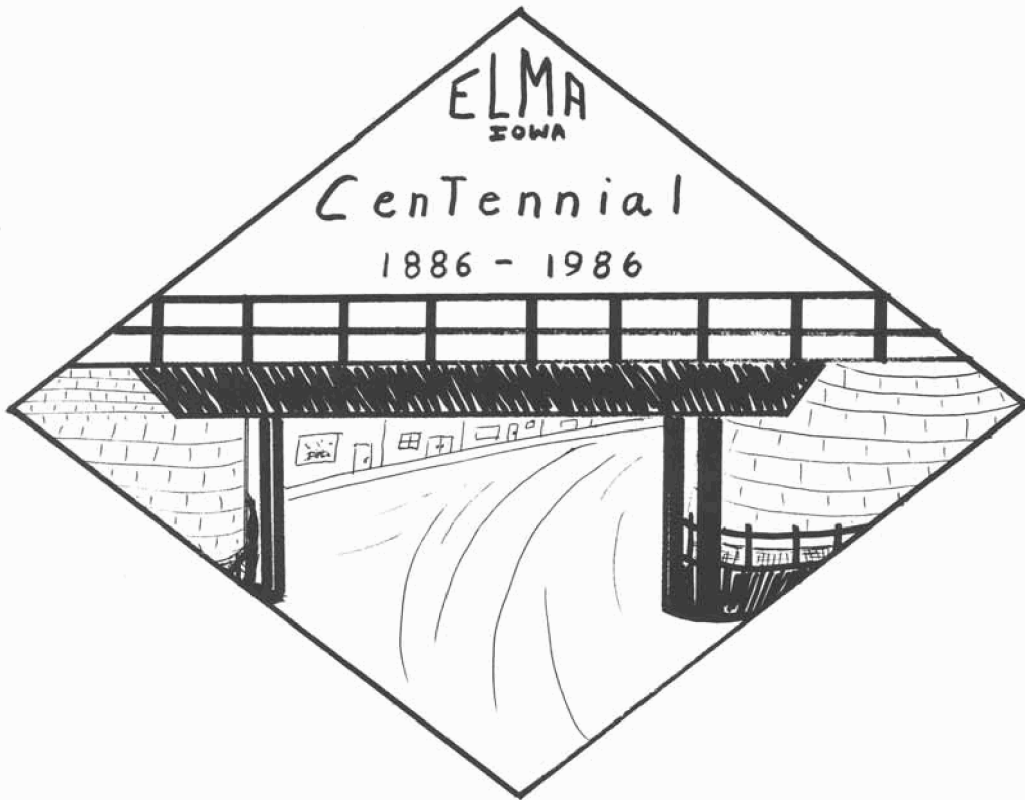


Businesses



submitted by Marge Gansen

Farmers Bank

The building occupied by the Farmers Bank was built in 1896 by Diedrich (Dick) Weers. It was organized in 1889. An ad shows G. A. Burgess as banker for Farmers Bank. It isn't known where the bank was located prior to the Weers Building.

In 1901 the bank was purchased by Maurice Despres. Officers were: President, Maurice Despres; Cashier, Sam Despres; Assistant Cashier, Irvin Despres. This bank was referred to by many as the "Million Dollar Bank." The bank closed on November 14, 1927.

Elma State Savings Bank

The Elma State Bank was organized in 1913 also located on Busti Avenue. President, R. Cunningham; Vice-President, Coleman (Coley) Foley; Cashier, Frank Silver. The bank closed its doors in March 1926.

First State Savings Bank



First State Savings Bank Spaulding & O'Donnell Offices

The First State Savings Bank was organized in 1905 and incorporated by: W. H. Shaffer, A. H. Shaffer, H. L. Spaulding, E. D. Elwood, D. J. O'Donnell, J. J. McFaul, E. E. Overfield, J. W. Klemme, B. F. Klemme, and T. K. Young.

The first officers were: H. L. Spaulding, President; D. J. O'Donnell, Vice-President; J. J. McFaul, Cashier. Later C. J. Garmen became Cashier and Pearce Cashman, Assistant Cashier, until 1919. Paul Conway took his place.

The First State Savings Bank building was erected on Main Street in the year 1888 and was a two-story brick structure. This bank closed in 1927.

The First State Savings Bank was previously the Bank of Elma. Maurice Despres and John Ferguson were partners from 1892 until 1901 when Despres bought an interest in the Farmers Bank.

August 1900: Shaffer brothers and Will Brown closed a deal last Saturday in which they bought the Elma bank. This makes four banks they are interested in—New Hampton, Fredericksburg, Elma and Riceville. (News article, 1900)



Open house at Peoples Savings Bank, June, 1978. (Left to right): Clara Enright, Angeline Rance, Kay Hayden, Pat Pitz, Sandy Lentz, Lucille Stapleton, Rosella Weers



Reed J Elwood, President of Peoples Savings Bank until the time of his death in 1976



Peoples Savings Bank, 1986

J. J. McFaul was cashier for ten years at the beginning of the century at the Elma State Savings Bank.

Peoples Savings Bank

When Peoples Savings Bank of Elma organized on February 21, 1927, the original board of directors included: W. D. Enloe, Louis Diekmann, F. N. Stute, W. B. Gardner, Bennie Basteson, William Jinderlee, and Reed Elwood. First cashier was Ray A. Moore, who was succeeded in 1934 by Charles J. Garmen.

Other employees of the bank in 1952 included: Reed J Elwood, Charles Garmen, Mrs. C. W. Finch, and Lois Brummond. Serving as directors were: Mr. Basteson, Mr. Elwood, A. J. Hart, Charles J. Garmen, and John Knippling. Officers were: President, Mr. Elwood; Vice-President, Mr. Basteson; and Cashier, Mr. Garmen.

Walt Diekmann was assistant cashier at the bank at one time.

The Peoples Savings Bank moved into a new building on the south side of Main Street in 1962. This is located on the former theater site. The bank was remodeled and added on to about 1978.

It was sold by Al and Helen Saylor to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Johnson and Mr. and Mrs. Clint Richards in 1984. The bank has added an enlarged insurance office in the front of the building, and new equipment continues to be added to maintain the fine standards we have come to expect of this financial institution.

May 15, 1935, Elma Bank Robbed

Cash worth \$304.40 and bonds in the value of \$300. Walter Diekmann, assistant cashier, and Norman Sage, a State Bank Examiner, were told to lie on the floor by men with guns. Miss Mary Mulick, Joe Bilek, and Joe Hilsman were customers who walked in and were told to stand against the wall. The robbery was the third in Iowa that week and the sixth in Iowa that year.

Charles Garmen

Charles J. Garmen was a long-time Elma resident and a banking associate for more than 50 years. For many years he was president of the Peoples Savings Bank of Elma.

On June 30, 1909, Charles married Clara Church, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Church of Elma. They were parents of one son, Charles C., who was also associated with the banking profession, working for many years in the Peoples Savings Bank.

Charles J. "Charlie" Garmen was honored in 1958 for fifty year's continuous membership in the Maple Leaf Masonic Lodge. In 1959, he and Clara were honored at their home at a celebration for their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

Funeral services for Charles were held at the Elma Methodist Church and burial was in the Howard Cemetery, Elma.



Charles Garmen, Sr., President of Peoples Savings Bank



Charles Garmen, Jr.

Barber Shops



Barbering in Elma's early years. This shop was the Heineman shop at a later date.



In the years around 1910 Frank Tyler, J. Kensella and Walt Helms were barbers in Elma. N. Marvin and Miller & Hilsabrok worked at this occupation in the 1920's. During the 1930's Joe Hoffman had a barber shop on the west end of what is now the Sunnyside Cafe. Clem Kelly was also a barber in Elma at one time with Leo Heineman. He later barbered with Joe Hoffman and the business closed in the early 1940's. In the late 1940's, Walt Helms passed away and Don Murphy and Jim Thompson ran the barber shop. Cliff Stratton built a new barber shop in the late 1940's, but it was destroyed in the 1954 fire. He rebuilt the establishment and retired in 1973. John Wacha III leased the

business and is presently operating an Elma barber shop on the west side.

Phil's Barber Shop on Busti Avenue has been a barber shop for at least seventy years. The earliest available record shows the shop as owned by Dewey Garrett in 1915. It was Garrett & Clancy in 1916 and in 1919 was sold by Clancy to Leo Heineman. Leo settled little boys down for many years with his threat of "the bear." Illness forced Leo into retirement. In 1962, the shop was bought by his son-in-law, Phil McCarville, who has operated it since that time.



Barbers in the shop were: Leo Heineman on the left and Don Murphy on the right. Leo is barbering Art Sunde and in the other chair is Charles Groth. A partition for a beauty shop operated by Lucille Kelly Corrick can be seen in the reflection of the mirrors. The picture was taken in the 1930's.



Joe Hoffman in front of his barber shop in the late 1930's.



Hoffman's barber shop in the west end of the building now known as the Sunnyside Cafe. The cafe was on the east side of the building in the 1930's.

Blacksmiths

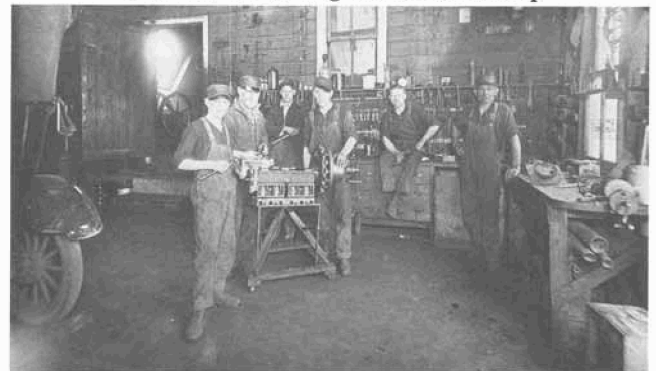
J. C. Weber ran a blacksmith shop on the east side of Elma. Later his sons, Carl and Casper, took over the business and ran it with the machine shop. Tom Sculley operated a blacksmith shop on the west side of town near the present site of Jerry's Plumbing and Heating. Later Jack Althof ran this business until it was destroyed by fire in the early 1940's. A. V. Francis ran a blacksmith shop where Russ O'Donnell's former Conoco Station is. He was in the business for forty years. Bill Enloe, Sr., operated a blacksmith shop at the present site of Kenny's Repair business. In the 1940's through the early 1960's, Jack Althof, the last blacksmith, had a building south of Kenny's Repair. The building was later destroyed. He passed away in the early 1960's.



The Cooper, Wagon and Buggies Shop was built about 1887 or 1888. Alvin Gross's father, Phil Gross, ran the shop around 1890. Albert Miller, who was married to Bess Walters, ran it around 1897. The shop was located about 400 feet northwest of the Highway 272 stop sign in Elma.



Busti Avenue showing the blacksmith shop.



The old Weber Blacksmith Shop. Loven Weber, Dewey Garrett, (unidentified), Carl Weber, Casper Weber, and J. C. Weber.



