





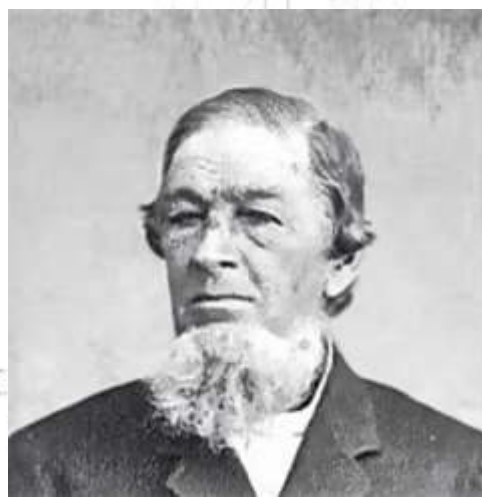
# CHEROKEE'S FIRST settlers

These eight men were among the first to call Cherokee County their home. Several arrived in 1856 as members of the Milford Western Emigration Society from Milford, Massachusetts, others arrived on their own accord. In 1895, what remained of the original settlers gathered for a reunion.



**Robert Perry (1832-1888)**

Born in Ireland, Robert married Catherine McDermott before coming to Cherokee County. He is believed to be the first person of European descent to set foot in the county and even served as sheriff for a time.



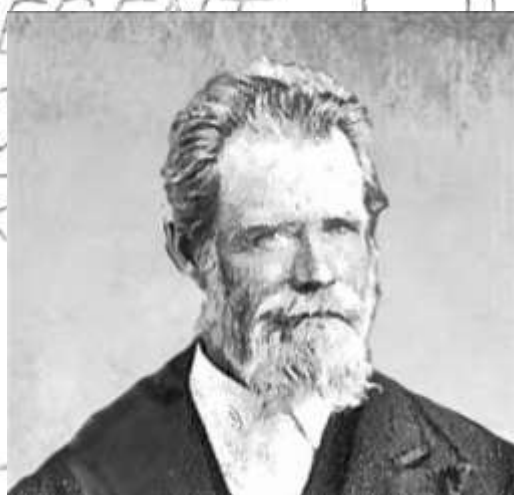
**Albert Hayes (1811-1888)**

Albert married Mary E. Comings before traveling to Cherokee via train then wagon. They stopped in Ft. Dodge to restock supplies. After arriving here, he was elected as the county coroner.



**Carlton Corbett (1821-1914)**

Mr. and Mrs. Corbett (Rosabella Cummings) were the first couple married in the county. Before being elected as the first prosecuting attorney in the county, he went to CA with gold rush fever.



**James A. Brown (1820-1902)**

Before leaving Rhode Island, James married Louisa S. Sholes. His daughter was the first child of European descent born here. He also served as the Justice of the Peace.



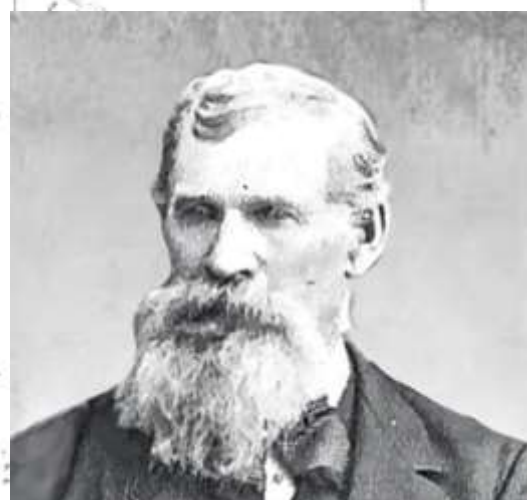
Robert Perry      A. Haynes      C. Corbett      Silas Parkhurst  
J. A. Brown      G. W. Leborveau      A. Phipps      G. W. Banister

SETTLERS OF CHEROKEE COUNTY—1856  
Taken at Reunion About 1895. Only G. W. Banister Survives.



