

Hamilton Township

(January, 1873, to mid-April, 1961)

[This first part of the history of Hamilton township, from here to the listing of schools by district, was written in 1961 by Mary Ethel Flory (Mrs. Charles Flory) of Shickley, at the age of 78. She pre-faced it with the following note: "With sincere gratitude to each of the numerous friends whose contributions made the writing of this unit of *Fillmore County History* possible."]

According to data believed to be authentic, it was in the month of January, 1873, that Fillmore County was politically divided into 16 equal-area precincts (also called

townships) having demarcations that as of now (February, 1961) still obtain. In the processes of choosing names for those officially defined areas, the second one from the west in the southernmost tier of divisions was christened "Hamilton." Technically Hamilton precinct is Township 5 North, Range 3 West of the 6th Principal Meridian.

Concerning the choosing of the name "Hamilton" as a township designation, some conjecturers have opined that the appellation was a memorial tribute to the United States founding father, Alexander Hamilton, whose genius for affairs served the new nation in so many meritorious ways

Hamilton Township Homestead Map

Joseph H. Davis Thomas B. Davis John Hyme Robert C. Geggie	John Hyme George Snodgrass Robert C. Geggie	Henry J. Davis Robert Logedin	John H. Lincoln Patterson Lincoln Daniel B. Lincoln	John J. Strader Charles W. Cox	John W. Pearch Watson Weidon Herbert Sauer, Jr. Asa M. Johnston	5	3	1
Mary E. Blood Lake Madigan Benjamin F. Terry	A. R. Holsinger J. Greene Davis Miles F. Martin	Ruswell B. Schelp Franklin P. Schelp John M. Crofoot	John M. Burgess Worthington Coffee	William B. Gray Newton L. Standish	John W. Yates William Zinn	7	9	11 15 School Land
John Williams Simon R. Malsinda D. Holsinger Milroy	John F. McTea S. A. Truesdell Isaac E. Allen	Joseph A. Jennings Bowater Bryant	James Arthur Flory Francis M. Flory William J. Wagers	Mary A. Williams Stephen P. Dille Heirs of Jereiah B. Chapman	John B. Hibbitts John Birch	19	21	23 27 Harley H. Wood Joseph H. Sikes
Levi B. Holsinger William F. Bradley	Stewart A. Orr Eugene K. Fisher	Brantley A. Smith Edward K. Cobb	William H. Wood John L. Medlar	Joseph D. Hamilton Leonard Beggs	Thos. M. Hamilton Christianna Schmidt Maria C. Hamilton	29	31	25 33 35 School Land

that according, to the *Encyclopedia Americana*, "American history presents a no more striking figure than his." However, another well-supported tradition concerning the choosing of the name "Hamilton" holds that the act was a special honor accorded the then-contemporary citizen, Joseph D. Hamilton, a Civil War veteran and lawyer who, as a homesteader on that township's Sec. 34, was active in the organizing and promoting of both local and county welfare movements.

The emigrants who located in Hamilton Township during the very early years of its official history were, like the pioneers who preceded them to that area, mostly from eastern states, notably Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. In the main, Hamilton township's early population was comprised of young married couples, some of whom had children. Of that early populace, practically all of the adults were sturdy, energetic people possessed of refined sensibilities and high moral convictions. The most commonly-used language was English, though some other languages, especially the German, had some adherents.

TOPOGRAPHY AND SOIL

Hamilton township's topography as known to its early settlers included some bluffy terrains, especially in parts of its Secs. 11, 12, 13, 14, and 24; some nearly level lands; some gently rolling and slightly sloping areas; a few low hills; one almost-continuously watered draw (North Fork of the Big Sandy), angling irregularly through and from Sec. 7 until exiting from the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 24; at least seven minor draws of more or less temporary water content; one never-dry pond; variable-sized tracts of swampy lands; and some differing depressions that were, sometimes, ponds having fishing, hunting, and skating potentials.

Such early-day travel routes as there were, other than the angling prairie trails, coincided with section lines and were without benefit of grading and bridging. By the year 1961, techniques of surveying, draining, leveling, damming, irrigating, and surfacing, combined with specialized soil-conservation practices, had gradually, but markedly and constructively, altered a considerable portion of the early topography, notably the pond-prone places, swampy areas, and public roads.

In the years 1886 to 1887, two railroads, the Burlington & Missouri River line (subsequently called Chicago, Burlington & Quincy) and the Chicago & Northwestern line were, in that order, constructed across Hamilton township. The first one, in an almost straight east-to-west course, crossed Secs. 12 to 7 inclusive and the second one diagonally crossed Sec. 6 and the NW corner of Sec. 7. Both railway beds became, as of April 1, 1961, permanent parts of Hamilton township topography that, lacking any truly strategic village-founding site, seemingly became invested with a for-keeps no-village status as early as 1889.

By the year 1961, technical analyses had shown Hamilton township's predominating type of soil to be of crete (formerly called grundy) formation, although some spots, especially in Secs. 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, and 28, were found to be mostly composed of Fillmore and Scott silt loam.

SCHOOLS

Of the many problems that confronted Hamilton township's pioneers and later emigrants, none were more basic than the one involving procurement, as needed, of multiple-purpose premises usable for elementary schooling, temporary church centers, business meetings, social and educational get-togethers. During the years from 1871 to 1892, that problem was, in the main, adequately solved by way of the county's timely organizations of school districts that, in Hamilton township, eventually numbered eight. Thus, the citizenry in each of those eight districts, in the order of organization, was assured of a schoolhouse and such accompanying blessings as the name then implied. Even so, District 58 (Summit), one of the area's three school districts organized during the last pre-Hamilton year, had one short term of school in each of two sod-house homes previous to public schoolhouse availability. That district's first schoolteacher, Frank Smith, is said to have, regularly, walked four miles to and from his teaching duties.

In due time, Nebraska's normal expansions and improvements in educational subject matter and teaching techniques led each of seven

of the township's school districts and the divisional parts of its eighth district to merge with a village-centered school district of its choice. Thus, it came about that Hamilton township's era of multiple-district schooling ended in the year 1953.¹

In September, 1959, the only one of the eight schoolhouses constructed in Hamilton township, still intact and occupying its original site, was that one (Medlar) located on Sec. 28 in District 77. By that time, some six years of solitude had caused that schoolhouse to become strongly suggestive of Whittier's "Ragged Beggar Sunning." Had some magic provided gifts of thought, speech, and memory, that modern "ragged beggar," as era historian, could have named: (a) each of the 14 pupils by whom four generations of that district's Carl Heinrichs family had been represented; (b) each of the some 250 teachers who had a part in guiding Hamilton township's children and youth through paths of elementary learning; (c) each of the township's large number of pupils who had eventually acquired college or university educations; (d) the one ex-pupil who had lost his life while in military service; (e) each of some 25 pupils who had become veterans of war; (f) each of the several pupils who had become ministers of the Gospel; (g) each of the many pupils who had become public-school and church-school teachers; (h) each of the very large number of pupils who had achieved successes in various other lines of vocational endeavor. Certainly, the "historian" could have continued by telling of schoolhouse business meetings and about schoolhouses having been settings for stirring evangelistic meetings, for week-night prayer services, Sunday church-school and preaching services, neighborhood literary programs, spell-downs, singing-class training, ciphering matches, quiz programs, special day observances, and last-day-of-school get-togethers. Too, the "beggar" could hardly have concluded without reminiscing about each of the large number of school-board members whose efforts had bulwarked the township's educational work.

TOWN HALL AND TOWNSHIP BOARDS

In the year 1888, the Hamilton township board named I. E. Allen, D. E. Smith, and H. Sauers as a committee to submit a plan for the building of a town hall and to lease, or buy, a suitable site on which to erect the said building. The ultimate result of that action was a 20' x 24' x 10' building, constructed during the following year, at a cost of \$300, upon the leased SE corner of Sec. 16, by Sylvester Lamb, a competent carpenter whose family home was on Sec. 19. The building project was, in the main, financed by a special two-mill levy upon the township's valuation that, in 1887, was \$129,337. (The valuation in 1959 was \$1,565,201.) The leasing arrangement was continued until in April, 1906, at which time the township purchased the 209' x 209' plot of ground constituting the town-hall site from Chris and Phoebe Lauber at a cost of \$75.

Throughout all of its years, the well-kept town hall had, as of February 1, 1961, adequately served as the precinct's voting place and as a suitable place for the transaction of all other of the township's official business. Too, until well into the twentieth century, it served the public in a goodly number of other valuable ways, especially that of being the setting at regular, irregular, and special times for organized religious activities pertinent to each of several different denominations.



Photo from Guy Brown, Jr.
Hamilton Township Hall in 1967

¹ Statistics and other school data appear at the end of this chapter.

