

Cedar County Historical Society

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Cedar County Trivia

- * Cedar County was created December 1837.
- * No more than 150 people lived in Cedar County in 1837.
- * Rochester was made County Seat 1838.
- * Durant was the first county community with a railroad in 1855.
- * Mechanicsville is derived from the first settlers who were artisans and mechanics.
- * Bennett was named for Mr. Bennett the Right-of-Way man for the railroad.
- * West Branch was a Quaker settlement.
- * Clarence moved 2 miles to be near the railroad.
- * Stanwood used to be Flourney, the name of the man who sold the land for a depot.
- * Lowden used to be spelled Louden.

COMING EVENTS

Iowa Museum Week

June 12—June 18

At the
Cedar County Historical
Society Museum at
1094 Hwy 38
Just north of Tipton

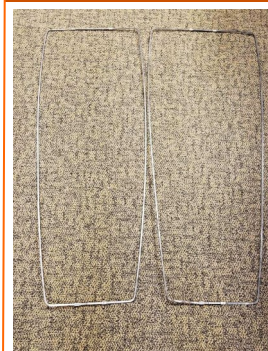
Watch the website and Face-
book for details.

Pioneer Cooking Demonstration

July 20

At the
Cedar County Historical So-
ciety Museum at
1094 Hwy 38
Just north of Tipton

WHAT AM I?



Pant Stretcher

NEWSLETTER

Dr. Speer Vet Clinic Coming to the Prairie Village

The family of Dr. Edward Speer has kindly donated the contents of the beloved veterinarian's office to the Cedar County Historical Society and Museum. We are very excited to have this collection and are making plans to construct a reproduction of the building that housed Dr. Speer's office. We will replicate his office and exam room in one section of the building and we will have an area dedicated to the history of Cedar County Veterinarians and Veterinary events. In her preliminary research Sandy Harmel has already received promised support from the Eastern Iowa Veterinarian Association and The Iowa Veterinarian Association who have also expressed interest in Cedar County Historical Society Museum serving as the archives of their organizational records. Another collection we will be honored to preserve. For construction to begin on the building funds will need to be raised before it can begin. The Speer family has also generously donated some funds to kick off our fundraising for the building. We are also looking for and applying for grants that can help cover the costs of building this new structure. These sources will provide us with a significant amount towards our goal. However we still need the support of our great members and friends. If you would like to donate to the Dr. Speer Clinic please send donations to CCHS PO Box 254, Tipton, IA, 52772 or you can use the PayPal donate button on our website. (cedarcountyhistoricalsociety.com)

One of our long time members asked that we share the story of "Farmer" Burns so I have reprinted what she wrote almost 20 years ago for us. Thank you Delores Rohlf for helping share our county's history.

Martin "Farmer" Burns World Champion Wrestler by Delores Hillmann Rohlf from Cedar County Historical Review 1998.

Most young boys in the neighborhood of Limerick, in Southeast Springfield Township in sections 35 and 36, grew up wanting to farm — but Martin "Farmer" Burns had other dreams. He was born February 15, 1861 in a log cabin just south of a branch of Rock Creek on the eastern edge of what is now the Beuthien farm, in Section 36. His parents were Michael and Mary Burns, whose other children were Bridget, born 1858; Thomas, born 1860; Catherine (Kate), born 1864; Mary Ann, born 1866; Margaret, born 1868; and Ellen, born 1871.

The community of Limerick is now lost in history, but it had its beginnings when the Irish were working on the railroad coming through Wheatland and Lowden in 1850s. In 1854, when the Lyons, Iowa Central Railroad project collapsed, Irish immigrants brought in from New York and Canada were without work, and went to farming in the hills to make a living. In the cabins along the creek were many families with names such as LaGrange, O'Brien, Sparks, Daniels, Keane, and Hoak. In late 1865 my great-grandfather, Franz Drost, bought a farm there and so there was a mixture of nationalities.