**Silas Parkhurst (1815-1910)**

Prior to moving here, he married Izanna Fisk, worked as a boot and shoemaker, and served in the Civil War. Once in Cherokee, he opened a shoe shop.



**George W. Lebourveau (1827-1894)**

Before being elected as the first mayor of New Cherokee, George married Sarah J. Cooke and served in the Seventh Iowa Calvary.



**Albert Phipps (1820-1901)**

Orphaned at the age of 6, Albert apprenticed as a shoemaker before leaving MA. He married Martha Littlefield prior to fighting in the Civil War. At one point, he served as the entire Board of Supervisors in Cherokee.



**George W. Banister (1834-1923)**

Born in Ohio, George married Margaret Allison before joining the Sixth Iowa Cavalry to fight on the Western Frontier. He was the last survivor of the 1856 settlers group after serving as an elected judge as two terms as sheriff.



These signs were made possible with support from the Cherokee Area Archives, Cherokee county conservation board, Cherokee historic Preservation commission, Cherokee County Legacy Foundation, and the City of Cherokee. Scan the QR code for more Cherokee history.



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# Prairie Pioneers



Photo of the Phipps Family

Left to right back row: Arthur, Frank, Henry, Nate, Luther, John.

Front row: Mattie Prescott, Adeline Burroughs, Albert Phipps, Martha Phipps and Annie Wakefield.

## Phipps family & Homestead

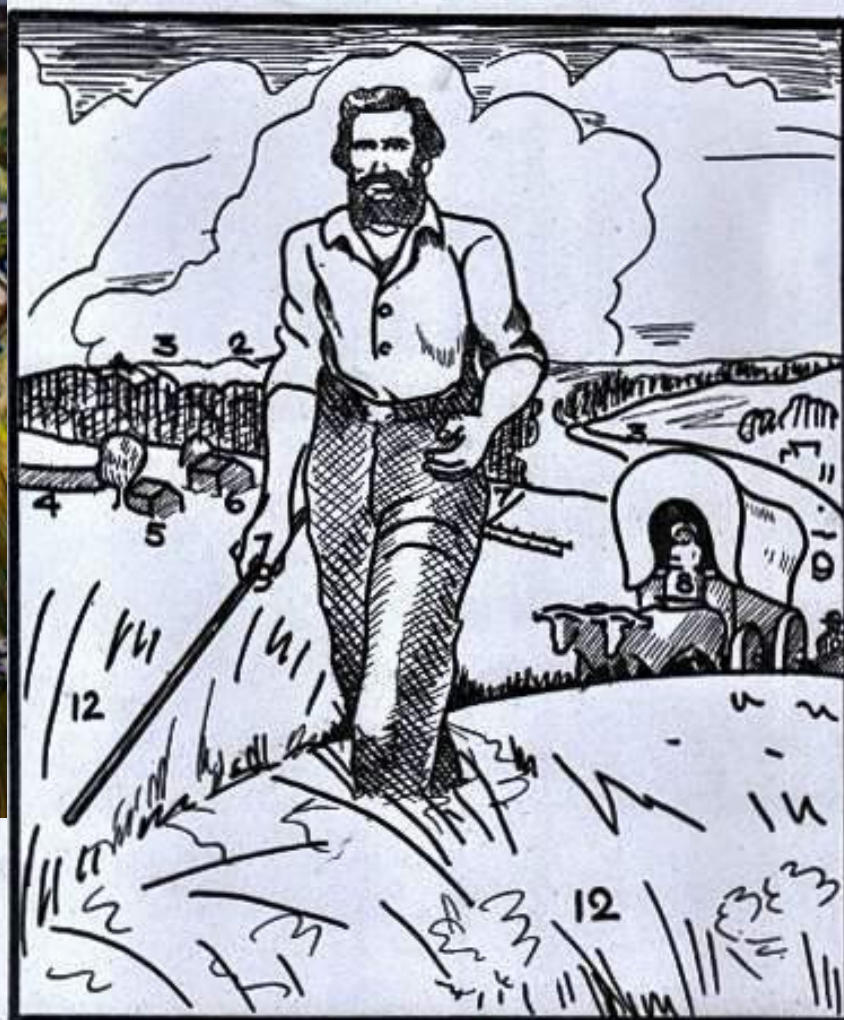
The Milford Western Emigration Society left their homes in Milford, MA in spring of 1856. Among the group starting the trek across the country were Albert Phipps, his wife Martha (Littlefield) Phipps, and their children Luther, John, Adeline, Henry and baby Frank. According to family records, the wagon train journey took four months before reaching Cherokee County. Upon arrival, the colonists chose land by lottery. The elder Phipps and his family drew land of 100 acres or more bordering the Little Sioux River. They built a cabin, thought to have been located southeast of this current location, near the river, and lived in it for about 10 years until they built the frame farmhouse in 1866 at this location. The Phipps homestead was designated a Century Farm in 1976.



