



**P.O. Box 114
Hwy 3 West
Hampton, Iowa 50441**

**Newsletter
Volume 24 #4
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Tour Activity

On September 15th, a busload of visitors from Minnesota toured Memorial Hall and the Franklin County Court House. Dorothy Jingst and Mary Marquard gave them a tour of the REA Power Plant Museum at the conclusion of their visit to Franklin County

Four Hampton-Dumont third grade classes and their parents/grandparents were present at the Historical Museum the afternoons of the week of October 20th. Dorothy Jingst and Mary Marquard gave them a tour of the Museum and Museum Quiz to familiarize them with the items displayed.

A group of Franklin County Historical Museum volunteers and guests went to Ackley on October 16th to tour the "Settlement on the Prairie" home, school and barn and view the newly restored buggy. The group then went to the Heritage Center in downtown Ackley.

Danish Intern

Nana Miklulsen, a Museum Studies and Theatre Studies graduate student at the Institute of Aesthetics at Aarhus University in Aarhus, Denmark is spending two months in Hampton as part of her internship sponsored by the Danish American Heritage Society. She is translating letters and other Danish artifacts from the Harriman-Nielsen home and showing the Harriman-Nielsen Committee members ways to display and store the Home's items.

Gate House

A BIG THANKS to Ron's Roofing of Hampton for donating the labor to put new plywood and shingles on the roof of the Gate House at the entrance to the Franklin County Fair Grounds. The roof had deteriorated so badly that water was leaking onto the contents inside. Fortunately nothing was damaged.

Harriman-Nielsen Home And Farm

The weather cooperated for another successful Fall Festival. Wagon rides, a corn maze, pumpkin carving, garden market, various games, tours of the old house and more were enjoyed by children and their families on October 5th.

On October 24th, 35 Girl Scouts and their leaders from Sheffield spent the late afternoon participating in planned activities and dodging the rain at the Barn and Grounds.

Silos And Smokestacks

On October 28th, Candy Street, Program and Partnership Director for Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area, presented a video on the organization's history and progress. It serves 37 counties in northeast and central Iowa.

The Franklin County Historical Museum, Franklin County Fair and Grandpa's Farm, and the REA-Power Plant Museum are a part of the National Heritage Area. She explained the advantages for tourism opportunities and grant applications to the Historical Museum volunteers who attended the meeting.

Old Stone House

At the Franklin County Historical Society Board Meeting on October 28th, Fran Wullbrandt from the Candlestick Chapter of the DAR gave a history of the Old Stone House and the Reeve Family. The Chapter is in the process of raising money to put a marker at the site. The FCHS Board voted to contribute half of the cost of new marker.

Historical Museum

The Franklin County Historical Museum will be closed starting the week of November 24th and will reopen the week of January 19th, weather permitting.

Village Within A Town

Have you visited “Pleasant Hill” Village on the Franklin County Fairgrounds in Hampton? The best time is during the fair in mid July. It has become a village of 15 buildings, including a gazebo. The village is named in honor of the 11 men who lost their lives in the Civil War, from Franklin County at Pleasant Hill, Louisiana. Three of the eleven were not identified. All were from the Iowa 32nd Infantry. Those named were Corporals Joseph Ward and George W. Rose. Privates were Jesse Horner, Ira Mc Cord, John Mechan, George W. Frey, E.W. Crossly and David W. Cole.



The village started here, after the depot and caboose were brought in and set in place. Then the idea of an old time village became a vision. An individual town council was formed, consisting of a Mayor, Secretary and Treasurer. Two members were to be from the fair board, 2 from the Historical Society and 3 others, who did not belong to either organization.

Two buildings were donated from the town of Sheffield. Several buildings were constructed on the spot, such as the blacksmith shop, the church and the ice cream stand. The bank was built by the county bankers, the Hamilton school served as a mercantile store and the Lovin school shows what a country school was like. County schoolteachers raised funds to put it in order. The horse barn was created with lumber from Paul Sandersfeld’s farm, in Alexander. Two more buildings from Sheffield are the barbershop and the saloon. There they serve Sasperilla, and other soft drinks. A boardwalk was built in front of the buildings, like of long ago.