Martin Burns took a real liking to wrestling and won his first match at the age of eight. His prize was fifteen cents. He went about training himself by sawing wood and other work around the farm, and quit school after his father died in an accident when Martin was eleven years old. Later he hired on to area grading camps, where fist fights and wrestling matches were the popular pastimes. Many of the old-timers around Limerick, Big Rock, and Wheatland told of their wrestling matches with him. Martin worked hard, living a clean life practicing his skills in wrestling, and never lost a match during the time he worked in the camps. His first loss was in Anamosa, Iowa, in 1886 when, at the age of 25, he was defeated by "Lewis the Strangler," whose real name was Henry Clayton.

Martin Burns was married in 1887 to Amelia Hoffmaster from Lowden, Iowa.

In 1889, while in charge of two carloads of hogs he took into Chicago, Burns wandered into the Olympic Theater where "Lewis the Strangler" was offering \$25 to anyone who could last 15 minutes without being pinned. Burns, still dressed in his bib overalls, waited for his chance, until a drunken comedian made light of him and called him "Farmer Burns." Burns lasted the fifteen minutes and won \$50 total, and through the Chicago papers the next morning his fame grew quickly and the name "Farmer Burns" remained with him.

"Farmer" Burns in 1935 (Reprinted from Historical Review 1998)

The following article was taken from the Council Staff's Nonpareil, Nov 24, 1935, p. 16. The article, entitled "Nearing 75, Farmer Burns Plans Comeback to Develop Mat Champ", was written by Morry Shadle, Sports Editor.

Martin Burns, the old Farmer who thrilled thousands with his mat prowess all over the country, is coming back. He will not pit his faltering strength against that of current wrestlers but will "try to teach some sturdy Iowa boys how to overcome brute strength with my science."

Nearing 75 years old and stripped of the fortune he once owned, Farmer Burns will open a gymnasium above 18 Pearl street sometime after Dec. 1.

With Charlie Lock, local wrestling promoter, Burns hopes to uncover another lowan to carry on in the style made famous by himself, Frank Gotch and Earl Caddock. His plan, he says, is simple. He is willing to take any husky lad in Iowa, train him for a while to see if he has possibilities and then-develop or discard him.

Burns and Loch have visions of from ten to twenty-five huskies in their stable. Training will be free. The fortunate, naturally will have to split part of their earnings with the trainer and promoter while the rest will have to go back to pounding the pavement or their old jobs.

Out for Cash.

The pair are not entering into this venture for their health, they were pleasingly frank on that score. They have visions of developing boys who will be in demand all over the country, boys with a scientific knowledge of the game as well as a flare for showmanship. Plans to sell memberships to the club on Pearl street are being made.

Getting back to The Farmer, during his career he engaged in more than 6,000 matches and won all but seven. In forty-seven boxing matches he was undefeated. His last public appearance was in Omaha in 1924 against Pete Lock, brother of the promoter. Later, Burns became afflicted with a sciatic nerve that ruined any chances he would have of appearing in exhibitions.

Burns earned the title of "Farmer" in his first big match, with Peter Remmen, in Decorah, IA., when he was but 17. In his story, a Chicago scribe is alleged to have said "Peter Remmen was beaten by an unknown farmer boy from Big



Announcing Museum Summer Hours

Tuesday 10 AM—7 PM

Thursday 10 AM—4 PM

Saturday 10 AM—2 PM

Rock, some place in Cedar county." In that bout, his purse and side bets totaled \$2,514.

Listing a few of his victims, one finds Evan Lewis, the original Strangler; Dan McLeod, Tom Jenkins, Hala Adula, the "Sultan's Lion;" Charlie Hackenschmidt, Fred Bell and others too numerous to mention.