Photo of the farm from the 1940s or 1950s



Diagram of Prairie Pioneer



- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. The Pioneer (John F. Potter).               | 7. Twiford Dam and Flume.            |
| 2. Indian Mound.                               | 8. "Aunt Mary" Potter.               |
| 3. Military Road. Stone City to Fort Snelling. | 9. The Fort across the Little Sioux. |
| 4. Black-house and Stockade.                   | 10. Chas. A. Hillen.                 |
| 5. Twiford House.                              | 11. Pennsylvania Load-pole Wagons.   |
| 6. Phipps House and Barn.                      | 12. Original Prairie Vegetation.     |

## "THE PRAIRIE PIONEER"

This mural, commissioned in 1936, was painted by Helen Johnson Hinrichsen of Davenport, IA. It depicts the arrival of pioneer John Potter by wagon train at Old Cherokee in 1868. Also depicted in the painting is his wife "Aunt Mary Potter" and 19 year-old Charles Stiles. The painting highlights significant structures and features on the landscape when John Potter arrived. Included in the painting is the "Phipps House and Barn" (#6 in the diagram). Hinrichsen is best known for her association with Grant Wood's Stone City Art Colony and for her work as

a graduate of and a teacher at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. This painting was located at the Masonic Temple from 1937 until it was moved to its current location in the Cherokee County courthouse.



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# Old White Mill

## Old white mill

In 1871, J. B. Bliss built a flour mill that ran on water power on the west bank of the Little Sioux River where a wagon road, now Spruce St, crossed an iron bridge NE of Cherokee. The mill stones were hauled by oxen from Denison, IA. The mill, at first known as Cherokee Mills, would later be referred to as the "Old White Mill." In 1887, Charles Beckwith, who had purchased the mill in 1882, converted it to full "roller system" which brought the mill up to a 50 barrel capacity. At a later date, P.F. Fassler erected a steam powered flour mill in New Cherokee and the Old White Mill was abandoned, to be removed in 1906. When wheat ceased to be grown in the area, the steam mill was also abandoned. The great flood of 1891 washed out the dam. The Old White Mill was torn down in the early 1920s.



## Spruce St Bridge

This site is the location of the first bridge in Cherokee County. The original bridge, built in 1859 on Spruce St, was destroyed in a flood. The metal bridge in the photo was known for many years as the "Orange Bridge" because of its original color.



This 1904 map shows where the Old White Mill and Spruce St Bridge were located right next to each other on the Little Sioux River. In the image to the right you can see the mill behind the bridge.



