a resident pastor for 20 years. They were supplied by pastors from Shelby who were: Rev. F. Leonhardt 1900 - 1905, and the Rev. A. Dettman 1905 - 1921.

In 1921 the Rev. F. Dollefeld came as resident pastor, and a house was rented for his residence. Three years later a permanent residence was purchased for the Rev. Walter Kieker, and the pastors who followed.

Rev. Kieker began his pastorate in 1924 and completed in 1933. During his pastorate the congregation joined the Evangelical Synod of North America.

In March, 1935, the Rev. William Krummel began his pastorate, and in 1942 the congregation took the official name of "Peace Evangelical and Reformed Church of Walnut, Iowa". Extensive remodeling was done during this time. Rev. Krummel left in July, 1941.

In November of 1941, the Rev. C. E. Gabler became pastor, resigning in February of 1943. In July, 1944, the Rev. Theodore Thomas was called to serve the congregation. During his stay the congregation celebrated its 50th anniversary. A new organ was added in 1950. In 1956, just shortly before Rev. Thomas left in July, the congregation voted to build a new parsonage. This was completed in the fall of 1957.

In January, 1958, the Rev. F. E. Fieker began his pastorate. Many improvements have been made and there are several organizations active within the church. In 1961 the congregation became part of the United Church of Christ, due to the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed church with the Congregational Christian Church throughout the United States. The congregation now has the official name of "Peace United Church of Christ" of Walnut, Iowa. The congregation also sponsored the founding of Peace Haven Home for Retired Persons, which has become a community effort.

The Calvary Baptist Church of Walnut had its start in the spring of 1951. Its small group met first in the Monroe No.4 school, located about 6 miles north of Walnut. From April until August of that year the group went under the name "The Bible Fellowship" but by August had agreed upon a simple covenant and doctrinal statement which included the position of complete separation from the American Baptist Convention, the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, and all other associations that would lead into an entanglement with apostacy or modernism.

Ministers and teachers from Omaha Baptist Bible School served this group at Sunday services during the summer. Later this group felt divine leadership to look forward to a church in Walnut. The first pastor was Rev. Mel Stadt of Blythe, California who came in September, 1951. A parsonage, located one block east of Central Street was purchased for Rev. Stadt and his family.

The following February a week of meetings was held in the show room of the Wilcox Garage. Over 1,000 people attended during the seven days of services. Soon after this, the Legion Hall was rented for worship services.

In May, 1952, a section of land was purchased from Irene Hagge Brackbalin, and plans were soon under way to start a building. Pastor Stadt, having been trained as an architect and builder, drew the plans for the church, and with the help of the men of the congregation, they started that summer to build the basement.

In April, 1953, the basement was dedicated and services were held there until the spring of 1956 when building was again begun to complete the structure. Services were held in the main sanctuary in late fall of 1957. Dedication services were held February 23, 1958.

Pastor Stadt gave the congregation this motto: "Where Friendly People Love to Sing" and the church motto: "Holding forth the word of life". The congregation voted to call the church, "Calvary Baptist".

Pastors serving the church have been:

Mel Stadt ----- 1951 - 1958

Byron Whitehouse ----- 1958 - 1961

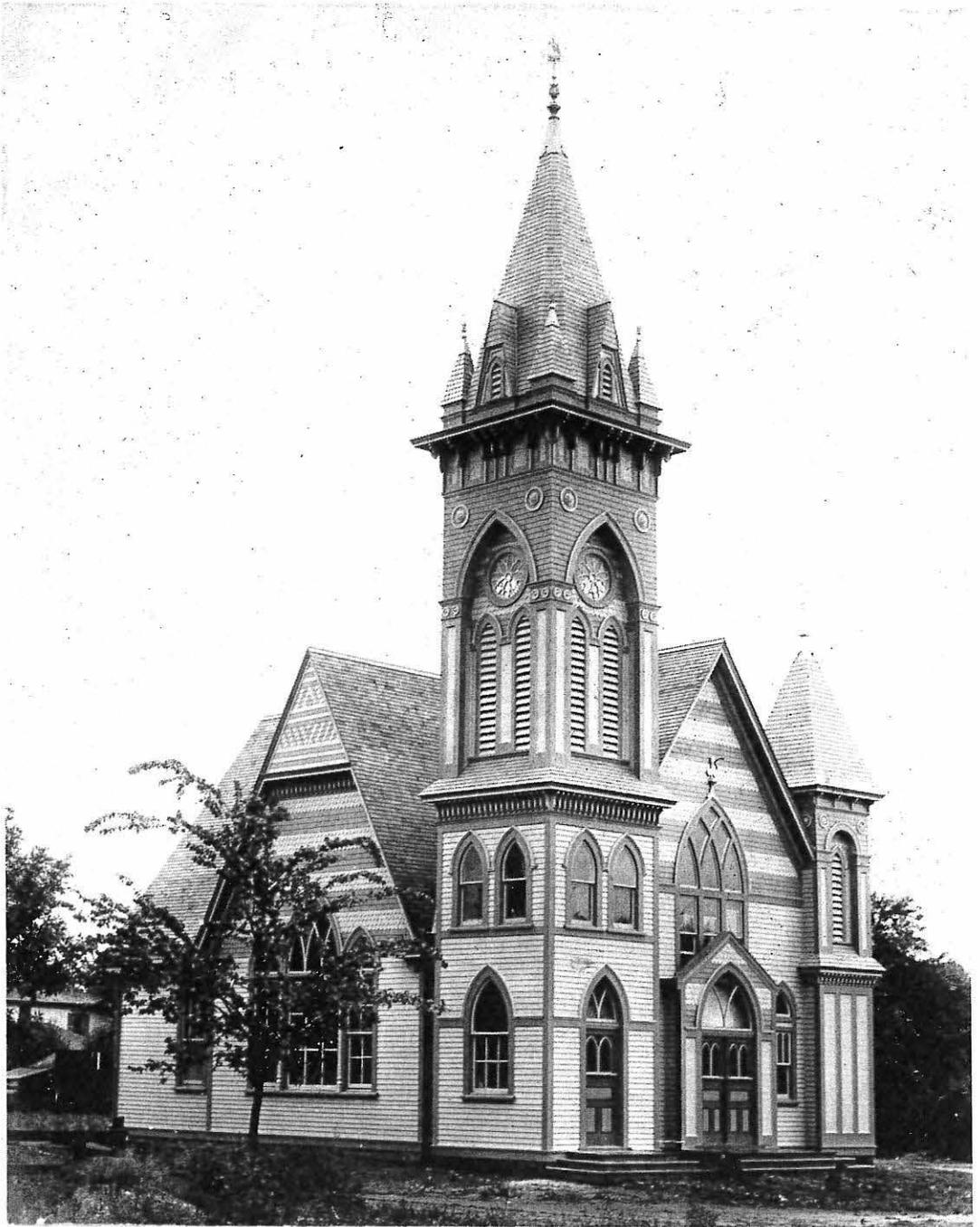
Donald Bunge ----- 1961 - 1964

The present pastor is Rev. Ted Konvalin.