A Three-Weight Champ

Farmer Burns met and defeated the original Strangler Lewis for the world's heavyweight title in Madison Square Garden in 1895. He reigned as heavyweight, light-heavyweight and middleweight champions until Tom Jenkins, now wrestling coach at West Point, lifted the heavyweight title in 1897. Burns never entered the ring scaling more than 165 pounds.

Starting without a teacher and never having a real manager, he developed many of the holds that later became famous. After succumbing to Strangler Lewis' famous choke hold in their first meeting, Burns developed his neck muscles by sleeping with weights on his neck.

The son of an Irish father who imbibed too freely, Farmer has always been a temperance man. He started wrestling neighbors for side bets when he was 8 years old. Depressions (two of them) and fair-weather friends have ruined his once fat bank roll.

Of modern wrestling, he has little to say. "If fans want lumber camp fight mixed with alleged wrestling, that's their business," he stated, "these fellows of today don't know how to wrestle."

War Ruined Caddock.

The Farmer gained fame as a trainer of such boxing and wrestling stars as Jeffries, Corbett, Sullivan, Gotch and Caddock. Caddock's career, promising to equal that of his famous teacher, was cut short when the Walnut, Ia. star was gassed during the war. Undoubtedly, much of Burns' bitterness toward war was caused by this incident.

In late years, Burns has been used as a front for a correspondence wrestling school. In his books he now sells for a living are descriptions of many holds but he says the contact he plans to five is the only way they can be developed to the limit."

Burns has two sons, Ray and Charles, who play in Chicago dance bands. Both were taught to wrestle but they did not like the game. His only living daughter, Mrs. Wes Beem, moved from here to Omaha less than a month ago. He has a brother, Tom, living in Sioux City.

Preparing for the Worst, Hoping for the Best

In the three months prior to the US entering WWI in April the local papers reflected hope, patriotism, and preparedness. The below articles are from the Tipton Conservative that year. Please note I try to reproduce these exactly as they appeared in the paper including punctuation and spelling.

Still Hoping for Peace. January 3, 1917: While very little progress has been made toward a settlement of the differences over which the European nations are at war, the fact that peace is being talked of is encouraging in itself. Germany insists that she is very much in earnest about desiring a cessation of hostilities, which would be generally welcomed by the people this country and all other neutral nations.

Your Flag and My Flag by Wilbur Nesbit February 7, 1917:

Your flag and my flag,
And how it flies today,
In your land and my land
And half a world away!
Rose-red and Blood-red
The stripes forever gleam;
Snow-white and soul-white—
The good forefathers' dream.
Sky-blue and true-blue with stars to
gleam aright—
The gloried guidon of the day; a shelter
through the night.

Your flag and my flag!
And O! how much it holds—
Your land and my land,
Secure within its folds!
Your heart and my heart
Beat quicker at the sight;
Sun-kissed and wind-tossed—
Red and blue and white.
The one flag – the great flag – the flag
for me and you,
Glorified and else beside – the red and
white and blue.

The Demand for Food March 28, 1917:

With the opening weeks of March the farm season begins in Iowa and the Mississippi valley states. What Iowa and the Mississippi valley states should have brought home to them is the need as well as the profit of utilizing every acre of available land.

Whatever the ultimate effect of the immediate effect is enormously to stimu-

late business. The demand for everything in the United States will grow greater during the present year. Prices, instead of returning to normal, will go higher. Food will be scarcer and dearer as the months pass. With all that can be raised in America there will be no surplus of any agricultural product a year from now.

The National City Bank of New York emphasizes the importance of farm activity in its review of the situation. Iowa and states similarly situated should recognize their duty as well as their opportunity as they read: "At the moment no other factor in the national situation is of greater importance than intelligent, precautionary preparations to secure the largest possible acreage of land under cultivation, and particularly in the food crops, during the coming season. Whether we are to have war or peace, the population must be fed, and if, unfortunately, weather conditions should be unfavorable, and the yield no better than last year's, the food situation next winter will be so much worse than it is now that we may take alarm while there is yet time to provide against the possibility."