The earliest record (known to the writer) of a Hamilton township board meeting bears the date of April 3, 1888. That meeting was held in the District 59 schoolhouse. As of January 1, 1961, the aggregate of available records pertinent to township board meetings showed the names of 54 men who had served the township as board members. Each of 38 of that number had been a board incumbent for a period of two or more years. Those who had board records of six or more years were J. T. Wagers, 6 years (as clerk, Mr. Wagers called the April 3, 1888, meeting to order); C. L. Evans, 6 years; S. L. Strayer, 7 years; J. C. Rousch, 11 years; A. F. Wagers, 9 years; Ronzo Hedden, 14 consecutive years as clerk; Leonard Hillgren, 12 years; Henry Neiman, 10 years; I. N. Schelkopf, 8 years; August Frenzen, 7 years; Don Flory, 9 years; George DuBois, 12 years; Maynard Merryman, 8 years; Royal Jackson, 20 consecutive years as clerk. As of January, 1961, currently serving board members were Maynard Merryman, clerk; Robert Frenzen, treasurer; Earl Houck, justice of the peace.¹

CHURCHES

During Hamilton township history prior to 1961, there had, in the aggregate, been, at least, seven religious faiths represented in its variable populations. To a marked extent, religious faiths were the avenues by the way of which people of Hamilton township and its adjacent areas entered into co-operative relationships, from which church organizations, uninhibited by township boundary-line importances, emerged and, in variable times, erected church buildings upon such sites as, in the main, approximately centered the areas to be served.

Bethel Church (Church of the Brethren)

Although Bethel Church is not, geographically, in Fillmore County, but in Thayer, it is just across the line from the SW corner of Sec. 31, Hamilton township, 5 miles S of Shickley, and was founded by, and has long served, numerous residents of Bryant and Hamilton townships.

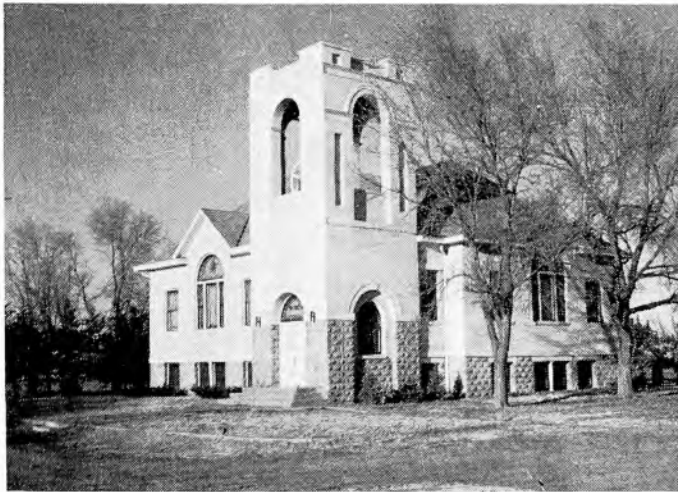


Photo from Bethel Yearbook, 1964-65
Bethel Church of the Brethren

Among the early pioneers in this neighborhood was James Edward Bryant, who, with his wife, homesteaded the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 14, Bryant township, in 1873. Levi Holsinger had built a sod house south of the present site of the Bethel Cemetery, on the east side of the road on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 32 (the farm now occupied by the Allen Betty family). After the death of his wife, Levi Holsinger returned to Illinois. Mr. Bryant and other local adherents of the Dunkard faith met for a time in the vacated sod house and organized themselves into a Sunday Bible school that, in time, was officially expanded into a fully organized Dunkard church, later known as the Church of the Brethren.

On April 7, 1875, after a baptismal service held in a draw partly filled with water from melting snow, 24 persons gathered at the home of Simon and Carrie Holsinger, on the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 30, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile W of the present Summit Cemetery, and organized a church, with the following charter members: S. R. Holsinger and wife Carrie; Alex Holsinger and wife Sarah; Isaac Wright and wife Rachel; J. E.

¹ In 1967, the officials were Maynard Merryman, clerk (with 14 years of service); Rowen Kempf, J. P.; and Max Dowdy, treasurer.

Bryant and wife Susan; John Fadden and wife Elizabeth; Reeve Miles and wife; Andrew Griffith and wife Elizabeth; Samuel Teter and wife Amanda; T. D. Van Buren and wife Mary; Wesley Teter, married; Unice Holsinger, married; Levi Beanblossom; W. G. Mills, William Wright and his brother Clark Wright, all unmarried.

The first Sunday School was organized in the Holsinger sod house in 1875, with James A. Flory, grandfather of Don Flory of Hamilton township, as its superintendent. From then until 1884, services were held in homes or schoolhouses, often the Summit school. James Flory, a proficient carpenter, located on Sec. 20, early in 1884 was inducted into the church's ministry and chosen to be supervisory carpenter for its church-building project.

The church acquired, for its sanctuary and a cemetery, a five-acre site "just across the way" in Thayer County, and there, in 1884, erected a building that, in due time, was given the Hebrew name "Bethel," meaning "House of God." Daniel Heiny, a Dunkard preacher who, with his family, emigrated to Hamilton township in the 1890's and located on Sec. 28, soon became a co-minister in the Bethel Church. As of the end of the year 1960, the original Bethel Church building had, at strategic times, been subjected to such remodelings, additions, and facility improvements as had kept it in continuing and, sometimes, markedly expanded service.¹

Summit Church

The first building constructed within Hamilton township's borders solely for religious uses was the Methodist Church located near the SE corner of Sec. 30 and dedicated on January 5, 1887. Specifically, its setting was part of an area donated about the year 1872 by the I. E. Allens from their homestead farm for use as a cemetery (then immediately needed) and for the church building that they hoped would, in due time, be erected thereon. The name "Summit," given to the church, was the same as that of the plot-sharing cemetery and, also, of the across-the-way District 58 schoolhouse that, for some years, had served the Methodist organization as a worship center. Traditionally, the thrice-used symbolic name "Summit" originated with the Allens and was submitted by them when, in the middle seventies, they wished to make sure that their family name would not become a permanent appellation for the then-new, near-by District 58 public school.



Photo from Mrs. Tom Wagner
Summit Church—some time between 1875 and 1887

For pastoral services, the Summit Church was circuited with the Shickley and Carleton Methodist churches until 1903 and, later, with only the Carleton church. The Rev. David Fetz was pastor when the church was built. Subsequent pastors in consecutive order were the Revs. H. A. Ewell, E. J. Bird, Francis Deal, E. F. S. Darby, Findlay Smith, E. L. Wolf, C. P. Metcalf, E. D. Gideon, J. H. Stitt, and Mr. A. Reed.

The Summit Church's usually ample seating capacity was sometimes overtaxed. On one such occasion, the Rev. Mr. Gideon, as pastor, suggested from the pulpit that all who were sinners would do well to shrink up a bit, thus making room for more people.

Besides its regular Sunday church school and worship services, the Summit Church had a goodly number of other well-organized

¹ This account is based largely on the original minutes of the Bethel Church of the Brethren. An account written in 1935, by charter member J. E. Bryant, for the church's 60th anniversary, and edited by Walker D. Wyman, husband of Mr. Bryant's youngest daughter, appeared in the *Nebraska State Historical Society Magazine*, XXVIII, No. 3 (July-Sept. 1947), pp. 187-195. On p. 193, Mr. Bryant states that the township was named for Mr. Hamilton, a pioneer Presbyterian minister.

religious interests, of which perhaps the chief one was the annual winter-time series of revival meetings that netted immeasurable benefits.

By the year 1906, natural causes had so shifted the early population of the Summit area that, in numbers, the Methodist Church's membership had become only a small fraction of what it had been in its earlier years. In that situation, dispersment of the remaining memberships to churches of other localities was agreed upon, and in due time, the church building was transferred to the Ong Methodist Church for use in an enlargement project.

After a devastating fire had, in 1948, destroyed the Summit schoolhouse, the one remaining early-day landmark of the Summit community center was the then unkept cemetery having somewhat more than 60 graves. However, goals for renovation and permanent care of the cemetery were taken on, in 1954, by a newly organized cemetery association that, in its early operations, was supported by contributions of both labor and currency, and through later years, with funds appropriated by the township. Thus, as of the end of the year 1960, a thoroughgoing cemetery renovation achieved some six years earlier, had produced a highly satisfactory cemetery status that had been, and was being, consistently maintained. Royal Jackson of Sec. 35 had, at that time, served the cemetery association as president since its time of organization and, as cemetery caretaker, since the completion of the reclamation project.

Salem Mennonite Church

The first Amish Mennonite emigrant to arrive in Hamilton township was Jacob Beller who, with his family, located on Sec. 28 in the year 1890. Others of like faith arrived soon and, very shortly, the Amish Mennonite families began holding more or less regular Sunday School services in the District 69 schoolhouse. The Amish Mennonite people's first minister was P. P. Herschberger, a temporary settler. The Amish Mennonite families organized as an Amish Mennonite Church in the latter part of the year 1891, and, for about 12 years thereafter, used the town hall for regular Sunday worship and Bible School purposes as well as for all other times of desired assembly.

Jacob Beller, Daniel Miller, Joseph Kuhns, Sr., Joseph Stutzman, Emanuel Kuhns, Daniel Troyer, and Christian Beller, with their families, were the church's charter members, and Christian Beller was its first permanently established minister.