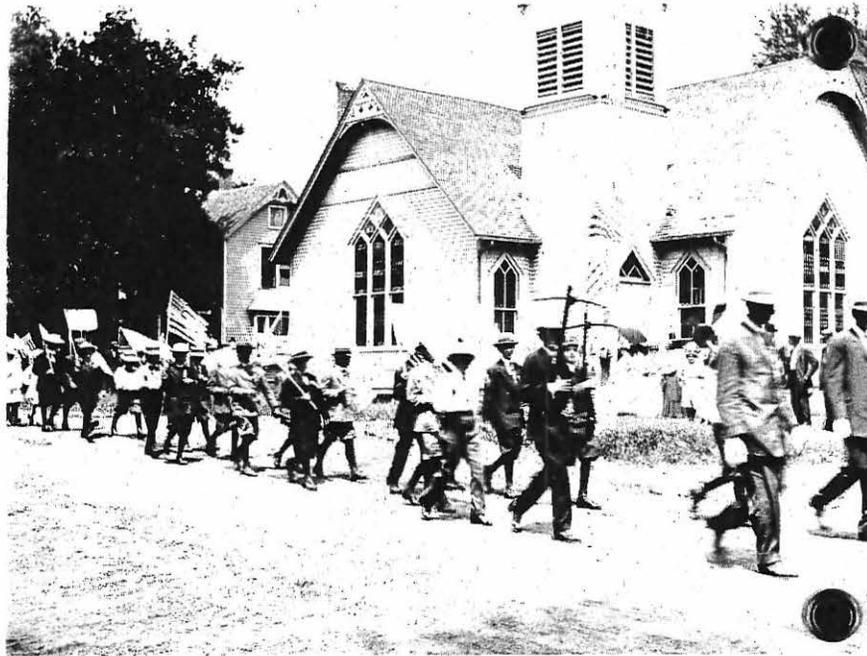
The aim of the church is first serve the people in the town and country, then to fulfill the great commission of the Scriptures:

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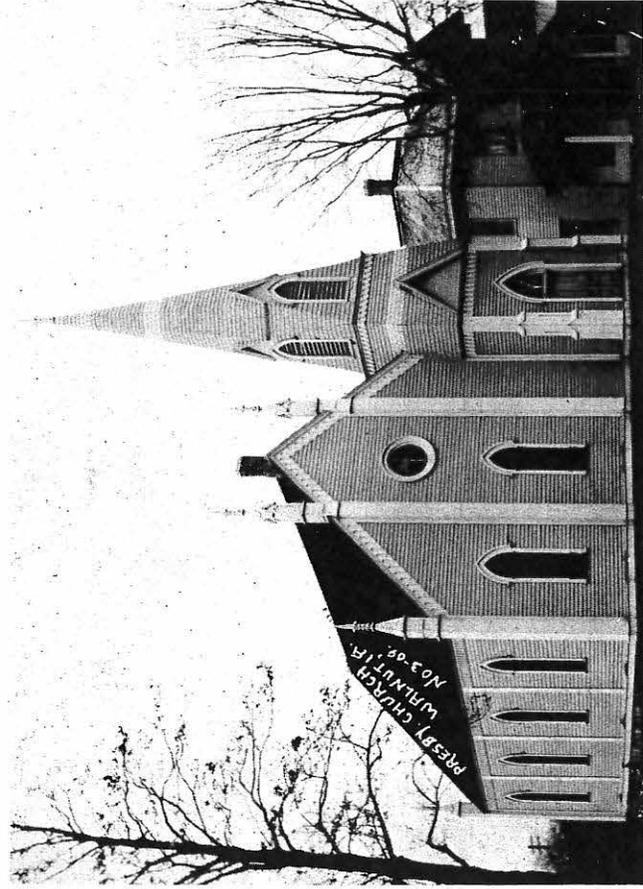
"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." The church helps to support their missionaries throughout the world.



The old Evangelical Lutheran Church around 1902.
Now the Peace United Church of Christ.



4th of July parade in the early 1900's. Methodist Church is in the background. This is the building which Dr. Weber has remodelled for his office.



Presbyterian Church, before the remodelling and new additions.



The original frame building of the Catholic Church,
located at the extreme east end of Highland Street.

CHAPTER IX

THE VITALITY-GIVING SAP

Organizations in Walnut

What Walnut is and has today she owes to her various organizations. Peace Haven Home, Veteran's Memorial Park, the new Legion building, the traditional Christmas tree and Christmas lights, the street markers and house numbers are only a few of the tangible assets bestowed by her organizations, in addition to the many intangible but worthwhile projects.

Preserving that old-fashioned do-it-yourself spirit, they provide lively entertainment with annual dances, banquets, children's Christmas party, horse show, and Fun Days.

Walnut's organizations might be likened to the various pieces of a beautiful picture puzzle. Each group, maintaining Walnut's stability, but concerning itself only with its individual objectives, contributes its own unique "piece" to the resulting picture of progress.

Here then are the descriptive "pieces", which, when combined, display the picture of Walnut's colorful, historic past and her active present, blending into a promising future.

The Post of the Grand Army of the Republic was organized in Walnut on Wednesday evening, April 23, 1879, by Department Commander Griswold. The following officers were elected and installed: Commander, Major W. L. Williams; Sr. Vice-Commander, Capt. A. L. Martin; Jr. Vice-Commander, E. Kenworthy; Surgeon, Dr. F. S. Thomas; Chaplain, W. H. Bowman; Officer of the Day, O. M. Bruce; Adjutant, J. C. Spangler; QM, I. T. Spangler; QM Sgt., B. F. Bixby; Officer of the Guard, Mr. Spencer. The organization was composed of honorably discharged soldiers.

The first Walnut Community Club was organized in 1912. (See Chapter V.)

Known as the Walnut Community Development Club, it must have disbanded later, and reorganized as the Walnut Community Club in 1922, with ninety members. Officers elected were: President, Dr. Harry Smith; 1st Vice-president, August Beyer; 2nd VP., W. R. Spence; secretary, Dr. E. V. Denault; treasurer, F. C. Hector; directors at large: Will Nilan, Art Jacobsen.

AMERICAN LEGION

The Walnut Post No. 422 of the American Legion applied for a temporary charter February 3, 1920. A permanent charter was granted March 20, 1950. Earl E. Thoning was the first Post Commander and Orville Myers (or G. D. Larsen, records uncertain) the first Post Adjutant.

Meeting were held in barber shops and other business places until the club purchased the Opera House. Post and Auxiliary members met there until the building was sold to the school and razed to make way for the new school addition.

In 1958 the Legion rented the former Harvey Lewis Harness Shop building on lower Central St. and started plans to build a new Legion Hall. The former Moritz Meat Shop was purchased and a new brick building erected on the site.

Legion membership consists of World War I and World War II veterans.

Among their many accomplishments is their sponsorship of Midget baseball.

Walter Rieck is the present commander, Darryl Kohlscheen is Adjutant.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

When the American Legion Post was organized in Walnut, the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of the veterans were approached to organize an auxiliary. Application for a charter was made April 26, 1922, and organization was completed May 2, 1922.

Charter members were: Mrs. Laura Thoning, Mrs. Orville Myers, Mrs. John Nichols, Miss Leona Rossmann, Miss Leonora Jurgensen, Mrs. Elizabeth Lewis, Mrs. Sabina Burke, Mrs. Bernhardt Hass, Mrs. Wm. Myers, Mrs. E. C. Thompson, Sr., Mrs. Edward Thompson, Jr., Mrs. Ella Fredrehsen, Mrs. Anna Feldhahn, Mrs. John Stuart, Miss Anna Paulsen, Miss Marguerite Thompson, Mrs. R. C. Schlotfeldt, Mrs. Lillie Mae Tilton, and Miss Pluma Menefee.

The first regular meeting was held at the W.O.W. Hall on June 30, 1922. Officers elected were: Mrs. Laura Thoning, president; Mrs. Aleta Myers 1st vice president; Mrs. John Nichols, second vice president; Miss Leona Rossmann, secretary; Miss Leonora Jurgensen, treasurer; Mrs. Elizabeth Lewis, chaplain; Mrs. Sabina Burke, historian; Mrs. Bernhardt Hass, sergeant-at-arms.

The executive committee consisted of Mrs. R. C. Schlotfeldt, Mrs. Anna Feldhahn, and Mrs. E. C. Thompson, Sr.

Mrs. Harry Nieman (Leona Rossmann) has served as president of the local unit, as county president, seventh district president, and state vice president.

Mrs. Menefee served as county president.

Mrs. Ivan Christensen is the present president.