In the past years there was a “shoot out” act on the green in front of the main street! It’s a real treat and very interesting. Pleasant Hill village is a neat village, one of which we can be proud.



In 1993 the Mayor and Mrs. Truman Durr and others from Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, came to visit the village and were very impressed. They should see it now!

Richland Township

Richland Township is situated next to Wisner Township on the west, Ross Township on the east, Marion Township on the south and Cerro Gordo County on the north. It's Congressional description is Regional Township 93, Range 21 and according to the Franklin County History of 1883, it had 23000 acres of choice land. It is watered by two branches of Buffalo creek. There are two natural timbers in it- that of Shobes grove in Sec. 1 and 2 and Tharps Grove in Sec. 36.



The two groves are 2 miles apart. The one named after John Shobe, who settled there in 1857 and Wm Tharp, who settled there in 1854. Being the first white settlers, there, the groves were named in their honor.

The name Richland is derived from Richland County, Ohio, from which some of the earlier settlers came. In the earlier days, Richland included the territory where Wisner Township is, but in 1881, when there were enough settlers in the area, an election took place and the two territories, were split in two, and Wisner was given to the Township on the west.

In the early days, country schools were set up two miles apart. What was interesting in the area at Old Chapin, part of which was in Richland Township, was that there were 3 country schools, one mile apart. The 2 were in Ross, the other in Richland. There was one a mile west of Chapin Station, one by the second curve at Old Chapin and one a mile west of the old town. The one off the curve burned down in 1877, the one a mile out of Chapin must have been torn down when Chapin became consolidated in 1915. I have no clue as to when the other, the “Halfwassen” school was torn down or moved.

Old Chapin never had any more than 13 homes in or around it. Old Chapin was the only town in Richland Township. There are 2 cemeteries; at Old Chapin and the Reformed Church Cemetery behind the church.

Work Started On Pipeline (Hampton Chronicle - Dec. 30, 1930)

This headline caught my eyes and I recalled there was a “pumping station” east of Alexander and that the grounds were fenced in. The article said work was done from Ponca City, OK to Randall, IA and from Minneapolis, MN to Popejoy, IA. They hoped to be done in a few months. This was the Great Lakes Pipe Line. It said the whole project would cost \$20,000,000 and would employ 3000 men in construction. (What would it cost today?)

My quest became a priority to find out where it came together and when, but I was not successful in either. I only concluded, after a lot of deliberation and investigation that it had to be near Alden, since half of the distance between the 2 towns, would put it there. The pipeline goes between the towns of Alden and Williams. My guess is it was completed in late April 1931, and it crosses the entire state.

According to the Internet, the first pipeline in the U.S. was built in Pennsylvania, 109 miles long, in 1879. The pipes were of wrought iron, but in the 1920's they were welded steel. The first cross country lines were from Chicago to Minneapolis and other cities, in 1931. This could be it.

In the 1931 newspaper, I found 2 stories in the Hampton Chronicle about the pipeline. In the Feb. 26 paper, it told of how George Sargent, a prominent Hampton contractor was working, hauling building material from Alexander to the site of the Great Lakes Pipe Line Co.'s building near Alexander. While unloading a large piece of steel from the freight car, the clamp holding it, slipped and the piece fell striking him on the leg, knocking him over, and breaking his right leg in 2 places.

On March 12, 1931, a story in the Hampton Chronicle told of a change of plans, an increase in size of the booster station from a two-unit plant to a three-unit plant. The change was because the original plan had called for a station every 50 miles. The new one was for every 100 miles. This meant that between Des Moines and the end of the line there would be only two, the one in Franklin County and at Faribault, Minnesota. The new plans called for 3 diesel engines and 3 booster pumps. It would put the Alexander/Latimer plant in pumping capacity of the big terminal in Des Moines, which had 4 pumps. It said that the base for this plant had already been dug for the two “working” tanks, which would hold 17,500 gallons.