The National City bank whose reports come authoritatively from all parts of the world, declares that the present crop year will end without reserves anywhere, the whole world will be dependent upon the 1917 crop, the Argentine wheat crop is already nearly a failure, and the corn crop is not much better. The Australian wheat crop, which, like that of South America, is harvested in our winter, is fifty million bushels short of last year. A semi-official report from France puts French wheat at 65 per cent as against 74 per cent last year largely because of want of fertilizer, the crop of Holland is unpromising, and that of England backward, while in the United States there is want of moisture in winter wheat states.

Here is the summing up: "With reserves exhausted, and the world situation what it is, there is no danger of overdoing production, for the largest possible crop in the country is certain to bring remunerative prices. It must be remembered that if the war ends at any time before the crop of 1918 is harvested there will be a great demand from central Europe on the crop of 1917."

Iowa should not contemplate this situation with thought only of the enormous prices for a bumper crop. And yet the Iowa farmer need not be unmindful of the profit ahead of him as he comes to his spring work. For once his duty and his reward run together.


The heavy snows have given Iowa every prospect of a favorable spring. Every

acre of available land in Iowa should be cultivated as never before and seeded and planted as never before. The world will need every bushel the Mississippi valley can produce, and that demand will be measured in prices never before realized for staple food products since men began to till the soil.

Now Taking Electronic Payments

Check out our two new ways to donate to Cedar County Historical Society on our website cedarcountyhistoricalsociety.com Scroll down on the home page and you will find a PayPal donation button. You can use this to donate to CCHS or pay your membership dues. Underneath it is a link to a shopping website where you can select your favorite place to shop and the rewards you earn will be donated to CCHS.

We can also take Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express at the museum and CCHS events. *(Card must be presented and able to scan.)*



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**Cedar County Historical
Society**

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Cedar County Historical Society
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Assistant.

Ancient Porch Trim by Sandy Green

What is the name of your architectural style?
You are shaped with curves, squares, arches
Holes, and bulb-topped mini supports.
I like looking at you.

They say, *Tear it off, use it for a pattern.*
You know the best way is get rid of the old
And start anew.

I say, *No! I like the old, the complex,*
The repaired posts that hold you in place.
I know you have cracks. I know you're crooked
And have seen lots of years of wear and tear.

They say, *It's wasted money; it might not work.*
But I am willing to take the risk.
I know you are inanimate; I know you can't re-
spond to me.

I too am old, cracked, complex,
Not always beautiful or even attractive.
But I am worth saving.

I will attempt to do the same for you.

Memorials

Mekkie Reth

Dr. Edward Speer

Robert Fleckhart

Cynthia Weaver

New Members

Debra Devore

Sonny Deke

Pat Barglof

Dennis Taylor

Jean Means

Terry Wiggins

Study the past if you would define the future.
-Confucius

What's
Been
Going
On



Mike Rekemeyer and Bob Davidson working the back 40)



Heavn's Callin'

On February 3, and May 5 Heavn's Callin' played and led a gospel sing along. Many favorites were played and sung such as "Are You Washed in the Blood", "I'll Fly Away", "In the Garden", "Just a Closer Walk With Thee", "Angel Band", "Swing Low Sweet Chariot", "Daddy Sang Bass", "The Old Country Church", and many more. If you weren't able to join us don't worry they will be coming back this fall. Watch the website, Facebook, and future newsletters for details.

**We Need
You!**

Mark your calendar for Saturday September 16. We are looking for volunteers for set up, clean up, traffic direction, greeters, kids crafts, running booths, and many more at our annul Day on the Prairie. Please call Tanya Demmel at 563.886.2899 or email at cchsmus@netins.net to express your interest.

Annual Picnic

It will be here before you know it. Plan on attending our annual summer picnic on:

Sunday, July 30th.

Join us for:
Great Food,
Great Conversation,
and an
Interesting Program.

