

◆ Early History of Reading Township ◆

A Graphic Story of Pioneering and the Political and Social Development of This Rich Agricultural Section of Northwest Iowa.

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The trips Mr. and Mrs. Elder made back to Reading township became fewer and farther between for that ageing couple was not as eager to buff traveling discomforts as they were at an earlier time. Also, they had become thoroughly established in a beautiful home on Raymond Avenue, Pasadena, where peace and contentment reigned supreme.

After fifteen years spent and thoroughly enjoyed by Mrs. Elder in the California home, she was called to answer the summons which ended a most active and beautiful career. Her loyalty to Reading township and to pioneer friends never faltered to the end, for it was her wish to be laid to rest in the Pleasant View cemetery where she might repose in peace near her fellow-homesteaders who had gone before. Mrs. Elder longed to be forever near her pioneer friends, with whom she had shared many pleasures as well as trials during their eventful journey along the rough untrodden road which directed them to a goal which had loomed in the distance ahead. When those who had strength to reach it beheld its splendor, they knelt in reverential gratitude that they had been granted the strength which had enabled them to reach the heights and permitted them to behold the grandeur of the emblems which represented the outstanding accomplishments for Reading township, Sioux County, Iowa.

The n. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 8, which was pre-empted by H. Ferguson and homesteaded by Trum Grander, has undergone so many changes of ownership and has been divided into small portions so that it is a difficult matter to record respective ownerships as they came about. The following statements may not be correct. (I would greatly appreciate criticism and suggestions which readers of these lines see fit to offer. My address, 1531 North Raymond Ave., Pasadena, Calif.) To proceed with the relation of activities on the n. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 8, we understand that Mr. Granger his homestead to the town lot company and that organized body disposed of their acquired property by dividing it into small portions.

Irwin brothers bought fifteen acres along the south border. Later, Cliff Farrand had a controlling interest, which he sold to a newcomer, who kept the property only a short time although he erected a neat house. He then relinquished his claim to Henry Rickefs who added a few acres to the original plot and, in turn, released his land rights to Harry Johnson. He bought more acreage and again added to the former plot, so that Mr. H. Johnson now owns the larger part of the south eighty acres of Trum Gander's homestead.

The north eighty acres of Trum Grander's homestead were purchased by Mr. Paul. Feed yards were erected near the railroad tracks for convenience in giving special care to livestock which needed extra care before marketing. Other "town conveniences" have been located on the property now owned by Mr. Paul because of advantages in connection with a location near the new town.

Reading Township's Woman Pioneer

G. L. and Bruce Houlton are the sons of Mary Houlton, Reading township's brave "woman pioneer." Mrs. Houlton's husband had died and she was left to care for her family of two boys and two girls.

Mrs. Houlton was truly a brave little woman and a courageous mother and those qualities of courage and bravery were instilled into the ambitions of every member of her family as has been evidenced in their respective accomplishments. Mrs. Houlton and her thrifty family surmounted trials and hardships of early settlers and eventually secured many acres of Reading township lands.

Early Settlers who bought Close Bros. Improved Farms

Although many of Reading township Land-Firm had bought and improved the s. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section seven. That section, later, provided ground for lots, blocks and out-lots on which business houses, industrial plants, homes, school, churches, elevators, etc., were constructed. Each unit of the respective groups suggested, when taken as a whole, constituted what became Reading township's commercial center, Ireton, on section 7. However, the main part of the original plot of the town was located on the n. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 7. In time, subdivisions and out-lots were added to

the original plot. Those additions included: twenty-five acres purchased by H. McKeever; Harm Dirks, fifteen acres; Ed R. Day, one out lot; and Mr. B. Lendt, another out-lot. Combined, those purchases constituted forty acres of the s. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ which Close Bros. had improved. Mr. R. A. Zimmerman bought the other three forties (120 acres) of that s. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 7.

Shortly after the s. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section seven had been taken over by the above mentioned thrifty citizens of Reading township, Mr. Arthur Peebles and J. W. Satterlee made negotiations with the Town Lot Company for the south half (80 acres) of the n. w. $\frac{1}{4}$, through which after 1882, the railroad crossed, diagonally from east to west. Mr. Satterlee had bought all the land in said eighty acres which was south of the railroad track, except twelve acres along the east side. This was purchased by Mr. Peebles, together with all the other part of the eighty acres which was north of the railroad track.

The whole of the north eighty acres of the n. w. $\frac{1}{4}$, section 7, was taken over by Louisa Bertram and her father. Henry Kluter bought the north eighty acres of the n. e. $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 7 from the Town Lot Company.

(To be continued next week)