Henry Weber—J. C. Weber. The Weber Blacksmith Shop owned by Cass Weber was sold to Leo Tonn in 1963. He used it to store antiques. After 1975 it was sold to Wallace Fair. He later sold the building to Leroy Mohrfeld.

Livery Stables

In the early days of Elma, livery stables were a very much needed and appreciated business. One of the earliest recorded was "Ewing's Livery." No one knows for sure where it was located, but the Business Directory (History of Howard County), states that the livery burned down in 1891.

In 1894 J. C. Cummings had a livery stable where Jerry's Plumbing and Heating now stands. It was later owned by J. J. Kildee and in 1900 B. E. Pittinger took over.

Also in 1894, a livery was started where Hart's Garage now is. Sources say it was owned by B. C. Pittinger and in 1900 sold to J. W. Mahoney. Five years later D. Casey took over ownership and in 1908 sold the business to his two sons, Art and John.



Casey's Livery and Feed Stable

Geo. Budke Harness Store

Geo. Budke was born April 7, 1875, at Fort Atkinson, Iowa. He had a wife, Elizabeth, and son, George W. Budke; daughters, Elizabeth (Sister Mary Georgine) Budke, member of Sisters of Mercy, and Agnes Budke Riley. His interests were his work and his family.

Geo. Budke was one of the last harness-makers in Howard County. The stitching horse, the awl, the wax-ends, leather knives—all were tools of his trade. The



George Budke

oldest son of a family of five girls and five boys, he learned the craft from his father. At 17 years of age, he was apprenticed to a harness maker in New Hampton, Iowa, March 10, 1892. There he worked with Frank Gardner, who later opened a harness shop in Elma, Iowa. Young Geo. went to work at the Frank Gardner Harness Shop in Elma on February 25, 1904, at \$6.50 a week. Geo. bought the Frank Gardner Harness Shop August 7, 1911. It was located on the corner of block H, lot 11, Busti Avenue, now the Mohrfeld Service Station.

As his business grew Geo. needed more space. June 4, 1913, he bought the Buhr building, block 18, lot 19, Busti Avenue. Here he not only made and sold harnesses, he repaired and oiled old harnesses during the winter months so that the farmers would be ready for the spring plowing and planting. Also for sale in his shop were horse collars, whips, gloves, fly spray, corn husking supplies—as well as horse blankets in the winter and fly nets in the summer. Later the harnesses were commercially made, but the repairing and oiling continued to be done by hand. During the summer it was not unusual for a threshing crew to bring in a threshing machine belt which needed splicing or for farmers to bring in binder canvas to be repaired.

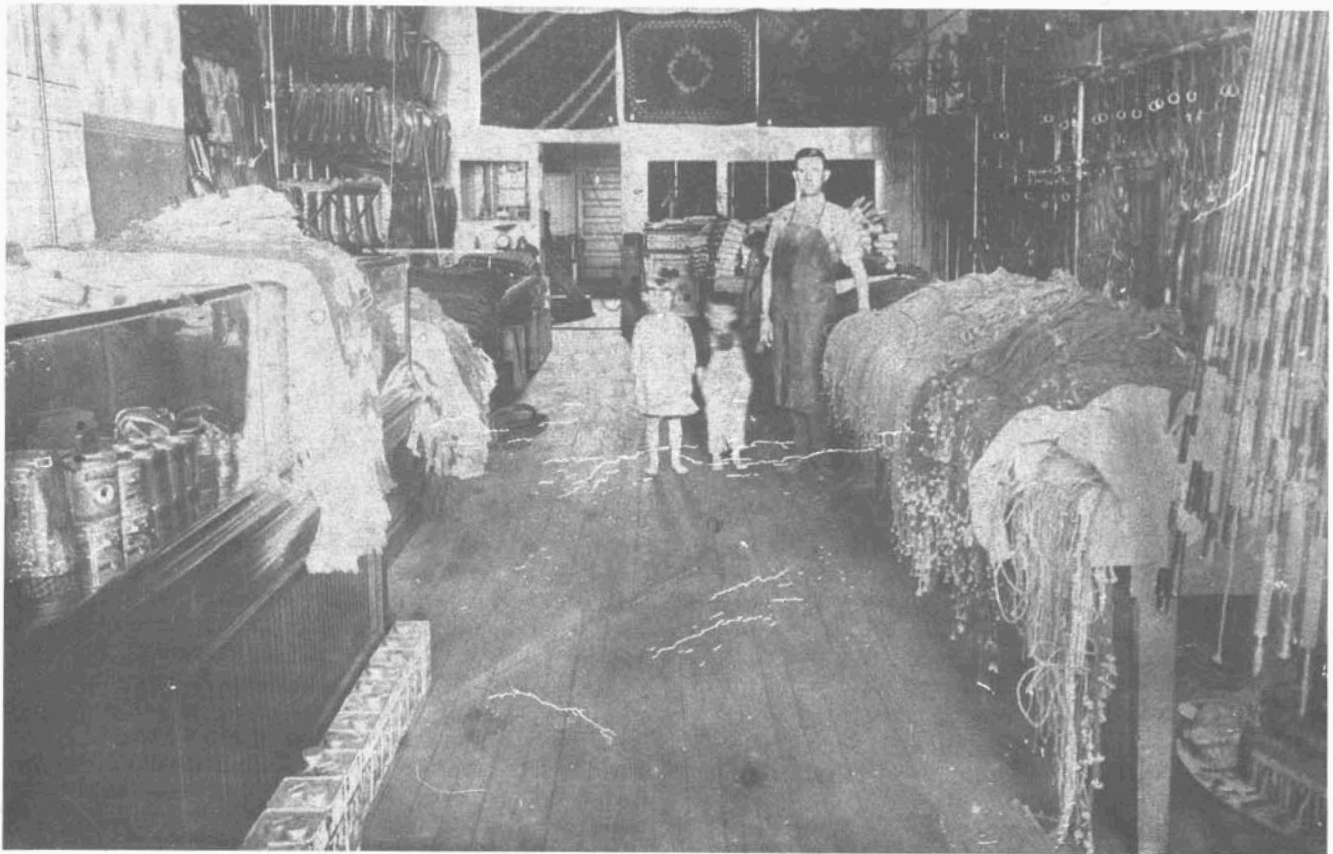
More and more machinery was introduced so that gradually the buggy whips were replaced with lubricating oil, the collar racks were not restocked and harnesses, except for ponies, were an oddity. 'Twas back-breaking but necessary work that had come to an end.

Geo. Budke sold his shop to Larry Dudack in December, 1948. He died December 14, 1948. He was a fine, capable, Christian gentleman, a loving husband and a caring father. He was a great asset to his church and to Elma and the surrounding community.

Elizabeth Clara Gardner, daughter of William and Mary (Brockamp) Gardner was born October 9, 1874, in Deerfield Township, Chickasaw County, Iowa. She died September 1, 1945. Geo Budke and Elizabeth were married October 9, 1911, at Elma, Iowa, and were the parents of three children.

Elizabeth Marie, born March 6, 1913, at Elma, Iowa, joined the Sisters of Mercy in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, September 1, 1932, and received the name Sister Mary Georgine.

George William, born May 29, 1915, at Elma, Iowa,



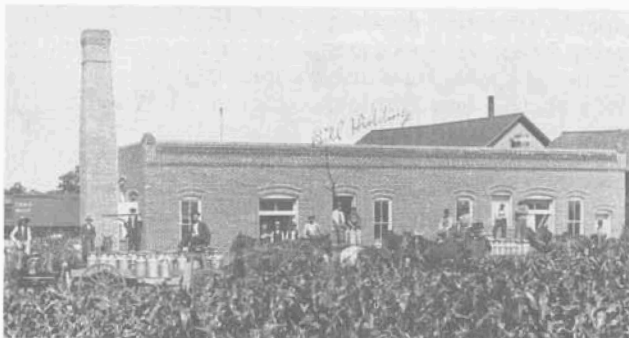
George Budke Harness Store with daughter, Elizabeth, and son, George.

was the provision manager at Armour & Co. in Mason City, Iowa. George was married to Mary Catherine Ryan November 24, 1936, and they were the parents of three children—Edward, who died at birth, John William and Mary Jill. George died January 8, 1974.

Agnes Marie, born November 17, 1917 at Elma, Iowa, married Paul Riley August 16, 1949.

Creameries

One of the first creameries in Elma, the Elma Co-operative Creamery, was built before the year 1890. The building, located just north of the Howard County



Elma's Co-operative Creamery when patrons hauled cream with horses.



Wm. Diesburg hauling milk with horse and wagon similar to those on the previous picture. Note the fly net on the horses.

Equity, had its own well for water, coal oil lamps, coal heat stove, and its own ice house. We remember it as it was in the 1940's. At this time, the ice house was no longer in use, but was still standing in its old location between the creamery and the railroad. The cooling system used a brine solution that was pumped through the coils of the vats by an electric compressor. The same coils were used to chill and pasteurize. Steam was sent through the coils for the pasteurization process. The steam came from a furnace-boiler that was heated with coal. The coal came in on a rail car and it was the duty of the buttermaker to unload this and keep the furnace going. The brine tanks sat up in the rafters overhead. These tanks were enough to also cool the en-

tire cooler room. A jack shaft with a pulley that operated a motor at one time was no longer in use.

At this time, only cream and not milk was bought. It came to the creamery in five or ten gallon cans. These were weighed, graded, steamed out and returned to the farmer. Each of the creamery's 150 patrons had a number for identification. Each patron's cream was tested weekly.

The creamery had small vats and one large vat. They produced 300,000 pounds of butter a year. (A modern creamery now can do this in two days.) Butter was made in a wooden churn with three wooden rollers to make the butter. As the churn turned, the extra milk, the buttermilk, was piped to a huge tank for farmers to use for feed. The farmers bid on this, usually bidding for a day of the week.

Butter was sold at the sales counter in one-pound sizes, and the cream hauler took some along on his route for the farmers. Bulk butter was packed in wooden tubs, which were waxed on the inside and lined with paper. The top was flat and metal straps held the lid and were nailed at the edge. They held about 64 pounds. The tubs were sold to the State Brand Creamery in Mason City. Butter was hand-wrapped.

Butter for sale in the one-pound size in Elma was put into a butter box called a Friday Box, presumably after its inventor. This had a bottom that could be raised. The butter was raised through a cutter and

sliced across. This made 12 pounds, then the next was raised and cut, etc. The butter box held 90 pounds. Since this work was done in the cooler, you worked fast!

All the farmers separated their own cream at the farm, and the milk was used to feed their little pigs. When the creamery began to buy whole milk, it was sometimes difficult to convince them that the difference in the price would make up for the need to find something else to feed the pigs, but this was 'Progress'!

Elma Co-operative Creamery

Elma Co-operative Creamery was built before the year 1890. The first buttermaker was George Hansen. The first building was located north of the Equity. The Elma Co-operative Creamery was organized on December 22, 1900, and articles of incorporation were drawn up under the name Elma Co-operative Creamery. It started operating January 1, 1901.