Using the SE corner of Sec. 17 as a building site, members of the Amish Mennonite Church organization, with member Chris Eichelberger of Sec. 20 as head carpenter, constructed a 32' x 48' church building that was finished December 3, 1904, and dedicated on the following day. As one of the dedicatory rites, the church was

given the name "Salem," a Biblical synonym for the word "peace." The three acres used for the church building and a cemetery area were donated by the afore-referred-to Dunkard minister, James A. Flory, whose family home was about 1/2 mile distant. It was not until approximately 27 years after church organization that the Amish Mennonite people, as a church, adopted the English language and dropped the German tongue previously used in practically all of its religious services. In 1920, the Salem Amish Mennonite Church merged with the Orthodox Mennonite Church and therewith deleted from its title the word "Amish" and forthwith acquired charter membership in the Mennonite Iowa-Nebraska Conference, under the name of Salem Mennonite Church.

Over the years, two additions were made to the original church building. The first one provided for a hall and a nursery room. The second addition was a 30' x 30' sanctuary extension that increased the seating capacity to approximately 500.

Pertinent data assembled in early February, 1961, included: (1) There were 195 graves in Salem's cemetery; (2) Salem's then-current church membership numbered 267; (3) Its church Sunday School had an enrollment of 327 and an average attendance of 231; (4) The church had always had one or more ministers within its membership and had worthily achieved departmentally, also in number and scope of its missionary enterprises; (5) The names of deceased resident pastors were Bishop Peter Kennel, Sr.; Deacons Joseph Birky and Benjamin Schlegel; Ministers Christian Beller and Jacob Swartzen-druber; (6) The resident members of the clergy currently serving the church comprised Bishop P. R. Kennel, Bishop Lee Schlegel, Ministers Fred Reeb and Jacob Birky; (7) The church's consciousness of its responsibilities was being manifested in enthusiastic plans for the future.

Seventh Day Adventist Church

It was probably at some time during the first half of the 1890's that certain of Hamilton township's families (and, possibly, some families of thereabouts location) organized as a Seventh Day Adventist Church that, for a considerable number of years, used the town hall as a setting for its church services. Rather early in the twentieth century, the township's Sec. 33 Herman Orthmans, as one of the family units of the said Seventh Day Adventist Church, made part of their home into a somewhat simulated church sanctuary that was so used by that church organization for quite some time—presumably, until in the year 1909, when the Orthmans disposed of their farmstead home. In subsequent years, centers of Seventh Day Adventist Church activities were rarely of Hamilton township location.

As of the end of the year 1960, a résumé of such religious activities as were pertinent to Hamilton township history showed that, during the years subsequent to the year 1890, a considerable number of its people, at various periods and lengths of time, had out-of-township church sanctuary affiliations that, seemingly, had worthily helped to maintain status for each of a goodly number of Christian faiths.

AGRICULTURE

As of the advent of the year 1961, it was noteworthy that, throughout Hamilton township's political history, agriculture had been the major source of its citizens' livelihoods. Even so, a considerable number of the people had, at variable times, supplemented agricultural commitments with various other kinds of more or less lucrative work, some types of which were carpentry; plastering; dressmaking; teaching organ and piano playing; school teaching; coaching group-singing; doing commercial trucking, itinerant merchandising, and agency selling; caring for business-office routines; and serving as official electees to positions of public service. One long ago, contemporarily significant instance of public service having been thus officially rendered was in 1907 when, as state representative-elect, Samuel Logsdon, of Hamilton township's Sec. 5, served as a member of Nebraska's state legislature.

Certain manuscripts have indicated that practically all of Hamilton township's very early would-be farmers started with very little agricultural equipment. Consequently, that early-day farming involved a great deal of manual labor such as pumping and (or) bucket-drawing of water supplies from underground sources, seeding, hoeing, spading, scooping,



Photo from Mrs. Charles Flory
Salem Mennonite Church (about 1950)



New Salem Mennonite Church, dedicated in 1967.



Corn picking by hand in 1920's



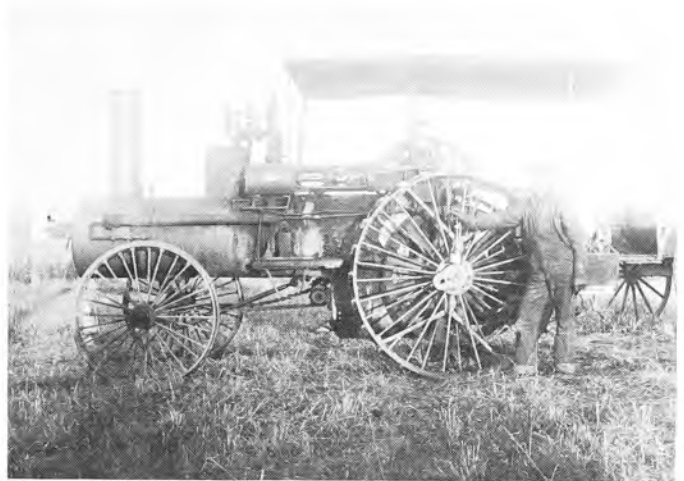
Stacking small grain (perhaps about 1915)



Photo from Guy Brown, Jr. Early-day windmill with wooden tower and wheel. This was a "self-closing" type, especially suited for the high winds of the prairies. Instead of a flat wheel facing into the wind, the wheel was made of several sections forming a shallow cone facing away from the wind. As wind speeds increased, the "wings" folded forward to take less wind and so keep the windmill from racking itself to pieces or overpumping. The wings could be completely closed by a lever from the bottom; this one is shown in the closed position.



Early-day transportation



Early steam traction engine (about 1895). This is a Baker Model 1201, of 15 horsepower. Note the steering-gear chains running to the front wheels.

scything, milking, cornhusking, stacking, and blading-shock-tying fidders. Incidentally, some intangible rewards resulting from careful and regular performance of certain of those manual labors were acquisitions of brilliant skills that were oftentimes comparatively discussed and, sometimes, competitively demonstrated before interested observers.

A wind-operated invention (marvelous for its time and aptly called "windmill") designed for the pumping of ground water to above-surface objectives was introduced into Hamilton township in the early 1880's and, in that decade, rather generally acquired. In due time, the windmills were being so successfully used for their designed purpose that manual pumping was being used only in the occasional times of special need and (or) emergency situations, incident, in the main, to times of windless weather.

Farm Draft Power

In Hamilton township, the earliest sources of agricultural draft power other than the human type, were oxen, which were few in number and, soon, almost entirely superseded by horses and mules that, for approximately 40 years, rated as indispensables in that area of need and, from 25 to 35 years longer, were, in variable lessening degrees, very definitely important as farm draft power. Too, horses (draft types) were much used for riding purposes and, to somewhat lesser extent, the pony species were likewise useful.

An impressive type of agricultural draft power first brought into Hamilton township in 1897 was a 10-horsepower steam engine that its owners used as belt power for two, possibly three, years and then replaced it with a larger, much more powerful, but similar type of steam engine¹ which, though mainly used for practically any and all kinds of desired belt-power service, was, in selected situations, also feasibly used for direct-draft servicing. A distinctively interesting feature inherent to the larger steam engine was its whistling facility that, codified, became a medium through which the engineer could, at will, transmit certain messages to previously briefed folks.

¹ Both of these pioneering steam engines were owned by the Flory brothers.—*Editor's note.*

The secondly acquired steam engine had been in use a few years when its owners applied it on a negotiated transaction whereby they acquired a big (60 horsepower) kerosene-fueled tractor with which, during the succeeding 20 or more years, a great deal of heavy belt work of considerable variety was done, also, many kinds of direct-draft servicing of which some were pulling graders for road work, moving buildings, and pulling an eight-bottom plow for tillage of farm lands.

By the time the 20th century's first score of years was nearing its point of departure, a great deal of interest in mechanical farm power had been and was being aroused in Hamilton township by reason of some farmer acquisitions of, and brief experiences with, the then-available tractor-type sources of farm draft power. Consequently, throughout the following 40 years, manufacturers kept those initial principles of farm tractor construction so abreast of pertinent scientific advancements, and consequent farmer favor and patronage that, by the springtime of 1961, practically all of the great amount of farm draft power being used in the township was of tractor-type concept variously modeled for adaptableness. Over most of the township's 20th-century years, tractor fuel, in the aggregate, consisted of several kinds of petroleum derivatives each of which probably had "best-seller" status for at least one period of from one-half to a dozen or more years in length.



Photo from Paul Lefever
Nora and Paul Lefever cutting oats with a binder.

Agricultural Production

Prior to the year 1961, grains grown throughout Hamilton township's years of political history had been corn, oats, and wheat (spring wheat, until succeeded by the winter variety). Flax, buckwheat, millet, and barley were early-day grains. Individual family productions of garden products sufficient for at least its own needs rated as near-standard procedure for the first 70 or more years of township history. Too, for about that same length of time, considerable importance attached to family goals for producing poultry and dairy products, not only for home uses, but also for desired trade-in values and somewhat regular expense incomes even though necessarily variable in amounts.

During most of the township's 19th-century years, prairie pasture and prairie hay were very important farm assets.

During the first half of the 1890's, the growing of alfalfa as a perennial forage was begun and soon became a commonly-grown crop, highly valued for uses in dairying, poultrying, and in the growing and feeding of livestock. Moreover, alfalfa's soil benefits soon made it become very important as a rotation crop. The value of clovers and some other kinds of forages were also being proven.

Early in the 20th century, sugar beets had a trial run and proved financially profitable but required more tedious labor than most farmers could conveniently provide. The growing of potatoes, melons, onions, and popcorn as commercial crops had times of popularity.