The Auxiliary cooperates with the Legion in providing for veterans and their families: hospital parties, clothing, Glenwood State School, Red Cross Bloodmobile. Poppy Day in May is held to raise funds.

Presidents of the Auxiliary from 1922 to the present include: Mrs. Earl Thoning, Mrs. Sabina Burke, Miss Naomi Robinson, Miss Roberta Robinson, Mrs. Homer Schlotfeldt, Mrs. Howard Fitzgerald, Mrs. Harry Nieman, Mrs. Martha Fraser, Mrs. W. S. Smathers, Mrs. Herbert Koehrsen, Mrs. Ed Damgaard, Mrs. Walter Rieck, Sr., Mrs. J. C. Menefee, Mrs. Clarence Walter, Miss Evalena Rossmann, Mrs. Bernhardt Hass, Mrs. Ivan Christensen.

AMVET AUXILIARY

In March, 1942 the United Service Women's Organization organized and drew up a charter, and continued until the charter was withdrawn May 16, 1946. Members reorganized in May, 1946 to be an auxiliary to the AMVETS post No. 45.

The first president was Mrs. Charles Linn. Other presidents have been: Mrs. Charles Longnecker, Mrs. Paul McAvoy, Mrs. John Juhl, Mrs. Lorenz Fix, Mrs. John Rock, Mrs. Dale Petersen, Mrs. Dwain Boeck, Mrs. Melvin Bussow, Mrs. Alvin Troll, and the present president, Mrs. Harold Hansen.

Present officers are: Mrs. Hansen, Mrs. Alvin Troll, Sr. Vice-president; Mrs. David Mutum, Jr. Vice-president; Mrs. Margaret McLaughlin, secretary; and Mrs. Lorenz Fix, Treasurer.

Mrs. Paul McAvoy was state president in 1954-55. Mrs. John Rock was state Sergeant-at-arms and state vice-president. Mrs. Lorenz Fix has served as state treasurer.

The following members have served in county and district offices: Mrs. John Rockwell, county president; Mrs. Charles Linn, 1st District president; Mrs. Lorenz Fix, District president; Mrs. Paul McAvoy, district president; and Mrs. John Rock, district president.

Present district officers are: Mrs. Ralph Shepherd, chaplain; Mrs. Charles Longnecker, hospital chairman; Mrs. Lorenz Fix, secretary; and Mrs. Nellie Eslick, regional sergeant-at-arms.

The main projects of the group are hospital aid and child care; White Clover Sales; sponsored Easter Seal drive last three years; collect eyes for the needy, and coffee strips; decorate graves on Memorial Day.

Other accomplishments include: planting trees in 1947 at Veteran's Memorial Park as a memorial to World War II boys; on September 9, 1962, presented and dedicated a plaque for the memorial trees at the park; presented the 4H with a flag; won state award for chaplain, history book and membership; sponsored girl scouts 1964-65; sponsored medical self-help program in Walnut; sponsored getting PTA organized in 1960; served buffalo banquet for 4 years for the Wild Life Club.

ORDER OF EASTERN STAR

Mignon Chapter No. 286 Walnut, Iowa, Order of the Eastern Star, was chartered October 24, 1900. At this time nineteen members were initiated as Charter Members: Mrs. Mary Allee, Mrs. Sarah Bruce, Mrs. Isabel Brindley, Miss Helen E. Frisbie, Miss Emiline Frisbie, Mrs. Mattie Flemming Fraser, Mrs. Jennie Hansen, Mrs. Matilda Nissen Lebeck, Mrs. Emma Mosher, Mrs. Maggie Ronna, Mrs. Anna Ronna Welch, Mrs. Mabel Ronna, Miss Cora Ray, Mrs. Gertrude Sievers, Mrs. Mary Staman, Mrs. Vera Stemen Seville, Mrs. Lida Thompson Pierce, Mrs. Louise Wilmarth Hansen, and Mr. L.L. Hansen.

To date (1965) Mrs. Matilda Nissen Lebeck is the only living charter member.

Mrs. Mary Allee was the first Worthy Matron, and L.L. Hansen the first Worthy Patron.

Mignon Chapter observed its 50th anniversary on November 13, 1950. At this time Mrs. Howard Swanson and Erwin J. J. Koos were Worthy Matron and Patron. A banquet and party were observed at that time with 200 guests present.

The chapter meets the second Thursday of each month.

To date, eight members are on the 50 year membership list: Mrs. Matilda Nissen Lebeck, of Los Angeles, California; Mrs. Vera Christensen of Fremont, Nebraska; Mrs. Alanda Bowman of Walnut; Dr. and Mrs. Harry Koll of El Paso, Texas; Mrs. Olena Rasmussen of Elkhorn; Mrs. Frances Johnson of Casper, Wyoming; and Mrs. Gladys Stiles Swingle of El Centro, California.

The Chapter, with the help of the Masonic Order, sponsor the Rainbow Order for girls. Through the years the Order has been an active organization and it would be difficult to select any one person for outstanding work. However, Sister Leona Rossmann Nieman who will become a 50 year member on January 6, 1966, has served her chapter not only as an officer and Worthy Matron, but served as organist from 1931 to 1936, then again in 1939 to the present year of 1965.

Miss Evalena Rossmann and Maurice Croghan are presently Worthy Matron and Patron.

MASONIC ORDER

A special dispensation was issued on the 14th day of November, 1898, by Crom Bowen, Grand Master, to form a new lodge at Walnut, Iowa. The following Master Masons were named in this dispensation: J. F. Rogers, Master; J. F. Ronna, Senior Warden; W. C. Sievers, Junior Warden, together with O. Mosher, F. B. LeFeber, J. G. Thompson, Chas. Neff, Ben Deen, O. M. Bruce and J. H. Schofield.

The above members met November 24, 1898, when Brother J. F. Rogers, as Worshipful Master, appointed Brother O. Mosher treasurer, pro tem; J. G. Thompson, Junior Deacon pro tem; Chas. Neff and F. M. Allee, Senior and Junior Stewards pro tem; and L. A. Stamen, Tyler.

After dispensation was read, Lodge was called to order and opened on the third degree. The following business took place and each officer was informed of his duties.

A fee of thirty dollars was agreed upon. Dues to be \$3.75 per year.

A resolution was offered that the lodge return thanks to L. S. Allen and E. G. Squires of Grove Lodge No. 492, Marne, in presenting their demits that Walnut might be enabled to organize a Masonic Lodge, thereby securing a home, where they will be ever welcome.

The Lodge was under dispensation until May 1, 1899, at which time they were to report to the Grand Secretary of Iowa at Cedar Rapids, their official business to that time.

On July 6, 1899, Thomas Lambert, Grand Master, appointed Deputy Grand Master G. A. Spaulding to organize the lodge, to preside at an election of officers of said lodge, and install said officers: J. F. Rogers, Worshipful Master; Otto Ronna, Senior Deacon; O. Mosher, treasurer; J. F. Ronna, Senior Warden; J. G. Thompson,

Junior Deacon; W. C. Sievers, Junior Warden; F. B. LeFeber, secretary.

The Worshipful Master appointed the following officers: M. B. Frisbie, Tyler; F. M. Allee, Senior Steward; and Chas. Neff, Junior Steward.

Brother A. C. Mitzen was appointed Grand Marshal for the installation.

Following installation a bill for twenty three dollars for the charter was allowed.

The Lodge was now ready for petitions and the regular business. The first petition for the degrees was presented by S. R. Comer, second petition by S. J. Sinn on demit. The following petitions were received in order: L. L. Hansen, F. H. Grace, C. W. Simonsen, W.W. Walters, T. J. Thompson, H. J. Hansen, E. A. Nissen, J. C. Blackby, and G. C. Brandt, all deceased but G. C. Brandt.