President was Dan Fallgatter, Vice-President, D. McKittrick; Secretary-Treasurer, A. A. Carter. Directors were: George Mover, Wm. Buchholz, C. S. Robinson, Pete Joens, J. H. Hunemiller.

On March 28, 1936, it was reorganized as a non-profit organization and called the Elma Co-operative Creamery Association. Directors were: Fred Kruger, Ben Basteson, M. E. Birmingham, Albert Brummond, Dick McGrane, E. W. Reckner.



Farmer's Co-operative Creamery. The man with the hat is John Watson.



Creamery with Earl Hayden standing by the door, Bill Sweet with cream cans and wagon, and John Mulick with horse and buggy.



Calendar of the new Elma Co-op Creamery Assn.

The Association purchased the Peoples Creamery from R. E. Wade and Vic Anderson in 1945 and dismantling began the following year. Construction on the new building began July, 1947. Ernest Friedrich was President of the creamery at this time. Art Rimrodt drew plans for it and was largely instrumental in building it, and supervising construction. It started operations in 1948.

The staff of the creamery consisted of the secretary, the buttermaker and a buttermaker's assistant or helper. A good secretary and buttermaker could make the difference in the financial success of a creamery. A buttermaker's assistant got paid in the 40's, \$70 in the summer and \$50 in the winter. The production was down in the winter months.

Some of the buttermakers through the years: Alphonse McLaughlin; August Berkes, until 1932; Reis Palmer; Nels Thomsen, until 1940; Art Rimrodt, until 1961; and Tom Burke, Jr.

Buttermaker assistants were: Clyde Cummings; Art Hunemiller; Bob Murphy; Herb Mealy; Francis Enright; Lloyd Friedrich; Bob Semerad; Billy Joe Biwer; Leslie Miller; Melvin McGrane; Dick Weers; Gary Rimrodt; Duane Rimrodt; Rueben Friedrich; George Fountain; Andy Balk.

Secretaries were: Henry Mealy; Loretta Stapleton; Harry Bloom, until 1939; Bob Galligan, 1939-43 and 1946-49; Myrtle Galligan; and Edna Schroeder.

Board members through the years were: Ephraim Reckner, almost 40 years; Fred Kruger, 8 years; Martin Birmingham; Gottlieb Schmidt; Earl Schroeder; William Gardner; Ed Huegel; Ernest Friedrich, who served 9 years; K. C. Johnson; Jim Friedhoff; Jim Fitzgerald; Charles Lentz; Robert Schroeder; Orville Baethke; Carl Dietz; Charles Lubbert; Quentin Fangman; James Murphy; Frank Komarek; Earl Kelly; Clarence Gansen; and Merle McDaniel.

Cream haulers were: Adamec, Frank Roche, Leo Milham, Glen Lubbert, Wm. Diesburg, Kenneth Kapka, Tom Burke, Sr., Nick Spoden, Walter Gebel, Ralph Biwer, Slim Heying, Charles Bode, Louis Lentz, Frank Ptacek, Pat Fitzgerald, Duane Rimrodt, Brian Glaser, Harold Eiffler, Frank Falada, Adolph Hyke, John



Long-time buttermaker Art Rimrodt checking the consistency of the butter.



Matt Biwer standing ahead of the milk truck owned by Slim Heying in 1956.

Hyke, Tom Hyke, S. F. "Zeke" Mannerter, Aegen Mannerter, Joe Johnson, Leonard Hunemiller, Ed Fitzgerald, John "Rip" Cashman, and Francis Zeimetz.

The creamery expanded in 1960-61 to a cheese-making facility; along with gathered cream which was made into butter. The cheese was sold to Borden's at Boscobel, Wisconsin, and the butter to State Brand Creamery in Mason City. Ice cream was also made for the patrons and store sales. The creamery was merged with the Cresco Co-op in January, 1963, and the building was sold to Joe Ludwig, Jr., in 1964.

We apologize if any names have been omitted from our lists.

Maple Leaf Creamery

In 1905 the President of the Maple Leaf Creamery was W. N. Dinger, and the Secretary was Dick Laue. Milk was bought at this time in 1905 for a price of \$.82 per 100 pound. At this time it was decided to be open on Sundays for the three summer months. A cream separator was purchased for \$150 at the time and a complete steam boiler for \$200.

F. Dinger was hired to haul all of the coal out to Maple Leaf from Elma and also to deliver all butter to the Elma Train Depot for the cost of \$400 per year. He also had to agree that the wagons were equipped with springs to handle the barrels of butter.

A. J. Herman was hired as buttermaker for a salary of \$90 per month.

Also, Pat Stevenson was hired to fill the Ice House for \$50.

In 1907, the buttermilk was sold to J. Enright for \$.27 per barrel. At that time directors were paid \$1 per meeting; and secretaries were paid \$15 per month for their salaries. Also at that time, coal was bought for \$4.10 per ton.

In 1909, S. M. Despres, President of The Farmers Bank, was elected Treasurer of the Maple Leaf Creamery. It was decided that the bank would agree to pay \$35 per year for their business.

In 1912, the price of creamery shares was reduced from \$25 per share to \$10 per share. Also Nick Graf was hired as buttermaker for \$90 per month, and was able to hire a helper.

In 1914, Charles Garmen was elected Treasurer of the Maple Leaf Creamery. He paid the creamery \$300 at this time for doing business with the Elma State Savings Bank. May 1, 1914, was the first day the creamery would only buy cream, and the price paid was \$.26 per pound of butterfat.

In 1928, Y. Buresh was elected Secretary of the creamery, as many of you may remember.

In 1929, Freida Lauck was elected Secretary of the creamery. The buttermaker was paid \$50 per month.

From 1937 to 1948 Clarence Darrah was buttermaker. In 1947, John Wacha, Jr., was elected as Director of the creamery.

From 1948 to 1949 Arthur Eckerman was buttermaker, and in 1948 Fred Lauck was hired and paid \$1 per day as the extra helper.

February 1, 1949 to 1961, Oscar Queel was the buttermaker for the creamery. On March 1, 1950, Norbert Burke was hired for an extra helper with a salary of \$100 per month. In 1953, the creamery hired George Fountain as an extra helper, and his wages were \$100 per month.

The first creamery in Maple Leaf was a wooden building. In 1924, a brick creamery was built on the same site. It discontinued in 1960, selling out to Elma.

The Dance Hall in Maple Leaf was built in 1924 also. It was a grocery store for part of the time.



Maple Leaf before 1924. Old Wooden Creamery, Maple Leaf Store and part of Anton Roman Blacksmith Shop.

The store in Maple Leaf was the site of the Post Office until it was discontinued in 1907. It was owned by Diekmann and in 1916 sold to Jarosh. The store sold out in 1961.

There were also two blacksmith shops . . . one run by Barney Roman and the other by a Papach.

Haberman Creamery

George Haberman opened the Haberman Creamery in November of 1932. The business was sold in 1942 to R. E. Wade and Vic Anderson. In 1945, the building was sold to the Elma Co-op Creamery and it was dismantled the following year.

Produces

Foley Implement was established by Coleman Foley after the turn of the century. The business was located west of the Farmers Bank building on Busti Avenue. He operated the business until he retired in 1930.

Pat Fogarty opened a produce in the Foley Building in 1931. Pat McGrane moved his produce to the Foley Building on the east side in 1940. He operated this until a year before he died in 1956. Leo Tonn bought the McGrane produce in about 1958. After Leo's death in 1975, the produce building was sold to Great Plains Supply Co. It was torn down.

John Clark opened a produce in 1932 at the present site of Hart Chevrolet. Harold Kelly was one of the employees of Clark Produce Station in 1936.

J. P. Kelly opened a Cream station and produce one door south of the Rudy Klobassa Meat Market on the east side of Elma, August of 1932.

Cedar Valley Produce was reopened in 1936 by Lloyd Beaumaster.

John Condon was in the grain and produce business



McGrane Produce on Busti Avenue. Standing by the truck is Pat McGrane and son Max.

in Elma for nearly 40 years. Condon Produce was west of Klobassa Grocery on the west side of Elma. John Condon died in 1939 and in 1940 the Condon and Pardee buildings were bought by George "Norb" O'Donnell and torn down.

Clem Cashman built a produce building in 1947. Eugene Carey bought the Cashman Produce in 1951 and Steffen bought the Blue Ribbon Feed Store in 1952. This building became the Liquor Store in 1954.

Whelan Produce Co.

The Whelan Produce Co. was owned and operated by John P. Whelan. He was at one time one of the largest produce and egg buyers in northern Iowa, employing a great number of people.

In 1917, he purchased the business of O. A. Dunton, a dealer in cream separators and gas engines, and also handled cream, poultry, and eggs. He continued this business as the Whelan Produce Co. and the following year equipped the business with a modern buttermaking equipment. He operated the creamery and produce business, shipping many carloads of produce, butter and eggs every month for many years. The depression and the slump in farm prices reduced his operations



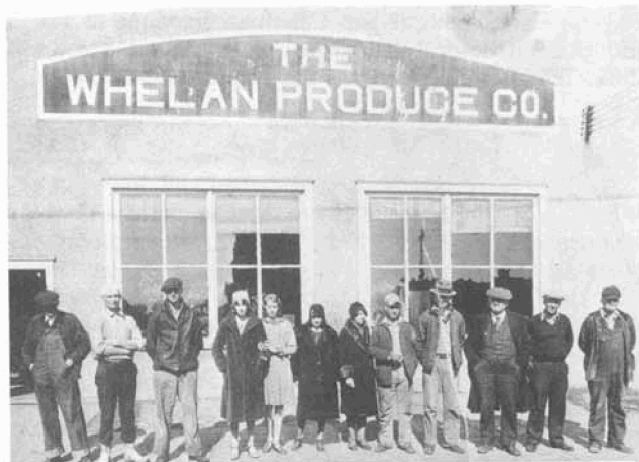
Whelan Produce, 1928. (Left to right): J. P. Whelan, P. O'Donnell, Katherine Brennan, John Clark, Tom Whelan.



Whelan Produce February, 1929.

considerably and, in 1932, he closed his plant, later selling the business to George Haberman of Ft. Atkinson. Mr. Whelan continued to run a produce station in Elma, buying for Goodrich and Searcy of Cresco.

Earl Kelly and Dick Sweet were buttermakers at various times. Cindy Stratton recalls working at the Whelan Produce (which was located where Don's Saddle Inn is now) in 1924. She candled eggs there for \$2 a day, candling 30 cases of eggs daily. Chickens were also butchered there.



Whelan Produce Employees—Dan McGrane, Earl Kelly, Fred Pierce, Ester Beaumaster, Ellen Engelborts, Nora Enright, Nellie Berry, Leo Westendorf, Tom Whelan, J. P. Whelan, Cliff Kelly, Jack Clark.