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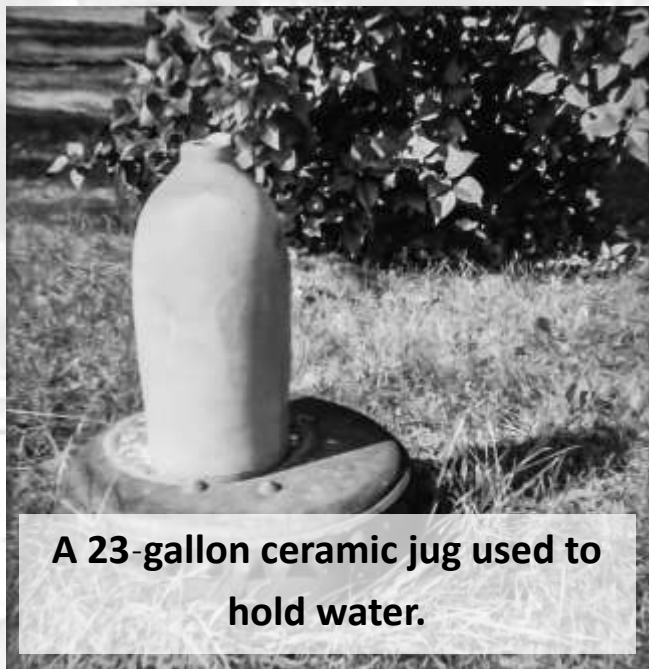


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# Healing Waters

The history of the Fountain House and magnetic waters began in 1879 with George Satterlee and his search for coal with temporary mineral rights on N. T. Burrough's land and while digging struck a spring that gushed artesian waters. While unclogging a pipe, he discovered that the water had magnetic properties. After locals visited to drink these magnetic waters, testimonials began to emerge of its healing powers. To stop the freeloaders from taking water, Satterlee built a one room building around the well and began selling the water for 35 cents a gallon. People came from miles



A 23-gallon ceramic jug used to hold water.

around as word of the water's curative properties spread. The most impressive building near the magnetic waters opened on July 4, 1881, the three story Fountain House.



The Fountain House was situated just east of the junction of Magnetic, Saratoga, and Park Avenues.

The spa was operated by Dr. R. Stoddard Gee and the hotel was managed by G. D. Streeter, who came from Wisconsin. The grounds were landscaped with evergreens, flowers, walking & driving paths. Soon, additions were added to the Fountain House so that ultimately it had 52 rooms, offered 62 different baths, and could accommodate over 100 patients at a time. It became the go-to location for banquets & events. Throughout the decade of the 1880's, it is said that 200 to 300 people a day would visit the Fountain House. The Illinois Central advertised excursion rates from Chicago, Dubuque, and Sioux City. Mr. Burroughs purchased a large covered wagon with open sides and multiple seats drawn by a team of four horses that would meet every train that came to town and transport the visitors to the spa.

## N. T. Burroughs

This land was owned by N. T. Burroughs who came to Cherokee in 1870. After Satterlee's discovery of "healing waters", he platted an annex to the city called "Magnetic Addition" where the Fountain House was built. Burroughs was already a successful businessman when he came to Cherokee, having business interests in multiple states. At one point he owned the current location of the Lewis Hotel and the 600 acres that became the Mental Health Institute.



## Dr. R. Stoddard Gee

Brought in from Dubuque by N. T. Burroughs, Dr. Gee was the physician who managed the therapeutic uses of the water. When he departed in the mid-1880s, the Fountain House temporarily closed.



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# Fountain house events and entertainment

## Off to the races

The grounds of the Fountain House had walking and driving paths as well as beautiful landscaping that consisted of evergreens and flowers. The lake was graded and deepened to accommodate overflow from the well and provide easy access to the water's



Racetrack and grandstand, which were located southeast of Magnetic Lake

edge. Also on the property, N. T. Burroughs built a racetrack, stables, and a grandstand southeast of the lake where horse, harness, bicycle, and foot races were held. The main feature, the track, was 60 feet wide and a half mile long. Guests of the Fountain House would often bring their own horses to train for the season. They enjoyed the benefits of the spa and the entertainment. The Fountain House temporarily closed in the mid-1880's when Dr. Gee left, with the resort

portion opening back up in 1889. The stables and grandstands were used by the Cherokee Horsemen's Association and continued to draw crowds for reunions, gatherings, holidays, and the once popular Chautauqua.