The first officers decided to have the first meeting on Wednesday evening, Nov. 30, and every Thursday evening until further notice. On July 27, 1899, the regular meetings were changed to the last Thursday on or before full moon. Then sometime during the year 1921 it was changed again to the first Thursday of the month. Brother T. E. Palmer was Worshipful Master at this time. Also at the regular meeting of July 27, 1899, a bill was allowed to Miss Lydia Thompson, making apron, \$3.00.

At a regular meeting in October, 1899, W.M., J. E. Rogers appointed W. C. Sievers and Otto Ronna as a committee to have a picture taken of the Charter Members.

On February 4, 1911 a meeting was called for the purpose of organizing an Association to provide a home for the Morro Lodge 559 A.F. and A.M., of Walnut. On this day "Articles of Incorporation" were written and signed.

A Board of Directors Meeting of the Masonic Temple Association was called to order by President Comer on July 8, 1911. Two bids were read for the erection of the Masonic Temple, one for P. H. Wind and Son, \$9400 verbal, and one of A. Backus and F. Bigelow, \$7313, written. At another meeting of the Board on July 15, 1911, the bid of Backus and Bigelow was accepted and a few changes made, the bid was verbally increased to \$7350.

On July 24, 1911 the lot was purchased from J. F. Ronna for \$1,000. The Temple, lot, fixtures and trimmings amounted to approximately \$10,000.

On Wednesday afternoon, December 27, 1911, the new Masonic Temple was dedicated. The Honorable W. F. Cleaveland of Harlan was Grand Master of Ceremonies, assisted by J. G. Thompson as Deputy Grand Master, J. W. Forbes as G.S.W., Dr. W. F. Brandt as G.J.W., Otto Romna as G. Treas., Newton R. Parvin of Cedar Rapids, Grand Secretary; L. J. Neff as D.G. Secty; T. L. Lebeck as G.S.D.; August Ketelsen as G.J.D.; Lloyd Longnecker as G.S.S.; Emil Feldhahn as G.J.S.; Henry Rossmann as G. Tyler; and L. M. Madsen, Dr. Morris Moore, and Dr. Spaulding of Avoca as Past Masters.

Miss Pearl Smith played the marches and played the piano accompaniment for the choir composed of John Reimer, Miss Marie Brandt, the Misses Sell, and Mr. Sell.

Following the dedication ceremonies, a brief sketch of the history of the lodge was read by L. J. Neff.

Further ceremonies were held that evening.

THURSDAY FEDERATED CLUB

The Junior Women's Federated Club of Walnut was organized March 22, 1935, having as its motto: "The height of your ideals indicates the size of you." The club colors are yellow and white.

The charter members were: Madeline Bassett, Ruth Burkey, Muriel Dau, Emma Forbes, Bernice Larson, Mary Moore, Opal Moritz, Kathryn McDermott, Maxine Rieck, Wanda Rieck, Ethel Stahl, Bertha Udem, and Eileen Hamilton. Wilma Nissen sponsored the club, and Wanda Rieck Jacobsen served as its first president.

Around 1945 the name was changed to Thursday Federated Club and the status was changed to senior women's club.

Among the various projects have been cash donation for play ground equipment, bird house building contest, sale of flags and housenumbers, purchased first fish bowl for the local kindergarten, participated in several "get out the vote" campaigns, rounded up candidates for the 1965 town election, and actively participated in that year's mayoral campaign.

Mrs. Erwin Arndt, president of the club, is the first member to hold county office. She is presently serving as vice-chairman and has been elected to the office of County Chairman for 1966-68.

Present club officers are: Mrs. Erwin Arndt, president; Mrs. Louis Myers, vice-president; Mrs. Larry Shepherd, secretary; and Mrs. Dixon Zander, treasurer.

Mrs. Paul McAvoy has served three years as town clerk, and is also on the library board with Mrs. Edna Nielsen and Mrs. Joe Mutum. Mrs. Nielsen and Mrs. Larry Shepherd serve on the Gold Feather Committee.

WALNUT WOMEN'S FEDERATED CLUB

The Women's Federated Club of Walnut, Iowa was organized January 26th, 1922, having as its motto: "God gave every man his talent, but did not undertake to cultivate it." The club colors are green and white and its flower, the white carnation.

The charter members were: Mrs. L. J. Neff, president; Mrs. Oliver Stephensen, vice-president; Mrs. F. C. Hector, secretary; and Mrs. C. R. Spangler, treasurer; Mrs. George Neff, Mrs. W. L. White, Mrs. Otto Ronna, Mrs. Martha Fleming, Mrs. C. W. Larsen, Mrs. William Myers, Mrs. James Pope, Mrs. Fred Fell, and Mrs. E. C. Thompson.

These women felt there was a need in Walnut for an organization to stimulate an interest in Literature, Science, Art, Music, and all higher educational work, therefore the programs have been of a miscellaneous nature.

At the first meeting it was decided to establish a circulating library for Walnut. Donations were asked of the public and each member donated a readable book to form the nucleus and its first home was Mrs. McCloud's Millinery Store and the hours were the same as now with the exception of being open Wednesday night. The club members acted as librarians. Its home changed to Reick Bros. Furniture Store, moved to the Thompson Drug Store and found its permanent home in the clerk's office of the city hall in 1925. It then reverted to the city with the public support of a mill levy and again in 1957 the Federated Club assumed the position of librarian to free more monies for the purchase of books.

The Federated Club purchased the furnishings for the establishment of a public Ladies Rest Room in the back room of the city hall.

Since 1949 the Federated Club has sponsored the swimming program of the American Red Cross for the children of the Walnut Community. During the first few years the children were transported to Atlantic where they received their instruction and then later to the Avoca pool when it opened. This was accomplished through the generosity of members, Walnut's community-minded men who donated their trucks for transportation and in later years a small fee has been charged the students for their transportation in the school busses.

The club took the initiative steps in organizing the school hot lunch program in 1949. The first meals were served in the Legion Hall because of its facilities and its proximity to the school. Several member committees canned food for the program during the summer months.

Through the Geberal Federation's Achievement program, the Walnut club has contributed many projects for the betterment of our community. These projects have been the above mentioned and also the summer playground project which was conducted in the city park for several years, glass, soap sculpture, and pottery exhibits have been shown, sold savings stamps at the school. The club has enjoyed many tours throughout the surrounding territory at the Joselyn Art Museum, art exhibits at Ames and in Des Moines.

Our club has contributed several outstanding women for offices in the county -- Mrs. L. J. Neff, Mrs. W. L. Rieck and Mrs. Albert Schirm having been elected to the county presidency. Mrs. Harold Nissen served as county president, district director, state offices, and culminating as State President of the Iowa Federation with her election to this office occurring in Burlington, Iowa in 1953.

Through the years the membership has fluctuated but at present there are 26 active members and four associate members.

WALNUT FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Walnut Volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1880. The first engine and 200 feet of hose, with 25 feet of suction hose, arrived November 17, 1880. It was a hand engine, requiring 12 men to operate it. At the trial it threw water against the wind onto the ridge of the Clayton elevator, a height of 65 feet. The engine and its appurtenances cost the town \$500.

The Fire Department elected officers in 1881, and organized into a company. The first officers were: Captain, J. R. Miller; Assistant, E. A. Bigelow; foreman of hose, W. H. Linfor; assistant, Woodring; secretary, C. Brown; treasurer, W. H. Linfor.

The Walnut fire company disbanded in 1883 and reorganized in 1884, electing the following officers: A. S. Burns, chief; Charles Jacobsen and Charles Eroe, foremen; W. S. Margeson, secretary-treasurer.

In 1902 the town council purchased a new fire bell for the use of the town. Mounted, it weighed 1050 pounds. It was placed on a frame tower on the town hall lot. It was also used to sound curfew. In June of 1940 the frame tower was replaced by a new steel tower which housed the fire siren and the old fire bell which was then being used to summon members to meetings and to announce council sessions.