Both cattle and hogs were commonly grown for family food uses as well as marketing purposes. Sheep husbandry with emphasis on the wool production and lamb feeding phases was tried, proven worthy, and continued by some.

The production and use of ensilage, begun about the year 1915, soon developed into a veritable boon for the township's livestock interests, particularly for its cattle-feeding phases.

During the 20th century's second quarter, grain sorghums came into popular favor and hybrid corn was a strikingly worthy crop introduction. Hamilton township's only large producers of hybrid seed corn were the J. J. Biegerts of Sec. 17, who engaged in that phase of agriculture during the years 1941-1944 inclusively. Near the middle of the century, hybrid grain sorghums were successfully grown. In Hamilton township seed for hybrid grain sorghums was first produced in the year 1959.

During the herein-referred-to 88 years of Hamilton township agriculture, available equipment for tillage, seeding, and harvesting needs ranged from the first-used simple ox-drawn, manually manipulated, seatless patterns through many stages of technical advancements to the highly mechanized, multi-purpose types of machinery eventually used.

Some "Firsts"

The production of turkeys upon a sizable commercial scale, begun in the year 1933 by the Roy Kempfs of Sec. 7, was a "first" in Hamilton township and, also, in Fillmore County. After the Kempf innovators had operated their turkey business for 15 years on a one-family basis, joint turkey partnership with the Wayne Kempfs of Sec. 6 was effected and the industry straightway expanded until the said co-operating families were, together, annually maturing approximately 5,000 poults all of which were products of their own breeding flocks and hatching facilities. When interviewed in January, 1961, the Roy Kempfs reported the partner families as having consistently maintained the afore-said proximate of turkey production and, currently, were expecting to likewise achieve in the new year.



Photo from Paul Lefever

Internal-combustion tractors gained popularity from about 1915 onward.

Stationary Motor Power

During some of the years in which uses of farm tractors were increasing, farm projects adaptable to stationary motorizations had, in increased numbers, been so served. Following the mid-century advent of the R.E.A. (Rural Electrification Administration) into Hamilton township, electricity as stationary motor power came into considerable favor. Thus there ensued some decline in uses of petroleum products as motor fuels.

The Automobile

When, rather early in the 20th century, the automobile was introduced into Hamilton township, considerable interest in, and enthusiasm about, its high potential for farm family uses, were soon being manifested. Therefore, consequent acquisitions of that innovation were of such frequencies that, by the time the middle teen year had arrived, family ownerships of automobiles were considerable in number and, by a not so long later period, practically every family's equipment included at least one automobile.



Photo from Paul Lefever

U.S. Highway 81 about 1918—1/2 mile N of Nebraska Highway 74.



Photo from Roy Kempf
Some of Roy Kempf's turkeys in 1959.



Photo from Mrs. Charles Flory
Mr. Flory in Atlas Sorgho under irrigation from the first well in Hamilton township (in 1937 or 1938).

Subsequent to the year 1933, township families, other than those of the Kempf partnership, that, in various periods of time and numbers of years, engaged in the growing phases of commercial turkey enterprises, included the Lloyd Troyers of Sec. 21, the August Frenzels of Sec. 26, the Maynard Merrymans of Sec. 5, the E. S. Thomases of Sec. 3, the Lowell Steiders of Sec. 24, and the Jay Kempfs of Sec. 6. The Jay Kempfs, largely by way of the turkey-growing route, earned the 1949 W. G. Skelly Agricultural Achievement Award.

Another "first" in Hamilton township and its county was an irrigation well put down on the Charles Florys' farm on Sec. 20 in the year 1936. In the March 9, 1961, issue of the *Nebraska Signal*, Conservationist Jim McDowell reported the number of irrigation wells in Hamilton township at that time as being 85. [By July, 1966, the number of wells had risen to 95.]

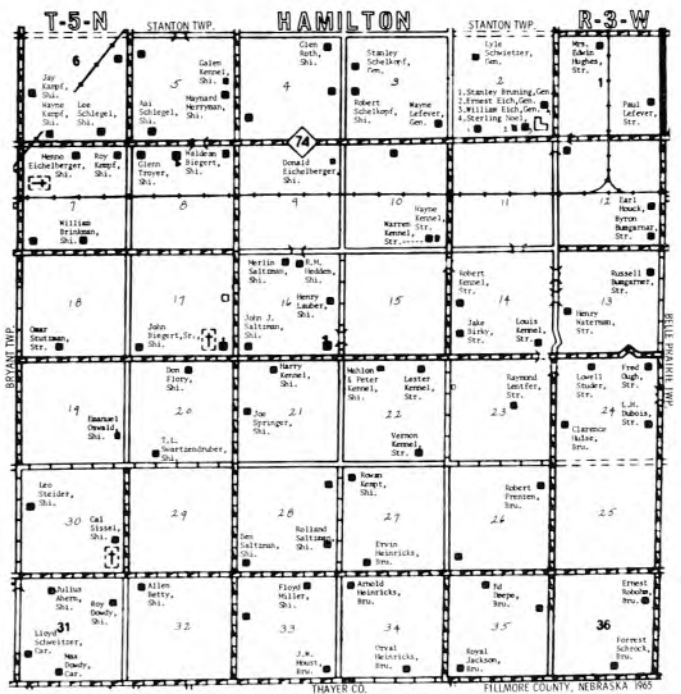
A further highly interesting and exciting addition of precedential significance was made to Hamilton township's agricultural history when, in 1947, certain of the township's field crops and other lands, as a part of a much larger area, were aerially sprayed by Max Biegert of the Sec. 17 J. J. Biegert family.

Adversities versus Benefits

Though agriculture, in Hamilton township aggregate, had, as of April, 1961, been brought through numerous stages and kinds of impressive development, the citizenries so achieving had, nevertheless, concurrently encountered a considerable number of adversities. Specifically, and in the main, the truly serious, more or less generalized, hardships experienced during that 88 years of township history had been hailstorms; grasshopper scourges; hog-cholera epidemics; chinch-bug infestation; blizzards (the chief one probably having been the monstrous visitation of January 12, 1888);



Photo from Mrs. Fern Blanke
Dust Storm in 1937



damages wrought by wildlife; some excessive rainfalls; the June 5, 1908, tornado; the horse disease in the 20th century's early teens; droughts, particularly the one incident to the years 1893-1899 and the one that wrought havoc in the 1930's; and seasons when prices received for agricultural productions had been less than equitable.

Naturally, the adversities had, for the most part, been very trying. However, there had also been much that was highly conducive to the people's happiness and welfare. Some of those constructive phases, things, and situations, other than the previously-specified churches, schools, town hall, and topographical improvements, included: horse-back riding; automobiling; agricultural successes; diets of home-

produced foods; electrification and intercommunity affiliations, adding to family togetherness; opportunities for doing much with little; round-the-calendar outdoor activities; animal, poultry, and songbird pets galore; timely acquisitions of conveyances such as lumber wagons, spring wagons, sleighs, buggies, carts, carriages, and bicycles; gradual improvements in housing, household furnishings, lighting and heating facilities; acquisitions of mail delivery and telephone services early in the 20th century, and subsequent to 1937, time-to-time advancement in equipments and techniques for acquirement and distribution of that marvelous "for-free" product, ground water.

An early 1961 comparative analysis of the before-named adversities and benefits along with the settings and significances involved, seemed to conclusively show that Hamilton township's benefits received during the 88 years immediately prior to that time, had far outweighed the contemporary adversities. Thus, it seems timely for the writer, in closing, to say that, in her judgment, Hamilton township history provides abundant reason for all-out, happy, and continuing compliance with the Biblical exhortation: "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever." (Psalms 106:1.)

SCHOOLS

District No. 56, also known as "Bluff School," from adjacent terrain, was organized in 1872, with Eleazar Phillips as its first director. The schoolhouse was built ¼ mile S of the NW corner of Sec. 24. This district was merged with those of Shickley, Strang, and Bruning on April 13, 1953. The last director was Lester Kennel.



Photo from Julius Lentfer, Sr. District No. 56 about 1937. *Back row, left to right:* Willard Kennel, Norman Ough, Lee Oswald, Alice Lentfer, Ray Eichelberger, Mahlon Kennel, Clayton Eichelberger. *Second row:* Henry Waterman, Laverda Houck, Junior Lentfer, Vernon Kennel, Harry Waterman. *Third row:* Edna Kennel, Ardis Kennel, Erhardt Steinman, John Eichelberger, Eddie Lentfer. *Front row:* Raymond Lentfer, Leroy Kennel, Alvina Steinman.