Lentz Feed

On November 17, 1958, Linus J. Lentz started working for Frank Schnurr. Schnurr Feed Store was built by Frank Schnurr near the Elma water tower. Frank ran the feed business from 1956 to 1963. At this time, the Purina franchise was run as a satellite plant from the dealership out of New Hampton, Iowa.

On July 17, 1971, Linus obtained the Purina franchise and moved the business to a new location—the rear section of the Henry Smith Cafe (formerly Hopkins Hatchery). The cafe still operated in the front of the building. On November 14, 1978, Lentz purchased the building from Smith and converted the en-



Lentz Feed Store



Lentz Feed Store with supplies that he sells.

tire building into feed storage.

Linus, with his wife, Elsie, and son, Tony, have been working in the agri-related business for twenty-eight years.

Their motto: "We are small, but have been steady."

Hopkins Hatchery and Produce



Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hopkins.
50th Anniversary,
June 18, 1978.

Hopkins Hatchery and Produce . . . the business of Ralph and Olga Hopkins. In 1935 we purchased the empty tavern from the owner, Lucy Barrett, on downtown west Main Street in Elma. The reason we

moved to Elma was because of the depression of the '30's. The Smith Incubator Company of Cleveland, Ohio, that Mr. Hopkins worked for was closed. A cousin and other men who had worked for Smith started a new business, the Bundy Incubator Company, also of Cleveland, Ohio.

These men contacted Mr. Hopkins and helped us get started in Elma in the empty Barrett Building. Many would remember the sloping floor that seemed to help get a good start in carrying out feed! Incubators were installed in the front room of this building and we put Jamesway Brooders in the back room for raising baby chicks to start chicks for those who wanted them beyond day-old or just hatched.

As business grew we added an additional building to the back of the original one, this was built by Tom Miller and his son. The incubators we moved to this area, with the front part for feed, poultry, and hog equipment, along with Salisbury supplies. Having operated a business in Osage for Maple Dale Hatchery of Austin, we were experienced to start out on our own. In the summer we expanded the business to include buying eggs which we shipped to New York, making a year round venture and not just seasonal. We also started buying poultry and culling hens which were sold to the dressing plant in St. Ansgar. Growth of the feed business made it necessary to build a warehouse that extended to the alley.

Otto Lentz of Alta Vista built this building as well as the new front building to replace the one that was no longer safe, in which to conduct business, after the March, 1954, fire that claimed most of the north side businesses and those on the south side from the corner east to the hatchery. Through all the many fires in the theater, until this last destruction of many buildings, the theater equipment that was salvaged was brought to the hatchery. This was ironic since the building was so old, a town landmark, and not too safe with all the inflammable equipment from a theater. The newest part of the People's Savings Bank is built on land that Father O'Donnell and the I. C. church sold to us after the fire. The growth of Elma is evident in the very fine park still enjoyed. Mr. Hopkins and a retired businessman, Ned Parker, would drive through the countryside and locate large and prominent rocks and stones using chains to drag them behind the truck to the park where they remain in place today. Other area families contributed markers as well. One stone was in the shape of a chair.

Serving on the committee that purchased the landfill west of town was a project Ralph was pleased about for the community needs. He was always interested in baseball and the Elma teams as a player and an umpire. Many will remember the night-time move to the park of the East side and West side bandstands. Thereafter, the Elma Town Band performed on summer evenings every Wednesday and Saturday. The band also played for Elma Day at the Howard County Fair, when most businesses closed to support this special time.

Nearing retirement we sold our buildings to Mr.

Henry Smith and he sold the buildings to Linus Lentz. We enjoyed our many customers and appreciated their business and that they shopped in Elma. Many took their egg money to buy their groceries. We were happy to maintain our business and home in Elma for thirty years closing December 31, 1965. We retired and moved to Rochester. Though Ralph passed away in April, 1983, I often return to Elma to visit with our daughter, Joyce Elaine (Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Hart), family and friends.

Mrs. Ralph E. Hopkins
Rochester, Minnesota

Howard County Equity Co-operative Association

The Howard County Equity Shipping Association came into existence in the early 1900's, possibly by 1913 by early recollection. Henry Knippling was the first manager. The main business was buying and selling livestock and grain. The livestock was shipped out by train to the Chicago markets. In the early years the firm had a record of being the biggest shipper of livestock in the area.

In 1918, R. P. Keefe was president of the board of directors, with Will Meirick, Otto Gesell, E. W. Reckner, and D. Laue as members. T. F. Burns was hired as bookkeeper. From the minutes of their meeting, we note that the name Howard County Equity Shipping Association was officially changed to Howard County Equity Co-operative Association. In 1920 August Lauck and Fred Kruger were put on the board, and sometime later, August Bartels was secretary.



Roy Wilhelm, Ray Boehmer, Jim Berry and Clyde Webb.

Art Gansen worked for the Equity for ten years, becoming manager in 1927. During this time the "Bill Whelan elevator" was moved to the Equity and the office section of the old elevator was turned into a cafe, which was opened by Clem Cashman in 1931, later known as the "Trolley Inn." The cafe was completed



Picture taken in the Trolley part of the Trolley Inn. Equity Crew—Pete Egan, Art Gansen, Andy Balk, and Louie Kobliska. Second row—A. J. (Butch) Hart, Lou Diekmann, Joe Ott, and Joe Showalter. Third row—Clem Cashman, Frank Hruska, Paul Schmelzer, John Beecher, Earl Hayden, Jim Hruska, August Lauck, and Joe Dusheck.



Front row—August Lauck, Earl Hayden, Jim Hruska, and Clem Cashman, standing. Back row—Joe Showalter, Pete Egan, Frank Hruska, Louis Kobliska, Ray Boehmer, A. J. (Butch) Hart, Joe Ott, Andy Balk, John Beecher, Louis Diekmann, Art Gansen, Joe Dusheck and Paul Schmelzer.



Livestock pens with easy access to the railroad cars.

by adding a street car or trolley on the east end of the original structure, now the site of the "Farmer's Inn."

The livestock pens at the Equity (stockyards) belonged to the Great Western Railroad. Due to progress over a period of time, the livestock business was changed with trucks taking livestock directly from the farm yards to the buying station.

Isabelle Gansen was bookkeeper from 1927 to 1932, when the wages were \$50 a month and room and board cost \$5 a week.

In an official audit the following data appeared, dated September 1931-September 1932. List of commodities handled: Corn, oats, other grain, flour, feed, implements and repairs, seed, livestock, coal, hay, twine, sundry mdse., wool was also handled. Cattle,



1927—Jim Dusheck, Conrad Schwake, Art Gansen, Mgr., Frank Dusheck, Mike Derr, Pete Miller, salesman, Isabelle Gansen, bookkeeper, and William Newman.

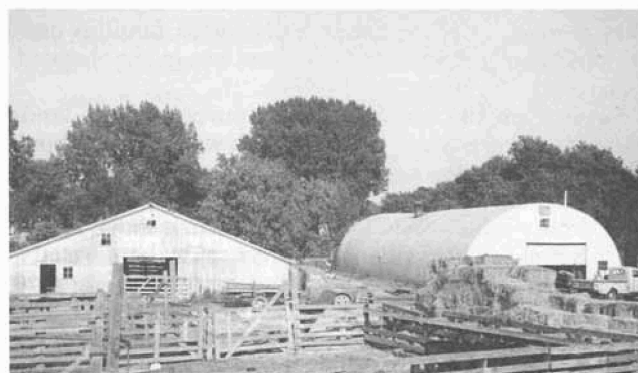


A diesel engine west of the grain elevators. Coal is piled to the right. A stock chute is seen on the right on the north end of the feed building in 1955.

1,549; calves, 2,356; hogs, 13,026; and lambs, 856. Fixed assets, \$14,166.30. Accounts Receivable, \$4,252.13. Total Inventory, \$7,235.73.

Commodities bring to mind "Town Crier" flour, which was advertised high on the elevator building, and "Great Heart" and "Black Banner" coal. The coal was delivered and put down a "coal chute" into a coal bin usually in the basement where it would be handy to fill a coal skuttle and place it beside the stove.

In the 1930's Elma enjoyed trade from a large territory. It was a principal shipping point for livestock, produce and grain for many years.



Stockyards and quonset building used for repair and maintenance of machinery in 1955.

Tom Pfund came to Elma from Hawkeye and was manager for a short time.

John Beecher became manager in 1933 and continued until his retirement in 1968. In 1936, the Equity was the largest individual business in Howard County, it had done a half-million dollar business. Louis Diekmann was bookkeeper at that time working there from 1933-1943.

There were stockyards along the east line of the Equity property, next to the quonset building that housed the "Shop." John Deere Equipment was sold for many years and repair service for farm machinery was available. The shop was closed in 1984 when Jerome Heying, Sr., retired after working there for about 24 years. The stockyards were torn down in 1985.



Louis Kobliska, parts man at the Equity.



Ray Boehmer and Joe Dusheck.

The office has been remodeled several times through the years, and recently extended to accommodate new and updated equipment.

Yardmen in the early years included Charles Chihak, Leon Meirick, and Jim Dusheck.



Veronica Riley and Ed Diekmann at work at their desk.

Bernard (Barny) Beecher and Lois Garmen were office personnel in the 40's. Ed Diekmann began working as bookkeeper in 1948; Veronica (Beecher) Riley began working there in the late 40's and early 50's. In 1951, records show the following employees: Joe Showalter, Joe Dusheck, Andy Balk, Ray Boehmer, L. G. Kobliska, and in subsequent years, familiar faces were Merle Jacoby, Leo Jenn, Vic Streich, Donald Ludwig, Bernard Hartogh, Ed Meyerhoff, James Friedhoff, Paul Kobliska, Jim Knecht, Arnold Knecht, Kenny Roethler, Norb Gansen and Mary Ann Gebel.

The Equity bought the old Creamery building and used it for storage for the bagged fertilizer. It was torn down sometime after 1969. Anhydrous ammonia and bagged fertilizer were handled by the Equity for a number of years.



Merle Jacoby and Vic Streich, Elma Co-op millmen at work in the control room of the new Feed Manufacturing Plant—1964.

On September 21, 1964, a new Felco complete feed manufacturing plant began steady production—a

100-ton a day operation. The mill equipment included a Bryant hammermill for grinding ear corn and small grain, a 2-ton Fairbanks hopper scale, with a 5,000-pound dial and a Marion 2-ton horizontal mixer. There are 16 holding and loadout bins totaling 220 tons of capacity. A one-unit bulk delivery service works in conjunction with the mill. John Beecher was very proud of this advancement, because home grown grain could be mixed with Felco protein and concentrates right here at home.

The Midland Petroleum business was purchased from New Hampton in 1968 and operated by Equity employees until 1983, when it was leased by Mike Zeimetz, and later purchased in 1985.

In 1967, the board of directors at the Equity were: Francis Meirick, Francis Ludwig, Albert Lauck, Joe Rouchka, Elmer Joachim, Reuben Friedrich, and Bernard Kleckner.

Clair Canny was now the manager, and progress was to continue. 1971 brought new changes with the addition of an LP plant on the lots purchased from Art Gansen on the south end of the Equity property, and a larger fertilizer blending plant on the north side. This would enable fertilizer to be blended and purchased in bulk or bagged.