Watch the next newsletter, website, and Facebook for more details.



This article has been reproduced per the request of a member wanting to read about Downey. Look for more Cedar County Settlement articles in the future.

History of Downey author unknown Cedar County Historical Review July 1981

James B. Berryhill, on September 27, 1852, entered a claim on the S. E. quarter of Section 30 of Springdale Twp. On January 18, 1853 he sold $\frac{1}{2}$ of the claim to Hugh D. Downey and the remaining half to Downey on September 21, 1853. The railroad line called Mississippi and Missouri (later the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific) passed through Mr. Downey's land in 1855 so he had a town laid out and gave it his name.

Edward Fowler, owner, with the help of Issac and John Heald, built a carpenter shop in 1856 on the ground that was later the town schoolyard. The shop had then been moved away. It was the first building in Downey. Mr. Wallace started a general store, but soon (1857) sold it to A.B. Cornwall. The same year Mr. Downey built four houses. Beech Downes opened a hotel in one house. He sold to E.W. Luster, who sold to Thomas Fern. Later this house was used for a private residence. In 1878 Harvey Watson was using it for a store. Mr. Downey's other three houses were used as residences by V.R. Cornwall, James Crozier and James R. Singleton. Also in 1857 John Loy built a house which was later owned by Edward Riley, Edward S. Fowler was appointed the first postmaster of Downey in April, 1857.

On June 29, 1869 Mr. Downey sold to A.B. Cornwall his 80 acres, including the land on which the village stood. In September of 1869 Mr. Cornwall had Martin G. Miller resurvey the site. Fifteen men owned lots.

They were Mr. Cornwall; the storekeeper, James Crozier; J.C. Evans, dealer in grain and blacksmith, D. Kinkaid; L.E. Elliott, livestock dealer; another livestock dealer, E.W. Luster; Wm. M. Wilcox, laborer; Wm. Brisbane, farmer; shoemaker, Jonas Hinchliffe and Wat. Sanders, laborer.

In 1875 N.W. McCain opened a drug store to which he added dry goods three years later. Also in 1875 James M. Elliott established a blacksmith and wagon shop. In 1878 residents Thomas Tidd and Frank Longerbeam were carpenters. Feltner and Work were dealers in lumber, grain and livestock. They used an elevator which had been built by Isaac Heald about 1868 and had been run by J.C. Evans.

Dr. McLaughlin and Dr. Gibbs came to Downey in 1877. Daniel O. Goodrich dealt in agricultural implements and timothy seed at that time.

The winter term of school in 1858-59 was taught by V.R. Cornwall in the old Fowler building. The next year school was held in a private home. In 1861 there were two teachers, Z. Broadhead and Mr. Bail teaching in separate houses. Miss Lizzie Ealey was the teacher in 1862. Charles O'Connor started teaching the following winter term, but his contract was terminated in February as he did not have a certificate to teach. At that time there were 37 pupils. In 1863 a school house was built. Eight years later this was rebuilt into a two story frame structure with three classrooms. By 1878, when John Waters was the teacher, only one room was used as there were only 35 pupils. Before 1910 a four room two story brick school house was erected. There were about 60 students at that time.

Rev. Howe of Iowa City (Presbyterian minister) held the first religious ceremonies in the old depot. In 1869 the Methodists under the leadership of Rev. Wm. Purvis with the help of John Work, Simon Barnes and J.J. Roberts erected a church on Broadway Street east of the school. When need arose for larger quar-

ters an addition was made on the west side and a new entrance was built. This building no longer stands.

Altho the corner stone of the first Baptist church bore the date July 4, 1869 the building was not completed until December of that year. The committee for its erection was A.B. Cornwall, Joseph King, C. F. Hoyt, J. M. Watson and the minister Rev. H. G. Sangster. In 1917 the church burned down. Before the end of the year a new brick building had been erected and it was almost paid for when it was completed. The 75th anniversary of the church was celebrated in 1940. The first deaconesses of the church, Bernice Brayton and Alice Coxon were elected in 1955. This church commemorated 100 years of service to the Downey community in August 1965. It is still active.