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1873-74	H. F. Smith	1922-23	Josephine Elwood
1874-75	H. F. Smith	1923-24	Maude Runsey
1875-76	Phoebe Davis	1924-25	Katherine Kuska
1876-78	Della Schelp	1925-26	Jay Kempf
1878-79	Della Schelp	1926-28	No record
1879-80	Mary Downey	1928-29	Leona Dunker
1880-81	Eleanor Matson	1929-30	Leona Dunker
1881-82	Anna Swelt	1930-31	Doris Hafer
1882-88	No record	1931-32	Elizabeth Shurtleff
1888-89	Dora Coombs	1932-33	Carrie Sauer
	Anna Cockrall	1933-34	Darlene Morris
1889-97	No record	1934-35	Darlene Morris
1898-99	J. M. Woods	1935-36	Mildred Ough
1899-00	Nellie Matson	1936-37	No record
1900-01	Athos Wennersten	1937-38	Margaret Bobbit
	Mamie Pinkerton	1938-39	Warren Messman
1901-04	No record	1939-40	Lyla McGinness
1904-05	Frances Logsdon	1940-41	Mildred Stejskal
1905-06	Frances Logsdon	1941-42	Mildred Wagers
1906-07	Annie Beller	1942-43	Mrs. Ervin Lentfer
1907-08	Maude Sherrard	1943-44	Joan Hulse
1908-09	Bertha Mathewson	1944-45	Betty Carl
1909-10	Bertha Mathewson	1945-46	Ardis Kennel
1910-11	Stella White	1946-47	Ardis Kennel
1911-12	No record	1947-48	No record
1912-13	Vinetta Miller	1948-49	Doris Peterson
1913-14	Agnes Sullivan	1949-50	Lorraine Vostrez
1914-15	S. D. Purviance	1950-51	Lorraine Vostrez
1915-16	Leslie Sauer	1951-52	No record
1916-17	Helen Rhoda	1952-53	Edna Kempf
1917-19	No record		<i>School closed</i>
1919-20	Albert Cumpston		
1920-21	Doris Deane		
1921-22	Angela Schommer		

District No. 57, also known as "Eich School," was organized in 1872; its first director was W. B. Grey. The schoolhouse was built on the NE corner of Sec. 11. On December 19, 1952, District 57 was attached to District 34 (Strang). The last director was Nick Eich.



Photo from William Bumgarner District No. 57 (also known as "White Temple School") in 1907. *Back row, left to right:* Pearl Swails (teacher), Hazel South, Bessie Bumgarner, Frank Eich. *Front row:* Elmer Bell, Henry Noel, Pauline Noel, Ella Bell, Byron Bumgarner, Emma Frantz, Fred Frantz, John Bell.

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1874-75	Walter Thurlow	1914-15	Neva Pumphrey
1875-76	Peter Eggenberger	1915-18	No record
1876-77	No record	1918-19	Rhea Bumgarner
1877-78	Alice Bales	1919-20	Gladys Bueher
1878-79	Mary Blood	1920-21	Carrie Sauer
1879-80	Amy Dyson	1921-22	Carrie Sauer
1880-81	Maggie Stewart	1922-23	Carrie Sauer
1881-82	No record	1923-24	No record
1882-83	Alice Bailor	1924-25	Rose LaPlant
1883-84	Watson Weldon	1925-26	Rose LaPlant
1884-87	No record	1926-27	Carrie Sauer
1887-88	C. C. Spangler	1927-29	No record
	Ella H. Davis	1929-30	Verneda Johnson
1888-89	Mable Strother	1930-31	No record
	Tephrona Stickel	1931-32	Verneda Johnson
	John W. Fries	1932-33	Elma Schelkopf
1889-99	No record	1933-34	No record
1899-1900	Daisy Logsdon	1934-35	Elma Schelkopf
1900 01	A. E. Wattles	1935-36	No record
1901-04	No record	1936-37	Arlene Leimbach
1904-05	Mable Eaton	1937-38	Ruby Thurin
	Effie Tonkinson	1938-39	John K. Wagers
1905-06	Effie Tonkinson	1939-40	LaVerne Philippi
	Effie Tonkinson Brown	1940-41	LaVerne Philippi
	Lola Craig	1941-42	Frances Smith
1906-07	Pearl Swails		Fern Trapp
1907-08	Ethel Harrington	1942-44	No record
1908-09	Ethel Harrington	1944-45	Elaine Goodwin
1909-10	Opal Walters	1945-52	No record
1910-11	Hattie Evans		<i>School closed</i>
1911-12	Maude Spangler		
1912-13	Maude Spangler		
1913-14	Maude Spangler		

District No. 58 was organized in 1872; its first director was S. H. Holsinger. The schoolhouse, also known as "Summit School" was built on the SW corner of Sec. 29. The schoolhouse burned down in 1948 and was not replaced. The last director was Glen Birky. District 58 contracted with District 54 (Shickley) and in 1953 merged with that district.



Photo from Mrs. Roy Dowdy District No. 58 ("Summit School") about 1928

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1874	Frank Smith	1919-20	Nellie Freeman
1874-77	No record	1920-21	Jessie Larsen
1877-78	Minnie Smith	1921-22	No record
1878-79	Maggie Stewart	1922-23	Wilma Yoder
1879-80	Maggie Stewart	1923-24	Malinda Root
	Mary Hart	1924-25	Gladys Schoenholtz
1880-81	Amy Dyson	1925-26	Gladys Schoenholtz
1881-82	Jennie Deselms	1926-27	No record
1882-83	Mary Height	1927-28	Vera White
1883-84	S. A. Orr	1928-29	No record
1884-87	No record	1929-30	Elizabeth Ockerman
1887-88	C. C. Spangler	1930-31	No record
1888-89	C. C. Spangler	1931-32	Elizabeth Ockerman
	Ella Davis	1932-33	Thelma Voight
1889-99	No record	1933-34	Vesta Ekwall
1899-1900	Mamie Pinkerton	1934-35	Vesta Ekwall
1900-04	No record	1935-36	Vesta Ekwall
1904-05	Minnie Sissel	1936-37	Leota Graves
1905-06	Ethel Graves	1937-38	Leota Graves
1906-07	Ethel Graves	1938-39	Pauline Wagers
1907-08	Lulu Lichty	1939-40	Pauline Wagers
1908-09	Daisy Sissel	1940-41	Esther Mueller
1909-10	Daisy Sissel	1941-42	No record
1910-11	Margaret Yearnshaw	1942-43	Ferne Stolzenberg
1911-12	Susie Rothrock	1943-44	Marilyn B. Pearson
1912-13	Gertrude Freeman	1944-45	Dorothy Geikin
1913-14	Susie Rothrock	1945-46	Rose Stejskal
1914-15	Emma Renken	1946-47	M. Luella Wilson
1915-16	No record	1947-48	Mrs. Lois Achemier
1916-17	Bernice Logsdon	1948-49	Mary Jean Bowman
1917-18	Viola Wilson		Ardis Kennel
1918-19	Mary Surber		

District No. 59, also known as "Schelp School" and "Arngabright School," was organized in 1873, and a schoolhouse was built on the NE corner of the NW 1/4 of Sec. 8. The first director was Worthington Coffee. In 1953, District 59 merged with District 54 (Shickley). The last director was Lee Schlegel.



Photo from Mrs. Virgil Eppler

District No. 59—taken at school picnic in 1932. *Back row, left to right:* Mrs. Ruby Merryman (teacher); Russell DuBois, Nelda Anderson, Kenneth Avers, Roine Kempf, Kenneth Eichelberger, Loretta Troyer. *Middle row:* Lester Troyer, Wayne Kempf, Bernice Kempf, Doris Anderson, Glen Troyer, Martin Bruhns. *Front row:* Wanda Avers, Dean DuBois, Eunice Zehr, Bernetta Zehr, Edna Eichelberger, Wilda Eichelberger, James Troyer, Billie Anderson, and Donald Eichelberger.

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1874-75	Eleanor Matson	1908-09	Maude Way
1875-76	Eleanor Matson	1909-10	Maude Way
1876-77	No record	1910-11	Emma McGraw
1877-78	Blanche Warner	1911-12	Clara Diederich
1878-79	Mattie Phels	1912-13	Clara Diederich
1879-80	Flora Lewis	1913-14	Jacob Beller
1880-81	Flora Lewis	1914-15	Jacob Beller
1881-82	Mamie Pinkerton	1915-16	Moneta Logsdon
1882-83	Emma Craig	1916-17	Moneta Logsdon
1883-84	W. J. Davis	1917-18	Rodger Bergquist
1884-87	No record	1918-19	Neva Hoak
1887-88	A. L. Frankenburger	1919-20	Helen Schelkopf
1888-89	A. L. Frankenburger	1920-22	No record
1889-99	No record	1922-23	Belva White
1899-1900	M. Pinkerton	1923-24	Jay Kempf
1900-01	Daisy Logsdon	1924-25	Jay Kempf
1901-04	No record	1925-26	Helen Hedden
1904-05	Stella Lull	1926-27	Lola McPeck
1905-06	Stella Lull	1927-29	No record
1906-07	Mildred Vough	1929-30	Velma Johnson
1907-08	Mildred Vough	1930-31	No record

1931-32	Ruby Merryman	1941-43	No record
1932-33	Ruby Merryman	1943-44	June Hamilton
1933-34	Lucy Fisher	1944-45	Bernetta Zehr
1934-35	Lucy Fisher	1945-46	No record
1935-36	No record	1946-47	Bernetta Zehr
1936-37	Zella Wagers	1947-48	Luella Wilson
1937-38	Betty Wilson	1948-49	Edna Roth
1938-39	Betty Wilson	1949-50	Edna Roth
1939-40	Orfie Bergquist	1950-52	No record
1940-41	Aldene Reeb		

District No. 69 was founded in 1873, with E. Holsinger as its first director. The schoolhouse, built on the NW corner of Sec. 20, was formally named "Union School" at the dedication ceremony; but it was also locally known as the "Shuster," "Biegert," and "Flory" school, for several neighboring families. In 1953, it merged with District 54 (Shickley). The last director was Roy Troyer.