A new fire station was erected in 1951, and a new addition to it was completed in 1965. A new ambulance was purchased, through public donations, in 1964. The ambulance is a Pontiac chassis, purchased through Olsen Motors, with a Superior ambulance body.

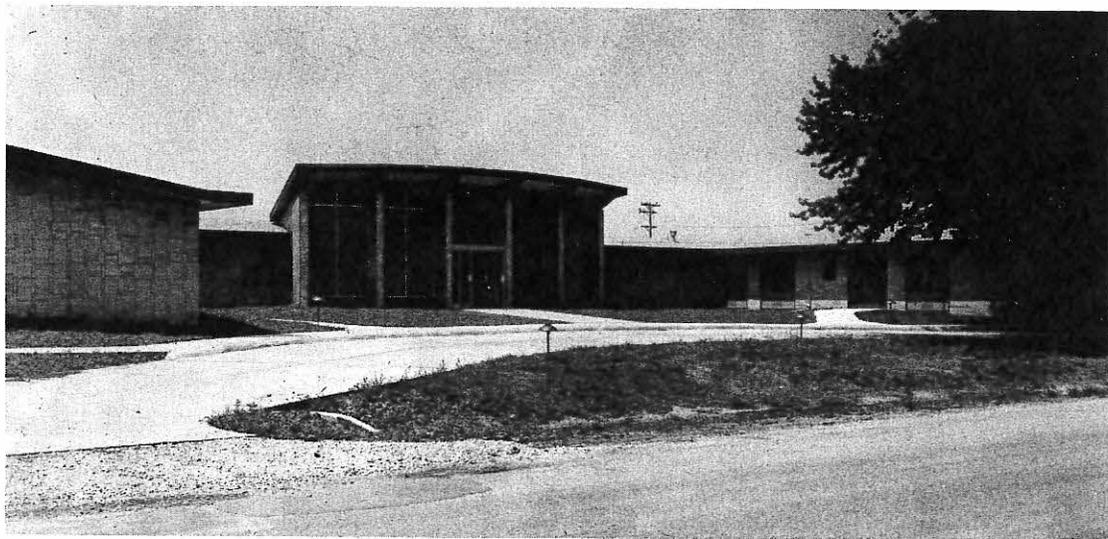
A new fire truck and appurtenances has been ordered this year (1966).

Present officers of the fire department are: Chief, Norris Pilling; assistant chiefs, Milton Mueller, Melvin Sievers; president, Charles Walter; secretary, Craig Woltmann; ambulance crew: William Chaffee and Lars Peterson. Other members are: Bill Donohoe, W. A. Eslick, Jr., Elwyn Ferry, Irwin Hansen, Melvin Jacobsen, Orvy Koos, Maurice Kuhr, Wm. League, Jr., Orval Nielsen, Alfred Oldehoff, Vernon Paasch, Rondo Rossmann, Harry Walter, Robert Walter, Bert Bivens, and Frank Griffith.

Craig Woltmann has been named local Civil Defense Director.

Part III

Walnut Stands Tall



Walnut Bureau Photo
Entrance to Peace Haven Home for the Retired.

CHAPTER X

PRESERVING A FINE FINISH

Resume of recent achievements

Highlights of Walnut's history after 1940:

A practice blackout in Walnut in December, 1942, was 100% perfect.

All motorists were to register November 9, 1942 for gas rations which would entitle every car owner to enough gas to drive 2880 miles per year -- slightly less than four gallons per week. In addition, there was rationing of meat, sugar, butter, and shoes.

Delpha Jacobsen was the first Walnut girl to enter pre-radar training in 1943.

The entire community was shocked when the following telegram was received by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Buttenschon: "We regret to inform you that Pvt. John Sharp died at 2:00 pm Sunday, August 8, 1943 when he drowned while swimming in the Colorado River near Needles, California. His body has not yet been recovered."

John was 32 years old and made his home with the Buttenschon's for the past 20 years.

On February 9, 1944, Mrs. Beth Burlingham received a card stating that her son Edward was a prisoner of war in Germany, being taken prisoner on December 16, 1943.

Charles LeRoy Linn, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Linn was the first Walnut boy to give his life for his country in World War II, in November, 1942.

In March of 1944 seven fliers were killed in a bomber crash on the Andy Schuttloffel farm, six miles south of Walnut.

In October, 1945, August Ketelsen, owner for 20 years of one of the landmarks in Walnut, disposed of this property. The two-story building is on the northwest corner of Highland and Central, now occupied by Lars Petersen.

On April 2, 1945, a news flash told of the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

On May 8, 1945 Germany surrendered. VE Day was quietly observed in Walnut. Japan surrendered August 15. V.J. Day was observed in Walnut with large attendance at Church programs.

Fred Fell was elected mayor March 28, 1946.

On June 27, 1946 C. A. Oster's horses, "Rainbow on Parade" and "Fleetline" won at the Lincoln show.

In 1947 Walnut received a new complete shoe repair service department. Proprietors were Mr. and Mrs. Fred Winters - located in the basement of the old Exchange State Bank Building.

Six acres of land were purchased from Emil Dau on May 1, 1945 at \$500 an acre. Donations accounted for payment of a large share of this amount. In the fall of 1946 the idea was proposed for lighting the park and immediately plans were under way to raise an estimated \$6000. In the winter of 1947 an auction was held which realized several thousand dollars. Also athletic fund certificates were issued to help raise money and another acre was added to the park. A. J. Hansen was largely responsible for the entrance to the park. He designed the archway, donating his time and labor to make it an attractive entrance.

In January, 1948, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Holst invited Walnut citizens to come in and inspect their "Sweet Shop" located one door south of the Post Office.

In April of 1948 the big task of setting poles at Memorial Park was completed. Total output of lights was 180,000 watts. The field was ready for use for the first game of the season on Sunday, May 2.

August 23, 1948 -- change over to dial phones.

In June, 1952, some 200 Walnut residents gathered for a dinner to honor Dr. F. N. Weber on completion of 25 years of service to the community.

In November, 1952, Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Arndt of Council Bluffs opened an electrical business under the firm name, "Arndt's Electric".

Without so much as an extra blast on the horn, the Rock Island Rocket roared through Walnut for the last time in September, 1953.

In April of 1960 the grand opening of the Econ-O-Wash was held with Mr. and Mrs. Robert Walter as owners.

An old landmark of Walnut, the Odd Fellows Building was demolished in September, 1960 when the east end of the building collapsed. Lawrence Gibson is present owner of the building which was completed

in 1899.

In February, 1954, Hoffmann and Koehrsen observed 29 years of business in Walnut.

In May, 1954 the traffic light was installed in the intersection by the viaduct.

W. O. W.'s test pattern for television was picked up by Walnut residents July 15, 1949. Network programs started September 1.

In June, 1954 Walnut's new mercury-vapor street lights replaced the old five-globe ones.

In May, 1961 the new watertower was erected near the park, and in June the old standpipe on the school grounds, a landmark since 1896, was dismantled and removed.

On April 22, 1896 the contract to erect a system of waterworks was let by the town authorities to B. P. Egan of Nebraska City, at a price of \$9350. The standpipe was afterwards let by Mr. Egan to the George E. King Bridge Co. for \$1675.

The standpipe contractors finished their work in August, 1896. The system consisted of pumping station with two 10-inch vertical engines and 40 horsepower boiler.

There were 9756 feet of mains all within a complete circuit with the exception of about 1200 feet on north Central Street, 25 hydrants and 16 gate boxes.

The standpipe was built of the best steel plate 10 feet in diameter and 100 ft. high, and held around 53,000 gallons. Bill Carstensen and his father made the rivets by hand for use in the feet of the standpipe. The holes in the feet were not in the proper place, and they had to be made by hand. It was built piece by piece with a swinging scaffold on the outside and a scaffold on the inside. Each rivet was placed by hand.