The last cattle were bought in 1968. The Equity quit buying hogs in 1974. Harley Dykema replaced Clair Canny as manager and, during this time, the concrete cement silos were built with a capacity of 400,000 bushels of grain storage. The older part of the elevator was torn down to make room for this new structure, and it was with amazement that observers gathered to watch the construction of these towering silos. At Christmas time there is a lighted tree placed on top of the silos.

Mr. Dykema had to resign because of poor health and Jim Frisbee was hired as manager.

The railroad tracks were taken out in 1982, the property was purchased by the Equity in 1983 and is now the site of a large grain storage shed which holds 500,000 bushels of grain. Both the cement silos and the storage shed can be used for Government storage.

Bob Ballantine is the current manager, and current employees are Lenice Jensen, employed since 1967 in



Vic Streich and Merle Jacoby stacking feed in 1955.



Howard County Equity Elevators in 1961.



Elevators, feed building, with the office visible, in the right foreground is the cafe now known as the "Farmer's Inn."

the office; Ed Diekmann, since 1948; and Adolph Ludwig, since 1960. The yard men are Ed Voves and Kenny Gebel, since 1969; Roger Gesell, since 1972; and Milton Boehmer; Francis Friedhoff; Craig Worple; Marvin Tonn; and Les Hobert.

Current board members in 1986 are: Orville Baethke, President; Robert Pietan, Vice-President; Francis

Nibaur, Secretary; John Ries, John Ludwig, Harold Friedrich, and Dave Fangman.

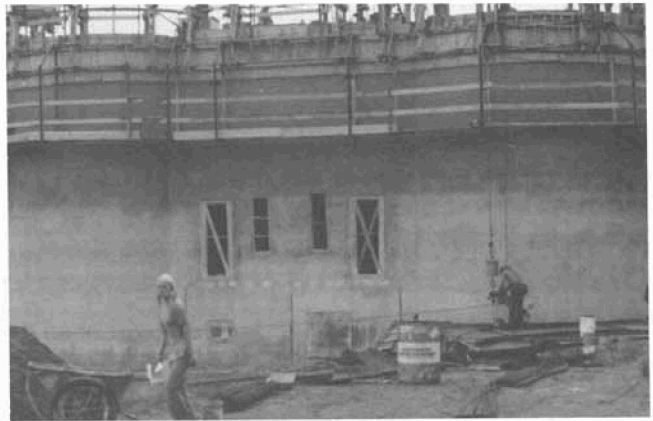
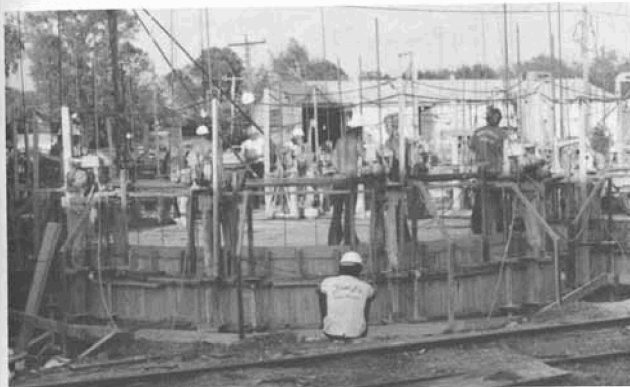
Because the Howard County Equity has been one of Elma's largest employers, we hope that we have not missed anyone in listing the employees. There were several day or short-time laborers that may have been overlooked; this in no way diminishes their value.

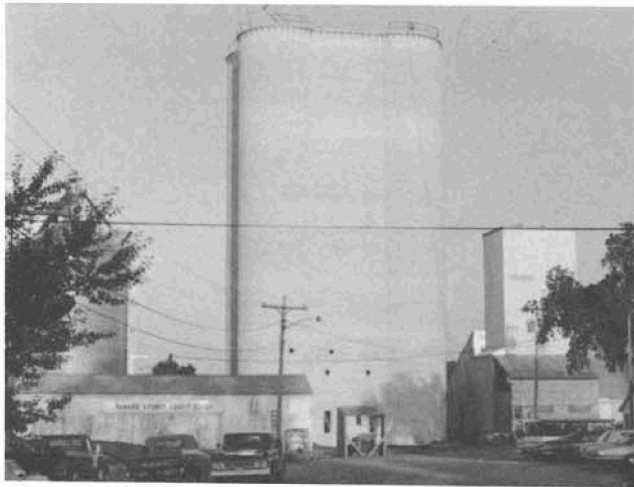


The storage shed constructed on property formerly owned by the railroad. Capacity 500,000 bushels of grain.



1976—Construction of the cement silos used for grain storage. Capacity of 400,000 bushels.





Historical Data

The Association was reorganized on August 16, 1958, under Chapter 499 of the Code of Iowa of 1958, with a fiscal year from September 1 to August 31. The annual meeting as amended on July 1, 1964, is to be held within 120 days after the close of the fiscal year and is to be held in Howard County, Iowa.

The Board of Directors has adopted bylaws which provide among other things: Rules, regulations and clarification of the Association's year end distribution of net savings, provision for compliance with the Revenue Act of 1962 and other appropriate rules and regulations governing the operation of the Association.

The amended authorized capital, per reorganization of August 16, 1958, has no limit. The Class "A" and "B" memberships have no limit as to the number or total amount to be issued. They have a value of \$25. The certificates of interest have no limit as to the numbers or total amount to be issued.

The Association is a Farmers' Cooperative Purchasing and Marketing Association handling grain, feed, seed, fertilizer, coal, farm implement parts, petroleum products and other farm supplies.

Grain Elevators

Since this is a farming community, there have always been grain storage and grain elevators. Prior to 1900 the railroad tracks were lined on the east side by four elevators with one on the west side. After 1900, these were named the Gilchrist Co., Sidman Co., Northwestern Iowa Grain Co., Hunting Co., and Farmers Grain Warehouse.

A fire in July of 1900 swept down the tracks into warehouse row, consuming the warehouses of Inter-State Grain Co., Hunting Elevator Co., and Sidman Grain Co. These were located along the tracks from Birch to Forest Street (or just south of our present Equity to the Whitco Building). The two southernmost warehouses were saved by a train crew from Riceville which came down and, by soaking the roofs of the remaining warehouses, saved them. C. W. Rowley, whose

company was the Sidman, was to rebuild at once; but the others didn't have plans immediately.

Northwestern Iowa Grain Co., the furthestmost to the south and west of the tracks, was the Loomis, Johnson, and Lee Elevator in 1905, and later the D. H. Tidgewell Grain Elevator, in the 1920's. Dave Tidgewell was an early Elma businessman who was well known and involved in many enterprises.

Many of these grain warehouses changed owners often and also locations. As an example, is this clipping from an old New Era:

The Harris warehouse which Ed Evans bought of M. A. Biwer is being moved this week from its old location to its new site just south of the stockyards. It is estimated the building contains over 30,000 feet of lumber and is a pretty heavy load. It was placed on twelve truck wagons and drawn forward by a capstan. Mr. Biwer had charge of the work. This occurred in 1906.

Located behind what is now the Zeimetz Service Station, was the Whelan Elevator. This was moved to the Equity when Art Gansen was manager. The office part of the elevator was the start of the Trolley Inn. The office for Art Gansen's business, dealing with livestock, seed, feed, and etc., was located across from the Trolley Inn to the south. It was also part of the old Whelan property.

Garages



Ed Sayers ran an auto repair and electric shop from 1925 to 1939. He is standing in front of his shop where the Iowa State Liquor Store is now located.

Art Gansen Garage



(Left to right): George Fountain, Jack Althof, Ray Cashman, Howard Watson, Harriet Burns, Frank Hruska, Kathleen McGee, Bill Kurtenbach, George Gansen, Bob Schroeder, Chas. McGee, James Fitzgerald, Tom Murray, Cletus Jordan, Mrs. James Fitzgerald, Joe and Joanne Fitzgerald, Ves Weber, Elmer Heying, Jerome Heying, Sr., Lavern Jarosh, Kenneth Stevenson, Wilford Burns, Cyril Finch, Art Gansen, Virg Kinnamon, Cliff Phippen, Alvie Iverson, and Lynn Stevenson.



Gansen Garage, 1950



Gansen Garage: New and Used Cars.

(Left to right): Elmer Heying, Mechanic; Jerome Heying, Louis Kobliska, Art Gansen.

After working for ten years for the Howard County Equity, Art Gansen decided to go into business for himself. He had operated a lime quarry, which was located on his property during the depression and delivered the lime to various areas. He had employed

Bill Keefe, Bennie Weiland, Roy Weiland, Dick Sweet, Curly Sullivan and Vern O'Neill.

In 1932 he began a business in a red building located south of the "Farmer's Inn" where the Equity's LP plant now stands. He bought livestock, sold feed and seed, and had a trucking business.

In the late 30's Art and Isabelle bought two farms from Lloyd Biwer and operated the farms with tenants.

In 1942 they bought the "Gansen Garage," from Louis Kobliska. Before Louis had the garage, Irving Borg ran a used car business there. It is the site of Russ O'Donnell's property on Busti Avenue.

The Gansens sold cars, machinery, feed and seed and did repair work on vehicles. They ran the Texaco Station in conjunction with the garage. Art also remained in the livestock business.

Through the years, many people were employed by the Gansens including: Leo Westendorf, Elmer Heying, Leander Heying, Jerome Heying, Lindy Kobliska, Bob Mathews, Gene Johnson, Clarence Shatek, Johnny Roethler, and bookkeepers were Bernice Boyle, Kathleen McGee, and Gerry Biwer.

In the 1960's the garage was sold to Pint Stevenson. The Gansens remained active in their business ventures until they retired in 1970.

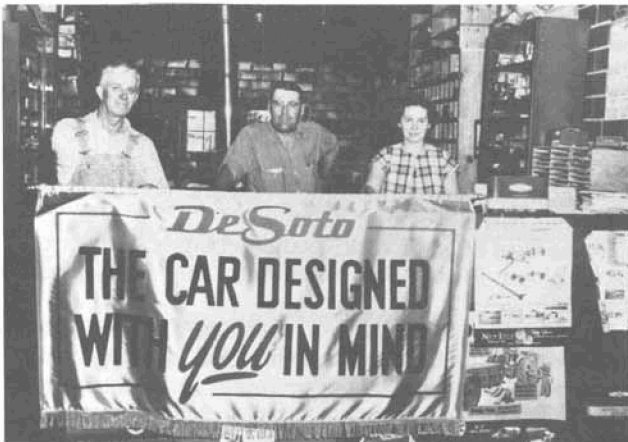
Car Dealers

Leo Biber sold Overlands in 1916. Will Diekmann sold Fords in 1917 and 1918. J. C. Weber sold Willys Knight and Overland cars in 1920. Pearce Cashman sold Fords and Studebakers in the early 1920's. Ed Weber had a Chevrolet dealership from the mid 1920's to 1939. His business was known as the Elma Motor Company. W. D. Enloe sold Fords in the mid 1920's and Durants in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Later he sold Dodge-Plymouth cars. His business was located where Kenny's Repair is now. He went back to selling Fords in the mid 1930's (where Russ O'Donnell's Conoco is located now). Louis Kobliska took over selling Fords in the late 1930's. In 1941 Irving Borg started selling Plymouth and DeSoto cars in this building. Art Gansen purchased the business later. He also sold Allis Chalmers and New Idea machinery. The business closed in the late 1950's.