Photo from Mrs. John Biegert

District No. 69 in 1903. *First row, left to right:* Jesse Saltzman, John Schrock, Jake Saltzman, Willie Saltzman, Lydia Detweiler, Barbara Troyer, Mary Schrock, Cassie Stutzman, Katie Saltzman, Nellie Detweiler, Jemima Stutzman, Susie Detweiler. *Second row:* Jake Birky, Sidney White, John Biegert, Irene Wagers, Katie Troyer, Lydia Birky, Emma Schrock, Martha Troyer, Annie Saltzman, Lillie Biegert. *Back row:* Abraham Troyer, Wilsie Biegert, Daniel Saltzman, Mary Saltzman, Minnie Sissel (teacher), Stella White.

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1873-74	Emma Harvey	1918-19	Nelle Hilgren
	S. R. Holsinger	1919-20	Nelle Hilgren
1874-75	Emma Harvey	1920-21	Marjorie Johnson
1875-76	Elizabeth Flory	1921-22	Dorothy Jacobson
1876-77	No record	1922-23	Alberta Flory
1877-78	Mary Blood	1923-24	Marshall Ketchum
1878-79	J. A. Williams	1924-25	Louise Thornton
1879-80	Millie Ballard	1925-26	Louise Thornton
1880-81	Amy Dyson	1926-27	Wilma D. Flory
1881-82	No record	1927-28	Velma R. Johnson
1882-83	Samuel Logsdon	1928-29	Jay Kempf
1883-84	James A. Flory	1929-30	Maymie Boo
	Eli Mitchell	1930-31	No record
1884-87	No record	1931-32	Iona Anderson
1887-88	Tephrona Stickel	1932-33	Iona Anderson
1888-99	No record	1933-34	No record
1899-1900	John Johnson	1934-35	Elsie Engel
	Lizzie Allen	1935-36	Elsie Engel
1900-01	Carl A. Johnson	1936-37	Vesta Ekwall
1901-02	No record	1937-38	No record
1902-03	Minnie Sissel	1938-39	Joseph Hoffert
1903-04	No record	1939-40	No record
1904-05	Ellen Venell	1940-41	Elsie Heinrichs
1905-06	Ellen Venell	1941-42	No record
1906-07	Bertha Mathewson	1942-43	Loretta Dowdy
1907-08	Raymond Flory	1943-45	No record
1908-09	Nora Wennersten	1945-46	MaryLou Stejskal
1909-10	Nora Wennersten	1946-47	Mrs. Erva J. Sissel
1910-11	Gertrude Sughrue	1947-48	LeVoy Saltzman
1911-12	Mrs. Cora Foster	1948-49	LeVoy Saltzman
1912-13	No record	1949-50	Betty Troyer
1913-14	Emma Davis	1950-51	Owen Deepe
1914-15	Inez Brammeier	1951-52	Norma Kennel
1915-16	No record	1952-53	Kenneth Steider
1916-17	Ruth Huston		
1917-18	No record		

District No. 77, also known as "Medlar School," was organized in 1876; its first director was E. K. Cobb. The schoolhouse was built on the SE corner of Sec. 28. In 1953, District 77 merged with District 54 (Shickley). The last director was Jay Swartzendruber.



Photo from Mrs. Ernest Heinrichs
District No. 77 in 1936-37. The teacher was Wilma Mau (Heinrichs).

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1879-80	Anna Adams	1924-25	Mrs. Maudeline Tonkinson
1880-81	Estella Estabrook	1925-26	Hilda Slaybaugh
1881-87	No record	1926-27	Hilda Slaybaugh
1887-88	Bessie Norton	1927-29	No record
1888-99	No record	1929-30	Clara R. Busse
1899-00	Cora Skinner	1930-31	No record
1900-03	No record	1931-32	Clara R. Busse
1903-04	Ethel Wagers	1932-33	Roma Bryant
1904-05	Annie Gilbert	1933-34	No record
1905-06	Annie Gilbert	1934-35	Arlene Limbach
1906-07	Myrtle Nichols	1935-36	Arlene Limbach
1907-08	Myrtle Nichols	1936-37	Wilma Mau
1908-09	Stella White	1937-38	Pauline Wagers
1909-10	Stella White	1938-39	Annalou Lucht
1910-11	Ora Mitchell	1939-40	No record
1911-12	Hugh Garrett	1940-41	Betty Widler
1912-13	Bert McCaulley	1941-42	No record
1913-14	Daisy Strayer	1942-43	Evelyn Geiken
1914-15	Elsie Brinegar	1943-44	Doris Miller
1915-16	No record	1944-47	No record
1916-17	Elsie Brinegar	1947-48	Kenneth Steider
1917-18	Zoe Timmerman	1948-49	Luella Wilson
1918-19	Lois Ainsworth	1949-50	Owen Deepe
1919-20	Mrs. Gertie Sissel	1950-51	Norma Kennel
1920-21	Delma Maple	1951-52	Joan Leff
1921-22	Alice Hedden	1952-53	Delores Detmer
1922-23	Maurine Flory		
1923-24	Pearl Coltrin		

District No. 82, known as "Monroe" and as "Albrecht" school, was organized in 1885, and a schoolhouse was built on the SW corner of Sec. 25. The first director was C. F. Brabham. On April 13, 1953, District 82 was merged, by petition, with District 94 (Bruning), in Thayer County. The last director was Robert Frenzen.



Photo from Mrs. Royal Jackson
District No. 82 in 1917-18—Teacher Estelle Williams at door.

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1886-87	Mary Warthen	1901-02	No record
1887-88	Winnie Delameter	1902-03	Ethel Wagers
1888-99	No record	1903-04	No record
1899-1900	Lucy Robinson	1904-05	Amelia Oberkotter
	Ethelyn Spear	1905-06	Carl Theobald
1900-01	Emma Woods	1906-07	Daisy Sissel

1907-08	Lula Watson	1921-22	Laura Haak
1908-09	Lula Watson	1922-23	Esther Bordner
1909-10	Lula Watson	1923-24	Rose Kamorek
	Ira Baker	1924-25	No record
1910-11	Mable Thomas	1925-26	Marie Eide
1911-12	Gertrude Freeman	1926-27	Zelma Wills
1912-13	Raymond Henney	1927-28	Bertha Dunker
1913-14	Edna Wiley	1928-29	Bertha Dunker
1914-15	Winifred Lawrence	1929-30	Linda M. Leenerts
1915-16	Eva Piersol	1930-31	No record
1916-17	Lois Ainsworth	1931-32	Ruth Schelkopf
1917-18	Estelle Williams	1932-33	Ruth Schelkopf
1918-19	Lela Ralston	1933-34	Ruth Schelkopf
1919-20	Nan Davis	1934-35	Ruth Schelkopf
1920-21	Albert Cumpston	1935-52	Ruth Schelkopf



District No. 93 in 1914. Left to right: Dell Schelgel, Henry Lauber, Ira Tonkinson, Orve Hedden, Wesley Tonkinson, Harold Justice, Marcella Sullivan (teacher), Helen Schelkopf, Claude Tonkinson, Irene Justice, Cynthia Anderson, Lydia Lauber, Elmer Tonkinson, Elmer Lauber, Matilda Schlegel.

District No. 93 was organized in 1891, with Brook McMains as its first director. The schoolhouse was built 1/4 mile S of the NW corner of Sec. 10. The school was known as "Schelkopf" school and as "Hedden" school, in honor of T. K. Hedden, a board director in District 93 for 29 consecutive years, from 1900 to 1930. On July 7, 1953, District 93 was merged with District 54 (Shickley). The last director was Isaac Schelkopf.

Year	Teacher	Year	Teacher
1899-1900	Lola Craig	1925-26	Helen McPeck
1900-04	No record	1926-27	No record
1904-05	Sarah Keller	1927-28	Lucy E. Fisher
1905-06	Katharine Seibel	1928-29	Lucy E. Fisher
1906-07	Wardie Nippert	1929-30	No record
1907-08	Margaret M. Seibel	1930-31	No record
1908-09	Margaret M. Seibel	1931-32	Burnice Fussell
1909-10	Margaret M. Seibel	1932-34	No record
	Happy M. Johnson	1934-35	Doris Swenson
1910-11	Esther McDonald	1935-36	Doris Swenson
1911-12	Carrie Maddox	1936-37	No record
1912-13	Alma Rousch	1937-38	John K. Wagers
1913-14	Marcella Sullivan	1938-39	Irene Hilgren
1914-15	No record	1939-40	No record
1915-16	Lela Wilson	1940-41	Irene Hilgren Churchill
1916-17	Fannie Lincoln	1941-42	Ardean Harms
1917-18	Bess Freeman	1942-43	Bernetta Zehr
1918-19	Mrs. Gayle Lauenstein	1943-44	Deloris Richards
1919-20	Gladys Stansberry	1944-45	Luella Wilson
1920-21	Gladys Stansberry	1945-46	Ruth Rosenquist
1921-22	Leslie Huntley	1946-47	Ruth Rosenquist
1922-23	Leslie Huntley	1947-48	Ruth Rosenquist
1923-24	Louise Crawford	1948-52	No record
1924-25	Helen McPeck		

FAMILIES

Theodore Keller Hedden was born May 5, 1859, at De-witt, Clinton County, Iowa. He was the fourth son of Henry and Eliza Douglas Minor Hedden. His wife, Eva Bell McBeth, was born December 22, 1859, at Pleasant Grove, Iowa, daughter of the Robert McBeths.