According to early records, the first well was located on the site of the present manse of the Peace United Church and the storage tank was located on the back of the lot where the school gymnasium is now located. This was prior to 1896.

Various wells were dug and put into service (all shallow) from time to time (following erection of the standpipe), but water was in short supply most of the time and as new demands and connections were made each succeeding year, it was soon evident that a better

source of water must be found. So in 1916 a contract was let to the Thorpe Well Co. of Des Moines for a deep well to be drilled just east of the present water plant. It took several months to complete this project. When finally completed, this well was drilled to a depth of over 2500 feet, one of the deepest wells in the state of Iowa. A holding cistern of 25,000 gallons was installed just west of the water plant and a compressed air injection system was installed to lift the water from the well to this cistern which in turn forced it into the mains and into the standpipe by two high speed centrifugal pumps, one of which is still in operation. These pumps have a capacity of 250 gallons per minute each at 50 pounds pressure.

Several years later it was discovered that the vibration of the injector pipes within the well casing was rapidly wearing both and with this in mind, a second well was decided upon in case of failure of the original deep well. After failing to get a satisfactory water supply in the two locations tried, a well was finally drilled to a depth of 318 feet in the north part of town and equipped to pump directly into the existing mains. This water was very hard -- as was the water in the deep well. Shortly after this the ejector pipes were renewed in the deep well as they had completely worn through.

In 1956 it was discovered that holes had begun to wear in the casing of the deep well and the town was forced to recase several hundred feet of the upper part of the well. That in turn reduced the diameter of the well so it was impossible to use the old type compressed air injection system, and a 30 horsepower submersible pump was installed. Incidentally, these pumps cost over \$3,000 each and have a life of from one to two years.

By this time the standpipe, through neglect in earlier years, began to leak pretty badly. Repeated attempts at welding proved to be of no lasting benefit and so in 1957 a 20 foot liner was installed in the weakest area. However this failed to solve the problem and repeated attempts at repair proved useless. For the last two years of its life only the bottom 60 feet proved to be serviceable.

Something had to be done as pressure was inadequate and so in December, 1960, it was decided to erect an elevated tank of 50,000 gallon capacity. Contract was let to the Chicago Bridge and Iron Co of Chicago, Illinois, for the installation of this tank and to the Baburek Metal Preserving Co. of Plattsmouth, Nebraska for the reducing of the old standpipe on the school grounds. Total cost for all construction, removal and engineering to be \$25,000. \$2,000 additional was spent for 630 feet of four-inch main to equalize pressure from this storage to the east part of town. This work was completed

in 1961.

After the recasing of the deep well and the installation of the submersible pump it was soon discovered that the town had a "Red Water" problem. This was partly due to the fact that the water is no longer aerated by the compressed air injection system, which changes ferris oxide to ferric oxide, and probably due to the tapping of a shallower vein of water in which the ferric oxide had settled, when the new casing was installed. Automatic washers were useless and rinsing clothes proved a nightmare under any circumstances. It was small consolation to know that other towns were having similar problems. Something had to be done. So in 1959 an aerator costing \$2,000 and two large sand filters were installed, the filters costing \$10,000. This dropped the iron content from 3.5 parts per million to .5 per million.

About this time it was discovered that the north well was pumping sand and mud. The Thorpe Well Co. was notified and found that the screen had disintegrated and that the pump was worn beyond repair due to the pumping of sand in the water. So the old screen was pounded out, a new screen installed, (\$1400 for the screen alone), the well repacked with gravel, acidized and new pump installed. Total cost \$13, 000. Also after some 30 years of use, one of the high lift pumps had to be replaced at a cost of \$2,000.

Presently the water system in the town of Walnut is in pretty good shape, but it has cost a lot of money to get it that way. When anyone says water is too high they really don't stop to think just what goes into making that stream of liquid come out of the faucet every time they turn it on. The average householder pays about 1¢ for every ten gallons of water consumed. Water is delivered to Walnut consumers AT COST. It cannot be lower than that.

The new elevated tank was financed with the issuance of \$25,000 water revenue bonds, to be paid over a period of ten years. These draw interest at the rate of 4 3/4% and will be paid from patronage receipts only and are not a general obligation of the town. The retirement cost of this loan will amount to approximately 1¢ per day for each inhabitant in the town for a period of ten years. Actually, the water department has other than patronage receipts that will pay the debt service on this loan thus reducing the total cost by some \$5,000.

All of the piping to the main, including the meter, is the property of the customer and is his obligation to maintain. In event of a leak anywhere in this connection, the Town is obligated

to dig out the Corporation Cock at the main for a charge of \$10.00. This usually costs more, but the town absorbs the difference. The water department will replace meter failure with a rebuilt one of equal value and charge the customer for parts at cost, for repair on their meter, or the one removed. It is impossible for a meter to register more gallons than is actually used by the customer. They may register less, but never more.

A Board of Trustees is appointed by the Mayor and approved by the town council to manage the water department. These trustees are bonded and receive a salary of \$75. per year. They hire a water superintendent whose duty is to supervise the actual mechanical operation of the system and to read the meters monthly.

Samples are taken of the water at regular two-week intervals and mailed to the State Hygienic Laboratories at Ames for analysis. Walnut water is absolutely safe for general consumption.

A chlorine solution is injected into the water automatically as it is pumped from the main well. This water in turn runs through the aerator which removes most of the objectionable odor. Water from the north well is used for emergency purposes only.

PEACE HAVEN HOME FOR THE RETIRED

In early spring of 1959, planning began for the construction of a dream -- Peace Haven Home for Retired Persons. On July 30 of that year a group of individuals met to formulate the building plans of Peace Haven. The home was to be built under the auspices of the Peace United Church of Christ.

At the time of planning, tentative plans called for a single story structure with 75 units to house 100 retired persons. There were some kitchenette units planned and also an infirmary, but due to Federal regulations, some of the plans were modified.

In November of 1959 the Peace Haven Association elected Board members and the same members are still serving. Board members are: Julius Lensch, chairman; Rev. Fred Fieker, Herbert Koehrsen and Lars Peterson, vice presidents; Wilbert Rossmann, secretary; Oscar Petersen, treasurer; A. L. Stuart, William Chaffee, J. H. Nissen, Irwin Hansen, Herbert F. Craney and Clifford Heyne.

The progress of Peace Haven remained at a standstill until July of 1960 when the Board of Directors was finally notified they received a tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. Previous to that time, any contribution made to the home was subject

to income tax. The drive for funds began October 3, 1960, with the goal set for \$100,000. The estimated total cost of the project was \$650,000. Ten days after the drive began, a total of \$32,863.90 had been donated or pledged. As of December 14, 1960 pledges and donations had reached \$60,113.35. Julius Lensch and Oscar Petersen had a December 16 meeting with the director of the Direct Loan Division Housing for Elderly of the Housing and Home Finance Agency of the government.

Peace Haven progress was again held up because of Federal red tape. On Jan. 27 the project was passed by every segment of the Direct Loan division and an oral commitment was made for the loan. Several changes were made in the original plans of the home, deleting the infirmary, kitchens and dinettes from C. units.

It wasn't until September, 1961 that word was received that the Peace Haven loan in the amount of \$750,000 had been approved. The loan will run for 50 years at 3 3/8% interest. The government had set the completion date of the home as February, 1963.

Sealed bids for the construction of the home were received and opened on March 27, 1962. The bids received were higher than had been anticipated, therefore none of the bids were accepted. On December 12 bids were again opened and read. The successful bidders were then notified of their approval by the Federal Housing and Home Adm.

General contractor was United Builders of Iowa, Ida Grove. Electrical contractor was Ridnour and Morrow of Creston, Iowa, and mechanical contractor was Wentz Plumbing and Heating of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Ground breaking ceremonies were held on Friday, April 19, 1963 with Julius Lensch, president of the Board, turning the first spade of earth. From that point on, construction work progressed rapidly on this huge building.