Cunningham opened a used car lot in 1937. Birums opened a used car lot where the Memorial Hall is now in 1939. Art Bergland was the salesman.

A. J. Hart sold Fords in the early 1930's where the Elma Locker is now. Later, he sold Dodge-Plymouths. He started a Chevrolet dealership in 1949 where Zeimetz Service is now located. In partnership with his sons, Dale and Lyle, he built a new garage south of the present A & L Hardware in 1951. Later, Dale operated the dealership by himself. The business closed in 1984.

In 1971, three local brothers (Virgil, Roger and Francis "Zip" Zeimetz) purchased a General Motor Dealership in Spring Valley, Minnesota, and have supplied new and used cars to this area since that time.



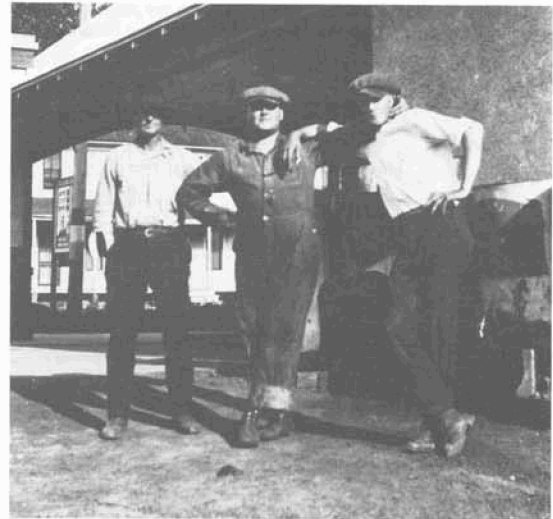
In Gansen's office in their garage on Busti Avenue. Louis Kobliska, Art Gansen and Isabelle Gansen.

Hart Business

A. J. Hart built the Hawkeye Filling Station which he later sold to Hi Erion. He ran a station in Alta Vista from 1920 to 1923. In 1924 he built another station in Elma. He leased this station to Virg Kinnamon in 1938. John Friedhof bought the building in 1946 for an Electric and Appliance Shop. He later converted it into a residence where Gen Friedhof now lives. In 1941 Butch operated Seercy's in Cresco. In 1942 he bought



The Hawkeye filling station was built sometime before the 1920's. The Elma town bandstand can be seen in the background.





Hi Erion and his father, Henry, ahead of the Elma Oil Co.



Henry Erion



Elma Oil Co. sometime before 1942.

the Elma Oil Company back from Hi Erion, renaming it Hart Oil Company. He continued this station until 1965 when he sold it to Farm Service of New Hampton. The station was operated by Gerald "Pint" Stevenson for many years. Among people who worked for Hart were: Dewey Garrett, who worked almost fifty years (mostly as tank wagon driver); Virgil "Curly" Sullivan; Herb Lamprecht; Cass Weber; "Chic" Kane; Harry Conway and Charles Bode.

In 1929 or 1930, he bought the Opera House and converted it into a garage. Hart sold Ford cars from 1930 until 1933 when he started selling Plymouth and Dodge cars. He sold this business in 1934. The garage was traded for a farm to Charlie Blaska.

The Harts started selling Chevrolet cars in 1949. The Hart Chevrolet building was started in 1950 and completed in 1951. The old depot was moved to the lot for storage. Dale was in the Chevrolet garage for thirty-five years.



Virg Kinnamon's Phillip's 66 station just at its completion in 1940.



Mort's Amoco and Convenience Store, part of which was the Kinnamon Station, on Busti Avenue.



Zeimetz Service Station at the site of "The Hawkeye Filling Station."

Standard Station

In 1933, the Elma City Council issued a building permit to erect a filling station at the corner of Highway

272 and Busti Avenue. The Standard Oil Co. opened that year with E. Benthrop as manager.

Fred Pierce became manager of the Standard Station in 1936, a business he owned for over thirty years. In January 1973, he sold the business to Dennis Meyer, but continued to work in the station until his death. In November, 1976, the Standard Station was sold to Lee Shannon, who operated it until 1983.

The Standard Oil tankwagon agent in 1925 was Harold Kelly. Other agents included Francis "Frank" Clancy; Cyril Finch in the 1930's; Charles Bode, who became the new agent in 1949 and the present tankwagon agent, Leroy O. Mohrfeld, who purchased the tankwagon in 1954.

Farm Service Station

Elma 1941—"Merle Schroeder opened the Farm Service Station located west of the Hastings Hospital." Harold Kelly became tankwagon agent in that year.

In 1950, the station was leased to Keith Roethler, with H. Meyerhoff leasing it in 1951. Kenneth Stevenson leased the Farm Service Station in June 1951 and the building was later destroyed by fire.

Dan Conway was a tankwagon agent for Farm Service. Cletus Offerman purchased the tankwagon in 1953 and later sold to Richard Rosauer.

Mort's Amoco

The station, now Mort's Amoco, was originally Phillips 66 built by Virg Kinnamon in 1940. It was leased to Stevenson Brothers, Kenneth and Brice, in 1948.

Skelly Oil Co. leased the station in 1952 employing A. Burkeman as manager; Elmer Heying, mechanic, and Gay Loftus, tankwagon driver. In 1953, Elmer Heying leased the station and L. J. Heying purchased the tankwagon.

L. O. Mohrfeld purchased the Skelly Oil building in 1971, using it chiefly as a garage and maintenance building for his stock trucks. One of the service areas was converted to a car wash and an addition, built in 1981, serves as a convenience store today. Amoco gasoline and oil products are sold by Mohrfeld and the station also serves as headquarters for his truckline and wrecker service.



"Our Standard Oil Man," Fred Pierce, and employee Keith Roethler.

Skelgas

An Appliance and Skelgas store was opened by Hi Erion in 1945 in the building next to the New Era Office on West Main Street. In 1947, Ken Jacoby purchased the Skelgas business and moved it to the Enloe Building. When Jacoby entered the armed service, John Fogarty purchased the Skelgas business. The business was operated by Lyle Hart in 1951 and at another time by Lee Shannon.

Kenny's Repair

Our records do not show the date the building now known as Kenny's Repair, located at the corner of West Main, was erected; but sources show that it was the Diekmann Garage in 1918. In 1920, it was purchased by P. H. Cashman and became a Ford dealership.

William D. Enloe started a Sinclair Station at the site in 1933 and started selling Ford cars there in 1935.

In 1940, Roger Maruska leased the Enloe Station and that same year, Esther Kelly and Cora McCarthy opened K-M Shop in the west side of the building. About this same time, the business also changed to D-X Products.

Gerald Pospichal leased the Enloe station in 1942 and in 1944 the business was leased to Bob Mathews. W. D. Enloe died in 1945 and his son, Ed, became manager of the D-X Station.

In 1947, Arnold Maravetz opened a body shop in the rear of the Enloe Building, Kenneth Jacoby operated Kenny's Skelgas in the west side of the building and Leroy and Lester Mohrfeld leased the D-X Station and operated it under the name of Mohrfeld Brothers.

A Cresco newspaper reports a fire in November of 1950 destroyed the body shop and the grease room of the D-X Station.

In 1951, Kenneth Stevenson purchased the D-X Station and he later built the large block building as it stands today. Although gasoline is no longer sold at pumps there, Kenny continues to do welding and repair work in his shop.



Mohrfeld Brothers Station in 1947. Operated by Leroy and Lester Mohrfeld. The south part burned down in 1951. Skelgas office was located in the west part of the office area.

Hardware Stores Church & Hoyt

One of the first hardware stores was established in 1886 by Frank Church and Warren Hoyt. A building was built on the corner of Main Street and 3rd Street in 1894. The building was a two-story structure, 25' x 90', with a warehouse and barn attached. Their inventory was hardware and nails, \$7500; and farm machinery, \$2000. In 1904, the building and business was traded for a farm, and the partnership dissolved. Frank and his brother, Fred, began the firm of Church & Church later, operating in several locations until 1918 when the partnership ended.

W. P. Weed Hardware

Wallace P. Weed conducted a hardware store in the building formerly occupied by the Church Bros., on the corner of Main and 3rd. He was later joined by his son, Arle, in 1909. In 1915, Henry Tex became a partner. The business was moved to the south side of the street, under the I. C. Hall, on the east side. Later a Mr. Schluter purchased W. P. Weed's interest and the business moved to the east side of town under the name of "Tex & Schluter Hardware."

J. L. Brown Hardware

Mr. Brown operated a hardware store in Elma for a period of time in the 1920's.

Diestler's Hardware

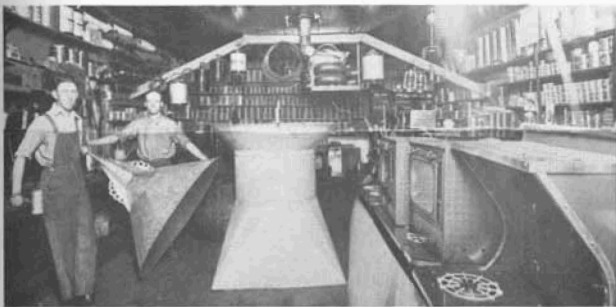
A. W. Diestler also ran a hardware store in the early 1920's.

Lichty Hardware

B. F. Lichty conducted a hardware store from 1890 to 1906.

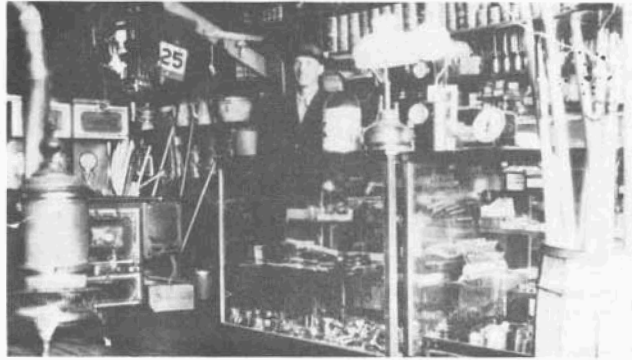
A. F. Gross Hardware

Gross Hardware first opened in 1912 in a frame building near where the present laundromat now sits. In 1916, the business moved to the north side of the Gesell Building located where the Stardust Lounge is now. Sometime in the middle 1920's, it was moved to



A. F. Gross Hardware Store at the beginning of his business. The store was located in a wooden building south of the laundromat on the east side of Busti Avenue. Bill Cannon and A. F. Gross pictured.

the Buhr Building and stayed there until it closed in the late 1960's. Gross Hardware was Elma's longest-running hardware store. The building was later torn down.