Theodore and Eva were married November 13, 1884, at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. They came to Nebraska and bought 80 acres of school land, the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 16, Hamilton township. Here they built a two-room frame house (bedroom and living room). The living room contained the dining table, a set of chairs, a cupboard, and the kitchen stove which heated the house. Heating stoves were unknown. Also a lounge which could be extended to make a bed for two. Other buildings were a corn crib, a granary, stable for four horses, and a hen house.

Mr. and Mrs. Hedden had six sons: Glenn D., Ronzo M., Earl J., Merritt M., Finis R., and Orve K. Hedden. One daughter died at birth.



Photo from Ronzo M. Hedden

The Theodore Hedden family. Back row, left to right: Earl, Glenn, Ronzo, Merritt. Front row: J. D. McBeth (brother of Mrs. Hedden), Finis, Mrs. Hedden, Theodore Hedden.

The Heddens battled drought, floods, hail, and wind-storms. Their crops were corn and oats, some rye and barley. They raised chickens and some bronze turkeys (the only ones in the vicinity). Later they changed to White Rock chickens, White Holland turkeys, Chester White hogs, and Shorthorn cattle. At one time they had a flock of sheep.

Mr. Hedden leased and broke the prairie on the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 15 and helped break the S $\frac{1}{2}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$. He later leased the S $\frac{1}{2}$ and held these leases and farmed the land the rest of his life.

Photo from Paul Lefever
Cultivating corn with two-row
cultivator (1919)



His first reaper was a self-rake, which raked the grain of a 4-foot swath off the platform in bunches about the right size for a sheaf. The sheaves from the self-rake were tied by hand with straw taken from the sheaf. A lost art. Then he got a Plano binder, which tied bundles with twine and kicked them off in a row. That wore out. The next was a Champion—6-foot cut with a bundle carrier. Carried three or four bundles, then was dumped by foot power. Saved a lot of walking for the shockers.

Mrs. Hedden helped with the shocking and cultivating. Father used the walking cultivator and bought the first riding cultivator in the community for Mother to use.

The land was full of rattlesnakes, garter snakes, bull racers, and bull snakes. The rattlers and the garters were the most numerous. Sometimes animals and occasionally a person would be bitten by rattlers, but as a rattler usually sounds a warning, most everything knew the sound and the animals the smell. The snakes were sometimes gathered up in the hay and hauled in.

For fuel, cobs and coal were used, when they were to be had. Also buffalo chips. My brother and I often took the bushel basket and gathered cow chips dried in the pasture, when we were about big enough so the two of us could tote it. Cornstalks were also used. Father bought some trees on the South Blue River and would go down there, starting about 4 a.m., with the wagon running gear, cut a load of poles, and get back after dark. The poles were chopped to stove wood with an ax. Later with a bucksaw. A good bit of this job was for the boys.

The plowing was done with a walking plow with two horses, sometimes three. The sod was broken with a special sod plow, with three or four horses, generally. The corn planted with a walking lister or a corn planter with a check-row wire. Later a riding two-wheeled lister. A lister took three or four horses. Usually four.

As the family grew, a bed was placed in the attic or upstairs, which was reached by a ladder. The upstairs was unfinished. In a blizzard the snow blew in some. A binder canvas was brought in and spread over the bed and the boys to keep the snow off. Sometimes there were four in the bed. Later another bed was acquired. In the heat of summer the boys slept downstairs on the floor and on the lounge. One hot night came a big wind and hail storm. The corn was in the roasting ear stage. The storm made such a roar we had to shout to be heard. These hail were ragged, flat pieces of ice. Some three inches in diameter. Punctured the weather boards and riddled the windows and screens on the west side. The turkeys roosted on top of the hen house. We found one turkey hen beheaded in the morning. The crops were mowed to the ground. Horses and cattle ran through the fence. Still the folks held on and later, in 1901, purchased the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{2}$ of Sec. 16.

When the boys got big enough, Glenn operated the walking plow and the two-wheeled sulky. Later he graduated to the two-bottom gang plow. Before the riding plows, Father

bought another walker. So that was two walkers. One left hander. Ronzo tackled the new walker. It was a dandy. Would go right down the furrow for a long way without holding on until it struck a hard spot or a root. The team was a pair of gentle sorrel mares (Mamie and Julie). The harness, collars, and hames with inch rope with swivels on the lower end for tugs or traces. The lines $\frac{1}{4}$ " rope with snaps for attaching to the bridles. No back pads or belly bands. We all went barefoot from the first warm weather until cold weather. Whenever the plow rolled a rattler out, one quickly stepped to the other side.

Father had a threshing machine called an Agitator run by horse power, using six teams of horses—that is, 12 horses. The grain was fed in by hand by one man. Another stood by his side to cut the bands on the bundles. The grain ran out at the bottom. A man stood there with two half-bushel measurers to measure the grain. They set in a tally box which tallied each one as it was removed and emptied. Good yielding oats kept the man on his toes. Most of the oats was called Russian. Grew tall and yielded well. It was sown broadcast either by hand or a seeder if one was to be had; if by hand, from a tub on the back of a wagon. The seeder took the place of the endgate and was driven from the wagon wheel. One time the team ran away with the outfit. Sure did buzz. When the hay ran out, oats were mown with the scythe for the horses. Corn fodder was cut with a butcher knife, if you had no corn knife, for the cows. Corn was cut by hand and stood in shocks for winter feed. Later a sled was rigged with knives on the side and drawn by one horse between the rows. A man sat on the sled and caught the stalks until he got an armful, when he stopped and stood the fodder in the shock.

When Father was building the granary, a sudden snow-storm came up. He started for the house but went the wrong way. He ran into his straw stack which set his directions right, so he got to the house.

They had an apple orchard, and a couple big Richmond cherry trees that were loaded with cherries every year. Also a row of mulberry trees which furnished many a pie and dish of berries. A big garden, nearly always a watermelon patch. Pumpkins were planted with part of the corn.

Father often went to Hebron and bought garden stuff. Generally brought a big watermelon. The road to Hebron went across his pasture before the land was fenced and cropped. The ruts were there for many years.

Bands of Indian shows sometimes came by. Covered wagons going West in spring, back East busted in the fall. They'd stop to water the horses and eat their meal in the shade of the mulberry trees which were beside the road. Progress has removed both the covered wagons and the trees. Roving gypsy horse traders were common. Always begging for sick baby.

Ronzo inherited the riding cultivator as soon as he got big enough to operate it. The seat was and still is adjustable. You guided the shovels with your feet or used the handles with your hand, or both together. The seat could be turned up and you could walk if you liked. A good way to develop a pair of legs.

A storage cave was built, a hole dug and roofed over with boards and covered with soil. Wooden steps to go down. A ventilator in the roof. The lumber rotted and the roof caved. After a couple of these a Russian cave was dug under the house. Twelve feet to the floor. Six feet of dirt over the top, then a 6-foot arched roof hole 16 feet long. It was dug with a spade and the dirt removed in a box hauled up the stair ramp by a horse and a rope. I don't remember the year, but I was just big enough to lead the horse (Old Fred). The cave stood without walling until the big bombers established a training flight just west of the house, when it had to be reinforced to stand the jar. Cement slabs on the side with brick arch.

The old house had one room added, which stood until 1918, when a large house was moved in and the two united. From then on the family began to scatter. In 1896, a neighbor who did carpentering was hired and a new barn was built with a lean-to. Stalls for 10 horses, built-in grain bin, and an overhead bin for oats in the lean-to. Later an addition

was made to stall 8 more horses and an additional driveway and granary were built.

The dry weather took the orchard, except the mulberry trees.

Theodore Hedden died at his home on March 13, 1934, at the age of 74 years, 10 months, and 13 days. His wife Eva died June 18, 1941, at the age of 82 years, 6 months, and 24 days. The farm has been operated ever since by their son Ronzo.

—Ronzo M. Hedden (80 years of age)

It was in the spring of 1871 that Joseph Jackson, 24, and a younger brother felt the lure of the western world, leaving northern England, county Yorkshire, the land of their nativity. In April, 1871, they sailed from Liverpool, taking three weeks to cross the Atlantic. A few years they spent working on farms near Clinton, Iowa.

Joseph came to Fairmont in 1875. He walked across country to Shickley, later buying out a relinquishment on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 35, Hamilton township.