## chautauqua



The Chautauqua platform and campgrounds were part of the Fountain House grounds. What is Chautauqua? It was a movement that began in the mid-1800's that focused on people gathering for both social and educational events.

Chautauqua's lasted several days, some up to 10, and consisted of speakers on varying topics, concerts by violinists and opera singers, and other events with a goal of self-improvement and civic involvement. In 1907, Governor Hoch opened the event held at the end of June-beginning of July.

## Program for July 4th

At Cherokee, Iowa

Please retain this program as a guide throughout the day. You will miss something if you do not have a program.

- 9:00 a. m. Band concert, T. Fred Henry's band, at the corner of Main and Second streets.
- 9:30 a. m. Parade. Assembles on Main and Sixth streets, proceeds east to Roosevelt, north on Roosevelt to Fountain, west on Fountain to Euclid, south on Euclid and Union to Willow, west on Willow to Fifth.
- 10:35 a. m. Address of welcome to returned men by Mayor Wm. Mulvaney, at corner of Main and Second streets.
- 11:00 a. m. Ball game at Fountain House grounds: Des Moines and Sioux City teams of the Western League. The Cherokee and Alta bands will furnish music at the grounds.
- 11:00 a. m. Band concert, T. Fred Henry's band, at the corner of Main and Second streets.
- 11:15 a. m. Free vaudeville acts on the two Main street stands.
- 12:40 p. m. Or immediately after the conclusion of the ball game, Lieut. Hopkins will make his first aeroplane flight, ascending from the Fountain House grounds.
- 1:30 p. m. Band concerts on Main street by the Alta band, T. Fred Henry's band and Cherokee Concert band.
- 1:45 p. m. In Memoriam. Promptly at 1:45 church bells will toll and taps will be sounded. That will be your signal to enter into a moment of silence and meditation. We'll pay a silent tribute to the fallen heroes of the World war. Talking and all activities will pause for a moment.
- 2:00 p. m. Free vaudeville acts—Main and Second street stands.
- 2:30 p. m. Military sports and races on Main street between Second and Fourth streets.
- 3:30 p. m. Baseball at Fountain House grounds. Des Moines and Sioux City Western League teams.
- 8:30 p. m. Band concert by T. Fred Henry's band at the corner of Main and Second streets.
- 5:15 p. m. Aviation exhibition by Lieut. Hopkins at the Fountain House grounds.
- 7:00 p. m. Band concerts by the T. Fred Henry, Alta and Cherokee bands.
- 7:30 p. m. Free vaudeville attractions on the Main street stands.
- 9:00 p. m. Street dancing on the pavement, FREE and continuing until 12 o'clock, mid-night.
- 9:30 p. m. Dancing at the armory.
- 10:00 p. m. Fire works at Fountain House grounds with band music.

THE AVIATION EXHIBITIONS ARE FREE.

Exert from a 1919 newspaper showing the 4th of July events on the Fountain House property.