Alvin Gross sometime between 1912 and 1916.



Gross Hardware moved to the Gesell Building (location of the Stardust) now. Earl Hayden and his drayline in foreground.



This picture was taken in 1920. The City Hall is the building on the left. It was moved in from Busti. The device seen in the foreground is a gas pump.



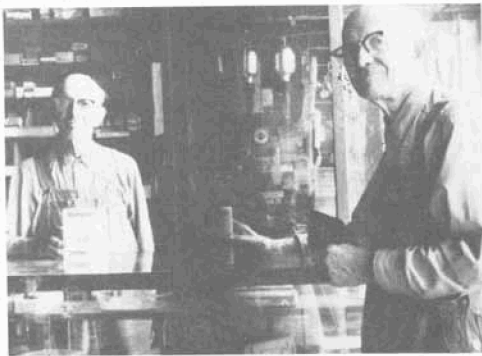
Alvin Gross seen in his store on the east side of Busti Avenue.



Alvin Gross, Hy Hyberger, Esther Reinhart and Ray, and Verona Gross behind the counter.



In 1930, Albert Derr, Joe Martin, Vern O'Neill, John, Hazel and Keith Roethler, and Alvin Gross behind the counter.



Alvin seen in a double exposure.



Louie Cashman seen at a log-splitting contest in front of Gross Hardware.

H & M Hardware

Harlan and Margaret Hyberger opened a hardware store in 1965 in the building which was formerly the Elwood and Landholt Hardware. In 1976, the business was sold to George and Ginny Saip and became known as "Saip's Hardware." It ceased operation in 1979 and the building was torn down in 1984.

A & L Hardware

Lynn and Amojean Stevenson opened a hardware in the former Conway Furniture building south of Memorial Hall in 1981.



Lynn Stevenson's A & L Hardware.

Elwood and Landholt Hardware

This hardware store opened in the Mealy Building in 1946. Fred Elwood and Bill Landholt were the owners. This business continued until 1958.



John Freidhof was in the heating and refrigeration business for about 25 years. He was an appliance repairman and sold and serviced televisions. He had purchased the Hart Oil Co. Building in the 1940's and used this for his business, later remodeling it into a home, where his wife still resides.

Ludwig Plumbing, Heating and Electric

Joseph Ludwig, Jr., became the partner of Albert Lauck in the plumbing business in 1958 and the Company became known as "Lauck and Ludwig Plumbing

and Heating." They were located on North Busti Avenue. Lauck retired in 1961 and Ludwig and his wife, Elsie, became the new owners and operators. The name was then changed to "Ludwig Plumbing, Heating and Electric."

In 1964, Ludwigs purchased the brick building west of the viaduct on Main Street and moved their business there. The building was formerly owned and utilized by the Elma Co-operative Creamery Association.

Ludwig's employees throughout the years were as follows: Jim Jacoby, Gene O'Donnell, Emmet Burke, Mike Heying, Ray Ptacek, Larry Steenhard, Melvin McGrane, Don Lentz, Mike Showalter, Marvin Valvoda, Lawrence Gosen, Don Ludwig, Jim Gronwoltdt, Matt Palmersheim, Bill Rausch (a son-in-law, now residing in Houston, Texas), Kevin Loes (a son-in-law, now residing in Iowa City), and Jerry Palmersheim; also other part-time employees. Avis Roethler was employed as bookkeeper. Ludwig's two sons, Tom, now of Champaign, Illinois, and Jerry, a University student in Amherst, Massachusetts, worked weekends and summers while they lived at home.

The business remains in operation at the present time under new owners. Jerry and Mary Palmersheim purchased it from the Ludwigs June 1, 1985.



Ludwig's Plumbing, Heating, and Electric on West Main Street.

Grocery Stores

L. W. English—Fred Sixbury Grocery Meat Market



The West Side Hotel burned down in August of 1901. L. W. English built and operated a grocery store (the store now occupied by Klobassa's Jack & Jill Store) until 1917. At this time, Fred Sixbury operated "The Sanitary Grocery Store." Charles Klobassa purchased the business in 1930. For many years the upper floor was used by the Masonic Lodge.

Klobassa's Jack and Jill

Klobassa's Jack and Jill Grocery Store now operated by Mrs. Vern (Marie) Klobassa, Ralph and Joe has been in the family for many years.

Charles Klobassa, Sr., was born in Innsbruck, came to the United States and worked for the George A. Hormel Co. Between the years of 1910 and 1913 Charlie and his brother Rudy operated a meat market on the east side of Elma. In the year 1930 Charlie purchased the business, "The Sanitary Grocery Store" from Mr. Sixbury—the present Klobassa's Jack and Jill location. To the meat market, groceries were added to the business. Lawrence and Ralph Klobassa, plus other hired help assisted them in the business.

Ralph Klobassa passed away at the age of 17 with the flu. Then Charles Klobassa, Jr., age 16, and Vern Klobassa, age 14, had to help in the store. They did their own butchering, made sausages, bologna, etc. In 1933 two wholesale trucks were put on the road to sell the sausage products.

During the course of years various people from Elma drove the trucks for them. During World War II, help was hard to find so Marie helped out and drove the meat route for several years. Charles Klobassa, Jr., then took over the route and Marie helped in the grocery store. The store was going by the name of "C.Klobassa and Sons."

On April 20, 1953, Charles Klobassa, Sr., died. The business was carried on by Charles, Jr., Vern, and Marie going by the name of "C.Klobassa's Sons." In 1954, the interior of the store was completely remodeled and went from a service store to self-service.

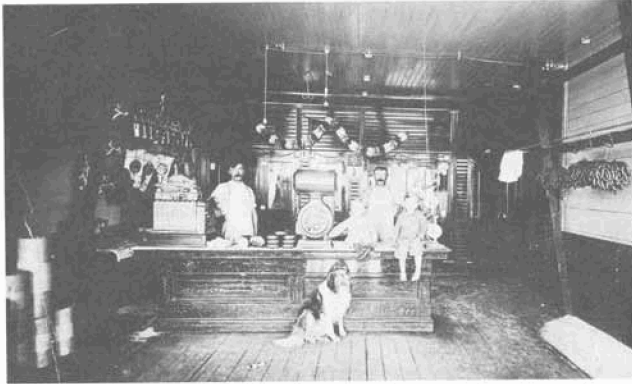
Due to illness, Charles Klobassa, Jr., sold his share of the store to Vern and Marie in 1961. He died August 21, 1966. The wholesale meat business was discontinued. A new slaughtering plant had been built and slaughtering and processing meat were added to the business. After graduation in 1964, Ralph Klobassa joined his parents in the grocery business. Ralph took over the butchering and processing end of the business except for the two years he served in the Army.

An addition was built onto the west side of the store in 1968. Youngblut Construction of Waterloo did the work. After the expansion of the store, Klobassas became affiliated with Nash Finch Co. of Cedar

After the West Side Hotel burned on August 31, 1901, the store now occupied by Klobassa's grocery was built by L. W. English. Shannon Bolul and Alvin Gross lathed the inside of the building for plaster and Sam Craft did the brick work. L. W. English ran a grocery store in front and Sixbury ran a meat market in the rear part of the store. This picture was taken about 1903. The top floor was occupied by the Masonic Lodge for many years.



Rudy Klobassa's Meat Market on the east side of town.



Rudy and Charles Klobassa's Meat Market.



Klobassa Brothers store on the east side of town. Note workers putting in water lines at left.



In 1930, Klobassas purchased the Sixbury Store. An unidentified salesman, Charles Klobassa, Sr., Ethel Derr, and Frank Maruska.



1936—C. Klobassa and Sons; Charles, Jr., Charles, Sr., and Vern Klobassa.



Store front in 1936. Note Masonic emblem on upper story.



1940—(Left to right): Jim Fitzgerald, unknown, Viola Ferrie, Vern Klobassa, and Amanda Biwer.

Rapids, through a Jack and Jill franchise, thus becoming Klobassa's Jack and Jill. After graduation in 1973, Joe Klobassa also entered into the business. Vern died on December 6, 1976. Marie, Ralph and Joe continued the operation of the store. In 1978, the sausage room was torn down and a 7,000 square foot addition was added. Randall Construction did the work.

Our present store has 11 doors of upright freezers, a 24-foot island frozen food case, 12-foot of frozen fish and poultry, 16-foot, 3-tier dairy case, 8-foot service

meat case, 12-foot self-service meat cases, 16-foot produce, 2 12-foot fruit display tables and two check-outs.

Vivian Gardner, our faithful employee, worked for us for 25 years. She retired in December of 1985.

The Klobassas hope to be a part of Elma for many more years.



Klobassa's Store in 1955—Marie Klobassa and Mrs. John Glennon.

Elma Grocery

The Elma Grocery "Company" had its beginning in 1919 when Louis Diekmann and Gaylord Robison were joined by Robert Mealy, who bought out a share and became manager of the store. Sometime in the 1930's, Louis Diekmann purchased the interest owned by R. A. Mealy and he continued to be a silent partner in the firm and was represented in the store by Guy Fuller who replaced Robert Mealy. In 1936, Gaylord Robison became sole proprietor of the business after buying the interest from his partners. He was assisted in the store by Mabel Bueckmann and James Conway. In 1939, his wife, Leona, started working in the store. In August, 1969, they celebrated their 50th year in the business and a year later, October 1970, they closed the doors of the Elma Grocery after being of service to the Elma Community for 51 years.

It was a place where friends gathered around the old furnace to visit.



The Elma Grocery in the late 20's with Rosella Weers, Gaylord Robison, Ted Rice, and Bob Mealy.



Harold (Curly) Stapleton at the door of the Elma Grocery.



Gaylord and Leona Robison taken in 1939.

Mealy Cash Grocery

Robert Mealy, formerly associated with the Elma Grocery, opened the Mealy Cash Store located on Busti Avenue in January of 1934. It liquidated in 1938.

Fuller Grocery

The Fuller Grocery opened on Busti Avenue in 1937 and continued until 1942. It was located in the south end of the Gesell Building where the Stardust Lounge is now.

Frank Hayden Grocery

Frank Hayden ran a grocery store on the east side of town on Busti Avenue in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

H. J. Trunkey Grocery

This grocery store was located west of Dr. Rainy's Clinic in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

Elma Meat Market

Charles Tyler came to Elma around 1890 working as a butcher. He operated a butcher shop in Alta Vista for a couple of years. He then started a meat market business in Elma and continued until the early 1930's. His business was located in various places in town.

Dine and Kozlen Family—M.D. Store

Morris Dine emigrated to the United States in 1909 from Russia and settled in Elma, Iowa. He began work as a construction worker on the highways and later

was a traveling merchant. Following that he became a cattle buyer and remained in that occupation until his retirement in 1960. He left behind in Russia a wife and three daughters. He was able to save money to send for his family, but unknown to him, his wife and son, that he had never seen, were killed. The money he sent to bring his family over was stolen and once again he had to save to bring his family to this country. This was made possible in 1921 when his three daughters arrived in this country.