The Home is located on a five acre tract donated to the association by Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Petersen. The buff brick building is 495 feet, 10 inches long, and the front of the Home is 171 feet wide. There are seven wings. All the wings are for residents except the number four wing which houses the dining room, kitchen, beautiful chapel, hobby room, machines for private washing of clothes, party room.

Living units range from approximately 220 square feet for a single unit to 350 square feet for double units. Each living unit has a complete private bath of ceramic tile and ample closet and storage space.

The main entrance is trimmed with Colorado red stone, and the interior of the entrance lobby is finished in redwood.

Some of the rooms are furnished, while residents of others may use their own furniture. Rental of the units ranges from \$115. per month for a room with shower for one person, \$180 a month for a room with double bed and shower, \$210 per month for a 2 bedroom unit with one adjoining bath with tub and \$225 for apartment unit - living room, bedroom and bath. These rates include food, lodging, general laundry and room cleaning.

The Home cost a total of \$808,000 not including furniture, chapel and non-permanent fixtures. Nearly \$85,000 was received by contribution.

This is the only Home for Retired Persons in Pottawattamie County. Walnut can be very proud of this new facility which was formally dedicated Sunday, June 28, 1964. The Walnut Federated Garden Club have done extensive landscaping at the home.

In March, 1964 the town council voted to accept an ornamental tree and shrub beautification project for the parking area of main street. The planting was done by Pellett Gardens of Atlantic under the auspices of the Community Club.

The planting included both sides of the street from Dr. Weber's office on the south to St. Mary's Church on the north, with a selection of low growing ornamental trees and shrubs.

The plantings were a gift to the town by Mrs. James Norman of Coos Bay, Oregon, and Mrs. John DeBerg of Walnut in memory of their late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Drake.

The plantings will make a lovely approach to the beautiful Peace Haven Home.

WALNUT PUBLIC LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL ROOM

In the summer of 1965 the Hoffmann-Koehrsen Hardware building was purchased by Mrs. John DeBerg and Mrs. Oscar Petersen and remodelled for use as a public library and historical room. Upon completion of the renovation, the ladies turned the building over to the town Board of Library Trustees.

The new location allowed the library to take advantage of the State Traveling Library service and made it possible for the library to be open 15 hours each week instead of only 6 hours, as formerly. The library had been located in the back room of the City Clerk's office since 1925. Mrs. Etta Rieck is the paid librarian, and also president of the Board of Trustees, having served in this capacity for nine years.

The opening of the historical room in the rear portion of the building, is planned for May 1, 1966.

MARIA JOSEPHINA VRANCKEN

In the summer of 1965 Maria Josephina Vrancken of The Netherlands became Walnut's second American Field Service student. She has made her home with Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Drake and daughter Candace.

Affectionately known as "jee" (pronounced Jay), Miss Vrancken was born June 9, 1948 and her home address is the town of Beek, in the province of Limburg. She is 5' 4 1/2 " tall and weighs 128 pounds.

Her father's name is Marie Jozef Vrancken. He is head of the experimental station of the plastics technology department at the Central Laboratory of the Dutch states mine at Galeen. He is 45 years of age. Her mother's name is Maria Mathilda Biermans and she is 41 years old. She does not work outside the home.

Miss Vrancken has a brother, John, who is 15 years old. He is now in the third form of the H.B.S. at the St. Mychiellyceum in Galeen.

Jee finished elementary school in 6 years with very good marks and passed the entrance examination for the H.B.S. at the St. Mychiellyceum in Galeen. After the third year she chose the science branch because she was highly interested in chemistry and physics.

Miss Vrancken has studied the English language for 5 years, approximately three hours a week. She also has a good degree of knowledge in French and German. She plans to work as a chemical

analyst. Her only relative living in the United States is a sister of her mother living in Marina, California.

RALPH SHEPHERD

Ralph Shepherd, mayor of Walnut from 1964-1966, was born February 6, 1894 near Cumberland, Iowa. He lived in Cass County until coming to Walnut in 1950. He was married November 1, 1917, to Ethel Adams. Two sons were born to this union, Roger and Warren, both living in Salem, Oregon. Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd have nine grandchildren. One grandson is serving with the army in France and one in the navy somewhere in the Pacific. Both are in the hospital corps.

Mr. Shepherd is an elder in the Presbyterian Church, a member of the Community Club, and the P.S.C. Wildlife Conservation Club. He served on the town council for four years before being elected mayor.

ROMA LAVONNE ARNDT

On November 2, 1965 the voters of Walnut went to the polls and elected a woman mayor for the first time in the town's history. Mrs. Erwin J. (Roma) Arndt defeated her two male opponents in a landslide victory.

Roma LaVonne Lehnhardt was born October 5, 1924 in Hancock, Iowa, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lehnhardt. Her mother was Ella Pendergast, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Pendergast of Hancock. Her father was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Lehnhardt of Walnut.

When she was one year old the family moved to Walnut, residing in the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Lehnhardt. Mrs. Arndt attended the Walnut Public School through the fifth grade. Her teachers were: Miss Roberta Robinson, first and second grades; Winona Thompson, third and fourth grades; and Anna Lange, fifth.

August 29, 1935, the family moved to the Rudolph Lehnhardt farm ten miles south of Walnut. Roma attended Rose Hill School No. 9 for three years, taught by Miss Avis Martin (Mrs. Ted Jessen), and Miss Geneva Reimer (Mrs. Micheal Yonkee of Dearborn, Mich., now deceased).

She attended the Lewis Consolidated School during her high school years, graduating in the spring of 1942. She enrolled in Iowa State Teachers College (now State College of Iowa) in Cedar Falls the following September, majoring in rural school education.

Following graduation from this course, she taught three years in the rural schools near her home.

In 1945 she enrolled in a radio electronics course and attended De Forest's Radio School in Chicago that summer, receiving a third class radio operator's license. This was in preparation for a career in aviation, her first love.

From 1946 - 1948 she worked as newspaper reporter and book-keeper on the Oakland Acorn at Oakland, Iowa, and also wrote several columns for the paper, including a hobby column, "Question of the Week", and an aviation column, "Power Glides". While working on the newspaper she learned to fly at the local airport, receiving her pilot's license in 1946.

On July 10, 1948 she was married to Em l/c Erwin J. Arndt of the United States Navy, whom she had met during her radio training in Chicago. They were married at the Congregational Church in Oakland, Iowa. To this union one child, Karen Louise, was born, July 29, 1950.

Following their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Arndt lived in Kennan, Wisconsin, where Mr. Arndt was associated with his father in the electrical business. Mrs. Arndt taught fifth and sixth grades in the Catawba, Wisconsin schools.

In the fall of 1950 the family moved to Council Bluffs, Iowa where Mr. Arndt was employed as electrician for the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1952 the family moved to Walnut and opened an electrical business under the firm name, "Arndt's Electric". Mr. Arndt served one term on the town council.

In February, 1958, due to Mrs. Arndt's father's failing health, Mr. and Mrs. Arndt and Karen moved to the farm south of Walnut to take over the farming operations.

Mr. Lehnhardt passed away in November, 1958 and the Arndt's remained on the farm until Mrs. Lehnhardt's death, April 30, 1965, moving back to Walnut that summer. They reside at 416 Atlantic Street, in the house they purchased from John Reimer in 1954.

Mrs. Arndt has one brother, Stanley Eugene, born December 13, 1936. Mr. Lehnhardt is currently employed as electronic engineer at Texas Instruments in Dallas, Texas. He attended Iowa State College at Ames where he received his engineering degree. Following his graduation from Oakland High School, Oakland, Iowa, in 1955, he was employed by Bell Telephone Co. in Omaha, and was later sent by Western Electric to work on the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line in northern Alaska. In 1958 he enrolled at Ames, receiving his Bachelor's degree in 1962.