Three brick houses had been built on the Alexander grounds. Various families lived in them from 1931 to 1960, when the houses were moved to Thornton, because by then, automation had come in. Some who may have lived there were the Shields, Hawkins and later maybe Lloyd Christensen and Paul Craig. The Shields' were great friends of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Peters, of Alexander. . However, I was told that there was a crew of 9 men who worked there, round the clock. Many local men had helped put in the lines, earlier and were from Latimer and Alexander. (See diagram of the line across the state)



Figure 9-4
Natural gas transmission and pipeline pipelines in Iowa, 1981.
Courtesy: Iowa Development Commission

Frederick Greenfield, of Sheffield, a former Alexander man, told of how his parents, Fred and Lula Greenfield roomed and boarded one man, a Mr. Legg, who, according to Mr. Greenfield was “an overseer”. Every 5 or so weeks, he walked along the pipeline to see and smell if there was a leak and also to see if a farmer had constructed some sort of building over the line. If so, he reported it. Mr. Legg stayed there, till it was time for the return trip. Years later, air planes were used to fly over the same territory. Asking how a pilot could tell if there was a leak, he said the vegetation would be discolored. His flight was every 4 or 5 weeks. Several persons told of seeing the planes flying over the area.

On Nov. 24, 1932 the Hampton Chronicle published an interesting story. A man had just lit a cigarette, and threw the lighted match into a stream. A film of gasoline on the water, burst into flame, in fact in several places along the stream. There were even a few small explosions, which continued from 12 hours to 3 days. The pipeline, 3 miles away, had sprung a leak, which seeped into a drainage ditch, which emptied into the stream. H. C. Schuler, a chief engineer of the Great Lakes Pipe Line, found the leak and repaired it. He was in charge of the Latimer/Alexander station.

In 1966 the Williams Bros. bought the pipeline and all went well until an awful explosion took place in that station. The cause was not known, when the story appeared in the Hampton Times, Feb. 7, 1978. The blast occurred Friday, Feb. 4, at 12:45 P M which shattered windows and shook buildings. The Times showed a picture of the black smoke and told about it.

Jerry Modderman, who lived ¾ miles south and Dallas Schear who was working 3 miles north, were the first to respond and call for help. (Mr. Schear described to me as to how it looked. He said, “It was a huge black red ball of flames shooting in the air.”)

The heat was so intense, no one, even the firemen could get anywhere close and in fact people were kept back one and half miles from it. The firemen were from Alexander, Latimer, Coulter, Belmond, Hampton and Sheffield. The valves both north and south of the station had been shut off, but even then, the fire took till 4:00am Saturday to burn itself out. There were no fatalities, because no one was there at the time. Lloyd Christensen's new truck was found there, but later it was learned that he and another were at the small plant near Alden.

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Two L.P. gas lines were heavily damaged and contributed to most of the fire. A line carrying refined petroleum products also had damage, but a new line carrying crude oil, was not. Also destroyed was the building housing the pumping equipment, including the diesel engines, pump, pipes and controls. This must have been a terrific blow to the Williams Pipe Co.

Things I learned: Williams Bros. hung on until financial problems forced them to sell in 2003, when the Magellan Pipe Line Co. of Tulsa, OK purchased it. I would guess that instead of installing all new equipment there, it was built at Albert Lea, MN. The Alexander plant is still considered active, and there are 2 electric pumps, controlled by the company in Tulsa. The Alden station was acquired in 1977 (a year before the fire). It is still fenced in but has no building.

There are 4 pipelines, but only 2 belong to Magellan's. One I was told carries the Fiber Optic cable and one brings jet fuel down from Minneapolis to Clear Lake. The pipes that Magellan own, are 12" in diameter. I asked how deep the trenches were dug and found they were 3 ft or more. In crossing gravel roads, a ditch was dug across it. But for rivers and railroads, a hole was bored underneath.

The Magellan Co has a large terminal in Clear Lake. On Oct. 31, a picture and write up in the Mason City Globe Gazette showed the many semi trucks lined up to get diesel fuel. It said, because of the harvest, smaller companies had run out of fuel, but that Iowa City and Clear Lake had plenty. Our area is also fortunate to have this pipeline so close, because it keeps the price lower.

Many thanks go to my many contacts: The Hampton, Alden and Iowa Falls Libraries; and the wonderful people with whom I corresponded or talked to. They were from Alden, Alexander, Latimer, Clear Lake, Iowa Falls, Sheffield, Williams and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Without you, there would not be a story.

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