Sunday schools were held in the churches. Early superintendents were Henry Mosher of the Baptists and Daniel O. Goodrich of the Methodists.

The Downey Mutual Telephone Company was organized in March 1901. Connections were between Downey, Linn Grove and the adjacent territory. The expense was shared equally by the shareholders. Business was in charge of an elected board of members. In 1932 the Downey Mutual Telephone Co. was dissolved. In 1936 the West Branch Telephone Co. was notified to change the phone wires.

The Downey store, in which was located the post office and the telephone service, was purchased by Charles Jacobs from Perry Clifford in May 1922. Clifford had been postmaster. Now Jacobs was appointed to fill the position and he served until 1956, when the office was closed and all the papers in connection with the post office were sent to Washington, D.C. A letter was sent to all telephone subscribers stating that telephone service from Downey would be discontinued as Mr. and Mrs. Jacobs were retiring from the post office. Three neighboring telephone exchanges were taking over the Downey phones.

Extra Extra Extra

Do you have an idea or suggestion for the newsletter? Please send your contributions to:

Tanya@
cedarcounthistoricalociety.com

Please put "CCHS Newsletter" in the subject line.

All suggestions and feedback are welcome. Because of available space all contributions may not be immediately utilized.



In 1903 the Downey Savings Bank erected a substantial two story brick building which now houses the Downey Savings Bank Pottery. All the old businesses are gone from Downey, but new agri-businesses are taking their place. Today Downey is a pleasant residential village.

**NEWSLETTER
JAN FEB MAR
2017**

**HISTORICAL MUSEUM
and Prairie Village
1094 Hwy 38 N.**

**Mailing address
P O Box 254
TIPTON, IA 52772**

**AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM,
west of Tipton at the Cedar
County Fair Grounds**

**Open
Tuesday
10:00 AM to 7:00 PM
Thursday
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Saturday
10:00 AM to 2:00PM**

Telephone:

563-886-2899

E-mail: cchsmus@netins.net

Tanya Demmel
Museum Coordinator
Newsletter Editor

Tanya@
cedarcounthistoricalociety.com

To join the Cedar County Historical Society annual dues are \$22.00, plus \$3.00 if you want the Annual Review mailed to your address. Dues may be paid at the Historical Museum, 1094 Highway 38 N., Tipton. Or be mailed to: Attn: CCHS Membership P.O. Box 254, Tipton, IA 52772



WANTED

*Historic items from Sunbury to
feature with the grand opening
of the Sunbury Bank in the
Prairie Village.*

Volunteers!

*If you like to mingle with
people, help people learn,
have handyman skills, like to
garden, research, organize,
clean, or anything not listed
we have a project for you!*

The Museum will be closed on Tuesday, July 4th.

CCHS 2017 Sustaining Members

Five Star Members (\$200)

Barnhart's Custom Services LLC
Cedar County Cooperative
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Laughlin Design
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Clarence Chiropractic

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Daughters of the American Revolution
Niermeyer-Maurer Insurance
Teresa Horton Cornerstone R.E. Consultants
American Trust and Savings Bank

Cedar Ridge Dental

One Star Members (\$50)

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Moeller Tipton Tire & Auto
Kruse Konstruktion Inc.

Cedar Street Barber Shop
Mi Tierra Mexican Grill, Inc
Unity Point Health

Cedar County Historical Society owes special thanks to our sustaining members for their help in allowing us to continue to save and protect the history of Cedar County. Please remember to thank these businesses and professionals for their contributions. To become a sustaining member please contact Membership Secretary, at PO Box 254, Tipton, IA 52772.

We're on the Web!

[http://
cedarcounthistoricalociety.webs.com/](http://cedarcounthistoricalociety.webs.com/)