Among the innovations since she took office January 3, 1966, is Mrs. Arndt's newspaper column, "Mayor's Memos", in the Walnut Bureau.

Walnut's beginning was a hesitant one, with a few straggling settlers arriving in the early 1860's. But with the advent of the railroad in 1869, it spurted to a booming, thriving town. Business was fluent and business houses numerous. Walnut eventually boasted of over 1,000 inhabitants.

Walnut was incorporated in 1877 and continued to prosper despite three major fires in which the east and west sides of Main Street and the school were completely destroyed. Her inherent pioneering spirit was evidenced in the way she pulled herself "up by her boot straps", dusted herself off, and started all over again.

But eventually, in the 1950's, she was dealt a stinging blow from which she has never been fully able to recover. Walnut lost the Rock Island Railroad. Adding insult to injury was the fact that paved highways and modern cars were taking her residents to the city to do their "trading". Following graduation her youth went elsewhere to seek more affluent opportunity. Walnut was suffering a marked decline.

The surrounding rich agricultural lands, originally responsible for her birth, were all that sustained her now. She was providing convenient service for the farmers.

Still surviving was that strong, but intangible thread of her indomitable spirit. Spurred by an enthusiastic few, the Walnut School was reorganized in the 1950's. The brick structure erected after the school fire in 1913 boasted of two new additions, the latter being less than five years old. That intangible thread again became vividly tangible when the new, modernistic Peace Haven Home for the Retired was erected here. Costing nearly a million dollars, more than \$80,000 of this amount had been raised through local donations. The 85 unit, one story structure opened its doors July 1, 1964.

Still Walnut struggled for survival. Her population was declining. There was need for a re-awakening -- and now there was urgent motivation for it. Progress had been largely responsible for Walnut's decline -- but now progress provided a "shot of adrenalin" for the dying town. Interstate 80, the new four-lane expressway, with a "clover leaf" less than a mile from town, opened in the fall of 1965.

A few of her citizens realized the latent potential of the Interstate. One of these was Roma Arndt. In her mayoral campaign she stressed that the Interstate could restore and re-activate the town in the same way the railroad had done in earlier times. Much could be done to encourage tourism. A bus line could be established to the town. Freight service to local merchants would be improved. She anticipated that in a few years Walnut could be an "outlying suburb" of Omaha.

This concludes the history of Walnut through its 87th year. I hope you have enjoyed your journey into the past -- watching your hometown grow from a few sheds to a thriving community -- at its peak in the 1890's and early 1900's. Walnut might be likened to a struggling infant in the 1870's -- to an industrious youth out to set the world on fire in the 1890's -- then declining in its old age, gradually losing the vigor and growth it once knew.

Like all of us, Walnut has had its years of plenty, its years of hardship, its times of disaster, the times of achievement -- its happiness and its sorrows. We have tried to record some of these for you -- along with a few humorous incidents and items of interest.

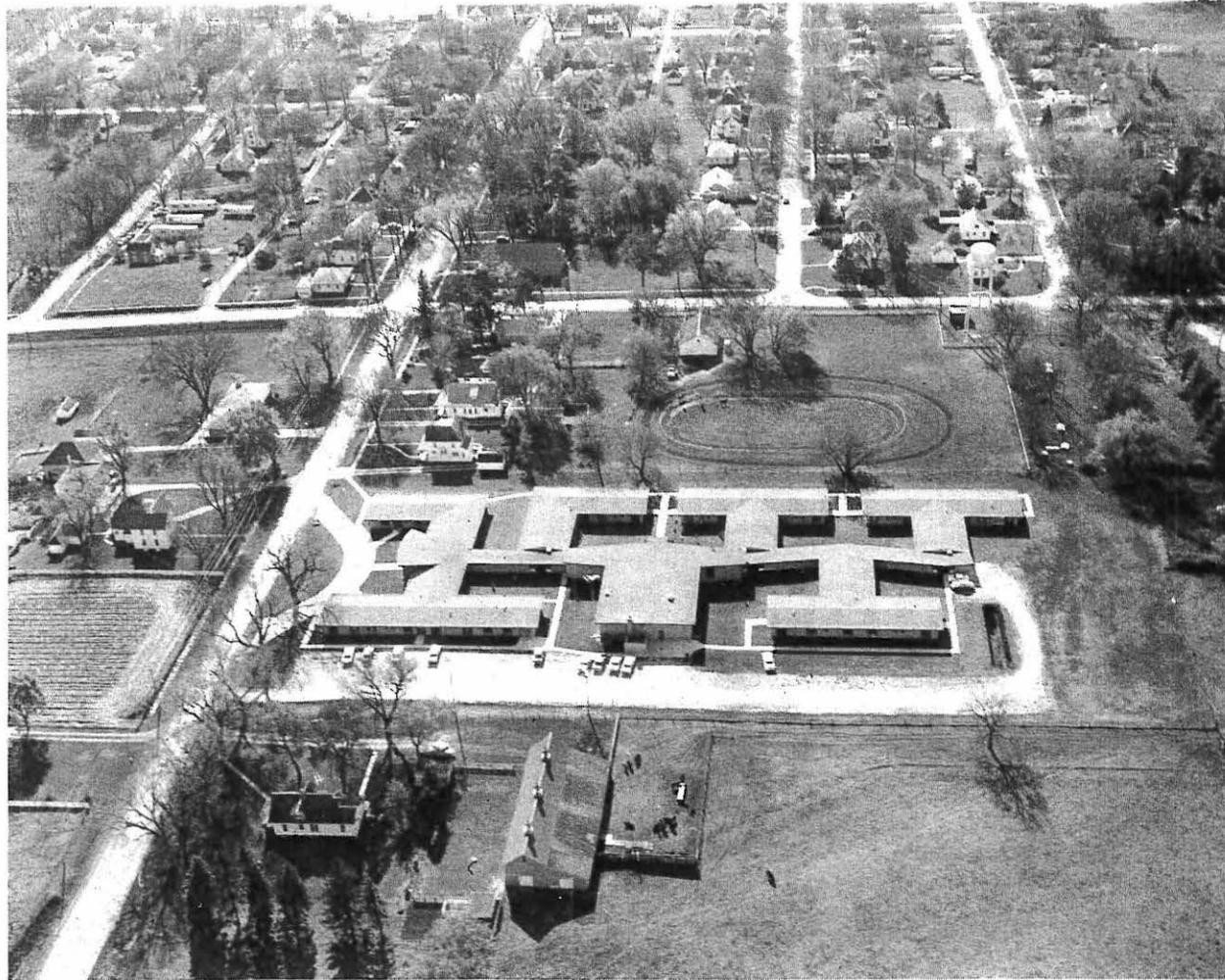
The past belongs to the Johannsen's, the Spanglers, the Hinckleys, the Burmeisters, the Lodges -- and the many other early pioneers who contributed so much to Walnut's history ... and to them this history is respectfully dedicated.

But they have left us a heritage -- the future of Walnut belongs to US. We too, are forming Walnut's history. If ever again any individual sits down to record Walnut's "Memoirs" in the future, we shall determine what he will write.

Roma L. Arndt



Walnut Bureau Photo
Aerial view of Walnut, 1965.



26 a

Walnut Bureau Photo

Aerial view of Peace Haven Home.
Note new water tower in right background.



Walnut Bureau Photo

Cutting the ribbon at opening of new Interstate 80. Congressman John R. Hansen is in center, wearing glasses. December 15, 1965.



Walnut Bureau Photo

Walnut's first woman mayor, Roma L. Arndt, and her council; from left to right: Larry Shepherd, Donald Walter, Cecil Roberts, James Zimmerman, Maurice Kuhr. Organizational meeting, January 3, 1966.