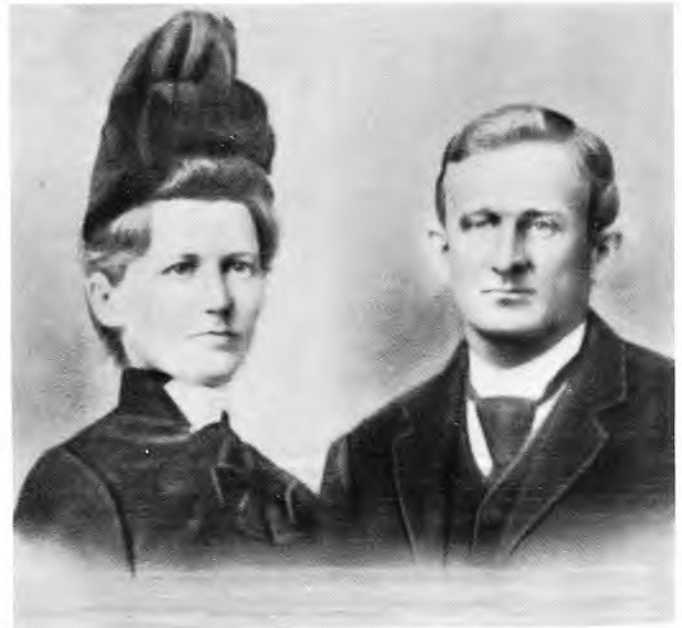
Tired of bachelorhood, he started corresponding with a young lady from Davenport, Iowa, suggested by a mutual acquaintance. He walked to Carleton and boarded the train for Davenport, where he was married to Julia Alice Whisler in April, 1888. They returned to a one-room home which is still a part of the house where the family of the two daughters, Gertrude and Myrtle, and a son, Royal, grew up.

At the time of Royal's marriage Mother and Father moved into Bruning, where Joseph Jackson died on June 7, 1926, and Mrs. Jackson on July 12, 1947.

Royal and wife continued to live on the farm until February, 1967, when they retired to Bruning. They have two children, Alice Saunders of Lincoln and Donald R. Jackson, M.D., of Omaha.

—Royal Jackson

Daniel M. Lefever was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on March 22, 1850. He was one of 14 children. In 1874, Mr. Lefever moved to Illinois, where he lived for six years.



Mr. and Mrs. Daniel M. Lefever

In 1880, he came to Fillmore County, where he purchased 320 acres of railroad land, the E $\frac{1}{2}$ of Sec. 1, Hamilton township. He immediately began making improvements on the farm. At one time the Lefever farm was known as one of the most beautiful and best kept farms around. It also had a large orchard.

Mr. Lefever returned to Pennsylvania in 1889 and married Elizabeth Rohrer, born October 5, 1862. They returned to his Fillmore County farm, where they began housekeeping and continued to reside until their deaths. They were the parents of four children: Paul, Maude, Nora, and Ralph.



Photo from Royal Jackson

The Joseph Jackson family about 1890. Left to right: Joseph Jackson, Julia Alice Jackson, Zella May Jackson, Mrs. John Elliott, Kathryn Elliott, Mr. John Elliott holding Colbert Elliott. The Elliotts were neighbors across the road. Jack Riddle, standing by the team and buggy, was the Jaskson's hired man.

Daniel Lefever met with a fatal accident in 1907 and Mrs. Lefever was left to raise her family alone. Mrs. Lefever passed away in 1946.

Paul, the eldest son, still lives on the home place.

Watson Weldon was born in Yorkshire, England, on February 25, 1836. At about 30 years of age, he came to America, where he met and married Martha Fisher, who was born in Knottsville, Missouri, on March 2, 1856. They were married in Wilber, Nebraska, March 2, 1872. Mr. Weldon came to Fillmore County in 1870 and took a homestead on the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 2, Hamilton township. Their closest trading center was Wilber, where Mr. Weldon walked to work, and brought home supplies.

Mrs. Trenary recalls that her mother often told of the Indians walking by and wanting food, but if her mother told them she had none they would walk to the next neighbors south (the Sauers) and beg.

Mr. Weldon helped dig the first well in Geneva.

Mr. and Mrs. Weldon were the parents of 10 children, of whom two died at an early age. The children were Charley, born in 1873 and passed away at 18 months of age; Jackson, born in 1877 and died in 1948; James, born in 1879 and died in 1957; Peter, born in 1880 and died in 1955; Thomas, born in 1882 and died in 1912; Dan, born in 1884 and died in 1957; Bessie, born in 1885 and died in 1953; Anna, born in 1887 and the only surviving member of her family; Katie, born 1890 and died in 1964. Another infant was born dead and is buried on the homestead.

—Mrs. Anna Trenary

George F. Woods was born in Jefferson County, Indiana. He married Mary L. Elliott, also born in Jefferson County, in January, 1876. They lived in Knox County, Missouri, for nine years. A water shortage in Missouri decided them to go west. In March, 1886, they came to Nebraska to visit the John Elliott family in Thayer County, who were cousins of Mrs. Woods. While visiting, they heard of an 80-acre farm for sale in Fillmore County and purchased it. The farm had a small house, a barn, a granary, and a good well.

Mrs. Woods didn't care for Nebraska because there was lots of wind and dust which she was not used to. Many women put wet rags around the windows and doors to keep out the dust.

When the Woods family moved to Fillmore County, District 82 was not completely finished, so the children attended Prairie Grove school in Belle Prairie township.

The day of the blizzard of '88 only a little snow fell at first. Later that day the blizzard struck with such force that it rattled the stovepipe. Mr. Woods looked out and saw it was a bad storm, and about 3 p.m. got a horse to go to school to get their son John from Prairie Grove school. They lived about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles from school. There was a hedge and mulberry trees they could follow to return home. They were fortunate not to lose any livestock during the blizzard. Mr. and Mrs. Woods brought two cows and a calf when they moved to Nebraska.

Mrs. Woods learned to like Nebraska and later when she visited Indiana she was glad to return to Fillmore County.

Mr. and Mrs. Woods had three children; John, Emma (Mrs. Edgar Miller), and James, who was born in Fillmore County. Mrs. Miller is the only surviving member of her family.

Mr. Woods died in 1901 and Mrs. Woods in 1924. They are buried in the Harmony Cemetery. —Mrs. Emma Miller



Cider press, powered by a portable 4-HP gasoline engine (about 1915).



Shelling corn, about 1917, with a Sandwich 4-hole sheller and a 10-HP Water Lou Boy gasoline engine. The man sitting on the engine wheel is Charley Nichols.



Biebert Brothers B-17 spray plane—owned by Virgil, Waldean, John R. (*manager*), and Max (*chief pilot*). Photo from Max Biebert

INDUSTRY

Biebert Brothers, Inc.—consisting of Max, John, Virgil, and Waldean Biebert—started in the airplane spray business in 1947 with one Stearman biplane. Their first job was spraying weeds in cornfields at Waverly, Nebraska. The first field ever sprayed for pay in Nebraska was on the farm of John Dondlinger, NW of Shickley, for the elimination of a small acreage of bindweed.

We sprayed many thousands of acres of corn and wheat in Kansas in the years 1947-1949. We acquired our first Government contract in Wyoming in 1949. With three light twin-engined Cessna aircraft, we covered 500,000 acres of rangeland with poisoned bran for the control of grasshoppers. On that job, we dispersed more than 5,000,000 pounds of bran. In 1950, for grasshopper control, we covered 600,000 acres of rangeland.

In 1951 and 1952, we covered many thousands of acres of cotton in Arkansas for pest control. In the fall of 1952, we moved our operation—by then we had seven airplanes—to Managua, Nicaragua, to work on cotton there. In the spring of 1953, we purchased a B-17 from the city of Stuttgart, Arkansas. The plane was in their city park as a war memorial and had to be disassembled and moved 300 miles to Springfield, Missouri, for assembly, which was quite a task. As the plane was badly mutilated after seven years in the park, it was almost impossible to assemble and fly it. After six months of constant work—14 hours a day, and 7 days a week—the plane was ready for ferry. At this time the U. S. Government gave us quite a time because of technicalities in the bill of

sale and the titling of the aircraft. After many months of negotiations and two trips to Washington, D.C., with Robert Waring of Geneva, we finally acquired clear title to the plane.

As an airplane of this size and type had never been used for spraying, we were subjected to much ridicule when people learned that was the use we were going to put it to. After a year of outfitting the plane and attempting to get a spray contract, we acquired the job of spraying Lansing, Michigan, for gypsy moth, which is an insect that destroys trees. The job was such an astounding success that we were soon busy every summer with huge government contracts. In 1955, we sprayed 350,000 acres for gypsy moth control. In 1956, we sprayed 1,400,000 acres of citrus to control the Mediterranean fruit fly. In 1957, we sprayed 750,000 acres for spruce budworm control; also, in the same year, we sprayed 43,000 acres in Fillmore County for grasshoppers. In 1958, again for grasshopper control, we sprayed 800,000 acres in Colorado.

In 1959, we converted the airplane to fire-fighting and did considerable work fighting forest fires in the United States and Canada.

In 1960, we decided to retire from the aircraft application business and sold both airplanes. The original plane, N17W, was sold to a flying company in Arizona and is still flying in this type of business. The second plane, N117W, acquired in 1956, was sold to Bolivia and was later demolished in an accident there.

In their 14 years in the business, the Biebert Brothers sprayed approximately 8,000,000 acres of farm and rangeland.

—Data from Biebert Brothers