The three girls were educated in the Elma Public Schools. Three years later, Ida, the oldest daughter was married to Abe Kozlen of Valparaiso, Indiana. After living elsewhere, they moved to Elma in the 1930's and opened the M. D. Store. Abe had been a merchant in Chicago and Hammond, Indiana, before arriving in Elma. They had four children—Robert, born in 1926, who now lives in St. Louis, Missouri; Jack, born in 1934, who lives in Omaha, Nebraska; Ruth Goldberg, born in 1936, who lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Barbara Resnick, born in 1939, who also lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Kozlen-Dine first home in Elma was on Busti Avenue. Later, they moved to a home near the store. Abe was very active on the school board, city council and the fire department.

The M. D. Store closed in 1960 when Ida Kozlen died of cancer. Abe, Morris and Barbara then moved to Minneapolis where Jack and Ruth then resided. Abe continued to live in Minneapolis until his death in 1972.



M.D. Store with Abe Kozlen and Marion Frank.



Morris Dine in 1952.

Morris Dine died in 1960 shortly after moving to Minneapolis and shortly after his daughter, Ida, died.

Sarah Dine married Jack Usem and moved to Austin, Minnesota. She and Jack celebrated their 50th an-

niversary. Sarah was one of the first business women of her time. She owned an appliance store and still runs it. Sarah had one son, Richard.

Amelia married Louis Wolf and she moved to Mason City, Iowa. She died in 1959. They had three children, Renee, Jean and Marlin. Marlin died at the age of 31 from cancer.

Abe and Ida Kozlen had 10 grandchildren. Robert and Mona have four children—Keith, Wayne, Victoria and Robin. Jack and Bette (Redman) have two daughters, Amy and Rebecca. Ruth and Raleigh Goldberg have two children, Stacy and Matthew. Raleigh died in 1959. Barbara and Lee Resnick have two children, Michael and Andrea.



M.D. Store in 1952; to the right is the Bluebird Tavern.

West Side Grocery—Evans Grocery—Grossers

Petersen opened a bakery in the building under the I.C. dining hall in 1931. Jim Kane and Borland opened a grocery store at this same site in 1933. They sold it to Louis O'Toole in early 1935. He named his establishment the West Side Grocery. Mr. O'Toole had operated the Farmers Grocery on the east side of town for many years before it closed in 1933. O'Toole sold the business to George Evans in late 1935. It was renamed Evans Grocery. In 1945 Kenneth Grosser bought the store and named it Grossers. He remodeled it after the 1948 fire in which the I.C. Building was destroyed. Mr. Grosser sold the business to Dan Conway in 1953 and it was then called the West Side Grocery again. This was one of the many buildings that was destroyed in the March 1954 fire.

George and Margaret Evans.





Grosser's Grocery Store—Kenneth Grosser, George Evans, and Verona Frank, who was employed as a clerk for many years.

The Leader

George Doubek owned the general merchandise, grocery business in 1933. It was located in the building under the I.C. Hall on the east side where Connor's was at one time. This establishment was called The Leader and sold under the IGA brand. The business closed in 1936. In 1937 the Elma Theater opened in this building operated by Art Sunde.

Harris Grocery

Elma had a unique store called the "walking store" operated by John and Aurelia Harris.

John Harris was born March 25, 1854, in New York City. He came to Elma in 1887 with his wife, the former Aurelia Bassett. For many years Mr. and Mrs. Harris bought and sold livestock, operated a dry goods store, and a grocery store. This was located in their house just north of the Lutheran Church. The merchandise was well arranged on the shelves in two rooms of the house. A customer could go to the "home store" and make purchases or leave an order and John would deliver it. The delivery system was John walking and pulling a little wagon behind him with the orders. He had regular days of the week that he would call on the housewife and get orders to be delivered the next day.

This continued until John's death in 1934. Aurelia died in 1939.

West Side Grocery—Conway's IGA

After the 1954 fire, Dan Conway rebuilt a quonset-type building. At that time, it was still called the West Side Grocery; but it was later changed to Conway's IGA. This business was leased to Bob Kelly in 1972. It was sold to Jim Johnson in 1973. Mr. Johnson sold part interest to Melba Rowley and Fran Pearson. The business was sold out completely to Tom and Bernie Tapley in 1982. The Tapleys ran the business from 1983 to 1985, when it closed.

City Meat Market—East Side Meat Market

Between 1910 and 1913, Rudy and Charles Klobassa operated a meat market on the east side where the

laundromat is now located. The partnership dissolved and Rudy ran the business himself until the early 1930's. Art Weers managed the business in 1933 and it was later managed by Floyd Irvin. The meat market burned down in 1936.

Floyd's Market

In 1936, Floyd Irvin started a Clover Farm grocery store in a building north of the A. F. Gross Hardware, formerly Conway's Furniture. This establishment operated through the late 1930's. The building was later used as a veterinarian's office.

Barrett's Grocery

Ed Barrett operated a grocery store from around the turn of the century to around 1925. The building later housed Hopkin's Hatchery.

Kelly Grocery

In the 1920's, Tom Kelly and his aunt, Mary Burke, operated a grocery store on the east side later owned by Louis O'Toole. It was located in the former Cannon Building. Bob Mealy later started his Mealy Cash Store in this location.

Dairies

Many dairies came into operation in the 1930's. Some of these were the J. P. Kelly Dairy, R. Evans Dairy, Buchholz Dairy, Kobliska's Dairy, which was later Lindy's Dairy. The latter became Stapleton's



"Lindy" Kobliska owned and operated Lindy's Dairy until his death July 4, 1943.



Harold Stapleton, owner of Stapleton Dairy. Delivering milk at the public school in the early 1950's.



Joyce and Harold seen in the Stapleton Dairy truck. Note milk cases by the dairy building.

Dairy in the early 1940's and remained in operation until 1970. Joe Sullivan also operated the Sullivan Dairy in the 1940's.

Louis Kobliska operated a dairy on his farm southeast of Elma. It was later taken over by his son Leonard. After Lindy drowned, the dairy was operated by Harold and Lucille Stapleton. They later moved the dairy to their current address, maintaining door-to-door delivery for many years. They sold it in 1970.

Elma Locker



The Elma Locker Plant in 1986. In early years it was the "Grand Opera House."



The Elma Locker in 1959—Pictured is Verna Brown, Jean Meirick, Francis Meirick, and Jim Johnson.

Francis and Jean (Mahoney) Meirick opened the Elma Locker in the fall of 1940. The remodeled building was originally the Opera House and had housed the Chevrolet Garage.

In 1962 the locker was sold to Art and Bessie Rimrodt, who operated it for several years. It was sold in 1968 to Merle and Marilyn Worple, who operate it at the present time.

During the past year they have added an improved freezer wrap. In addition to the locker business they sell cured meats and sausages. They buy and butcher about three head of livestock a week.

Clothing Stores

The first clothing store in the town was established shortly after the town started. This was located where Mrs. Augusta Pierce lived in later years on Main Street, having been established by Maurice Despres.

Tim Hurly operated a men's clothing store in several locations on the east side of Elma. He opened a store in the building now occupied by the Shopette in 1930. In 1933 he moved to the Weers Building and closed two years later in 1935.

Leo Tonn opened Tonn Clothing Store in 1949. It was in a building on the north side of Main Street between the West Side Tavern and Tip Top Tavern. In 1954 this building burned.

Ralph Biwer built a new building at about the same location and Weber Clothing opened there in 1954. This store was operated by Al and Mary Weber. It moved to the Kenneth Jacoby building in March 1958 and operated there until October 1960. It was remodeled into the residence now occupied by Joe and Mary Mulick.

Various other mercantile stores operated in Elma through the years.

Louis Diekmann operated a clothing store on Busti Avenue in the early 1920's. The building later housed the Elma Theater and burned in 1932.



Louis Diekmann clothing store.

Zeiner Bros.

The Zeiner brothers operated a clothing store in the Gesell Building on the east side from the 1890's until 1914. The business was then sold to Mike Cashman.

He operated the store at this site but then later moved the business north of the Stritzel Building, which is now the Shopette. It burned down in 1932.

Connor Bros. & Parker

In the 1920's, Connor Brothers and Parker ran a general merchandise store which sold dry goods and groceries. It was located under the old I. C. Hall on the west side. In the late 1920's, the name changed to "Connors." The business closed around 1932.

Weber's Clothing Store

Mr. and Mrs. Al Weber started Weber's Clothing Store October, 1954, in Elma, in the building owned by Ralph Biwer above the bowling alley.

Cora McCarthy and Monica Kinnamon worked as clerks there, each at different times.

March, 1958, the Weber Clothing Store was moved to the Kenneth Jacoby Building, west of Klobassa's grocery store.

January, 1960, Al Weber became manager of the Elma Liquor Store and Mary Weber operated the clothing store.

In October, 1960, the Weber Clothing Store was closed.



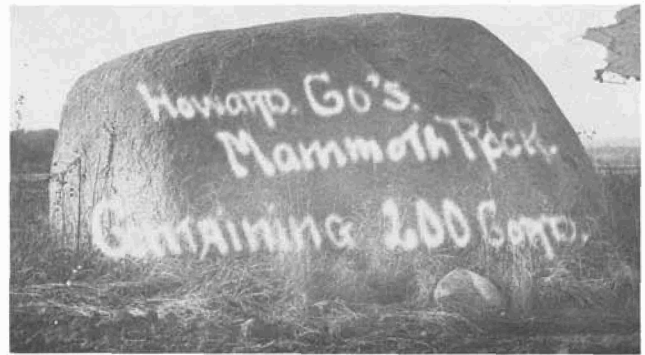
Al (Shorty) Weber

Old Stone Building

To develop the town of Elma, Lemuel Potter built a two-story stone building on the corner of Main and 6th Street. The building was built practically out of one boulder that was located on the prairie some two or three miles southeast of Elma. Mr. Potter did the blasting himself and much of the mason work. He blasted the rock, shaped it in blocks 1' x 2' x 3', and hauled the stone to town. He built the first story without help, at age 75, but required help with the second story.

In the year of 1894, a Butter Tub Factory was housed in the building. Butter tubs were used to ship the butter that was churned by the local creamery. Also housed in the building was Kane & Condon Cash Feed Store, and storage for tow which was a by-product from the flax straw tow mill.

The tow mill was located where the Colonial Manor, now stands. It was destroyed in a fire in 1908 and it is uncertain if it was ever rebuilt.



Huge rock that was used to build the "Stone Building."



This old postcard gives the dimensions for the building. Note the wooden sidewalk in the foreground.



J. J. Stritzel lived in this building and did shoe repair. He tore down this structure and moved the material across town. This was all done by hand and a one horse scraper did the excavation of the new store building. Stritzel hired a mason to build the present structure.



Original letter head of J. J. Stritzel shoe store showing the interior of building in the early 1900's.