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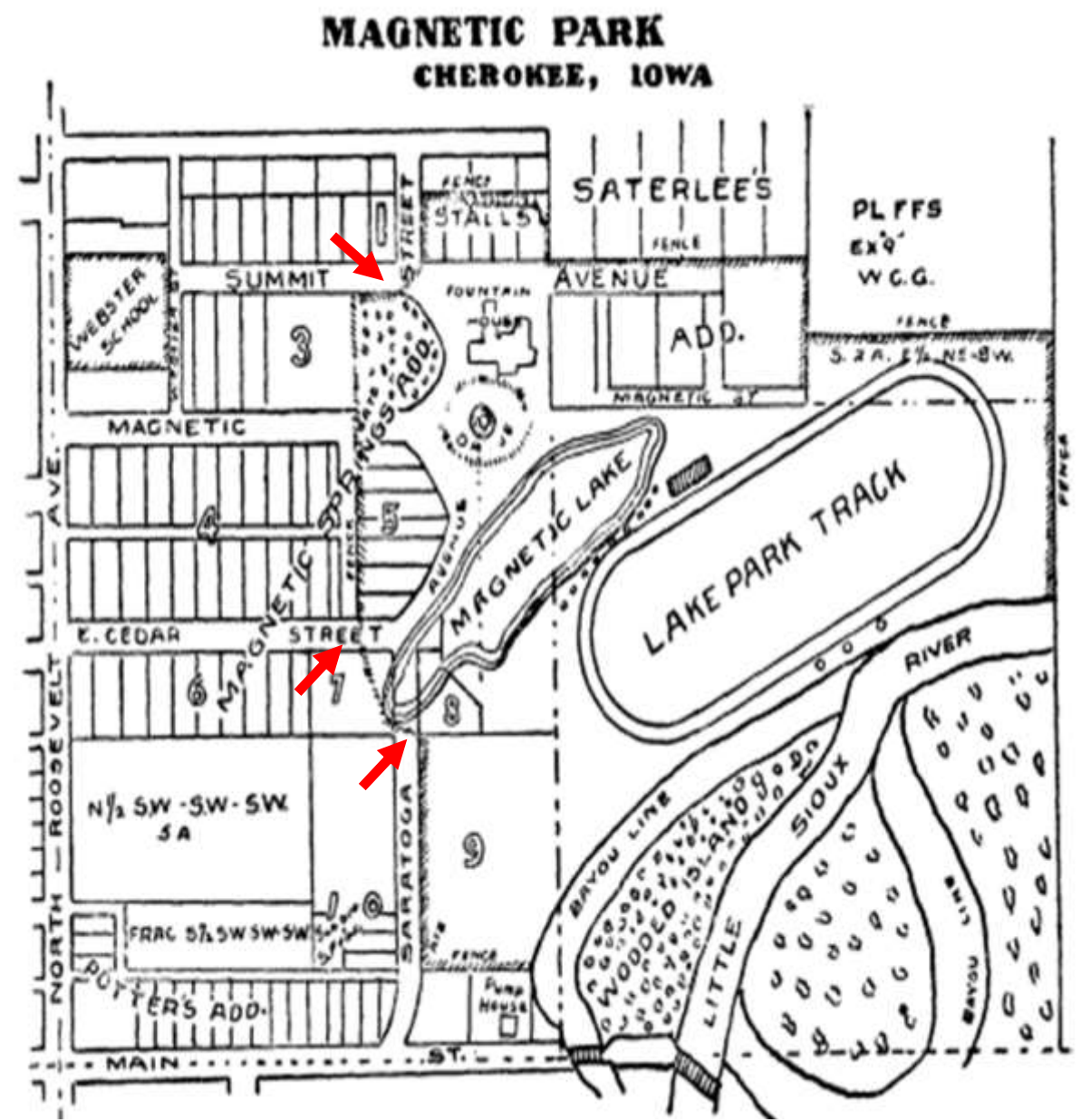
# At odds: How Saratoga avenue moved

In 1890, the Fountain House temporarily closed and N. T. Burroughs begins to pasture 500-600 head of sheep on the grounds. He fenced over the streets he plotted in the Magnetic Addition in order to keep his sheep on the grounds. While away on a business trip in 1902, E. F. Wilkie, a city councilman, and others, cut the fences to open the streets for use and the sheep scattered. Burroughs went



This 1907 map shows the current location of Saratoga Ave, which is located further west (left) than in the other map.

on to sue the City of Cherokee for cutting the fences and won. Cherokee appealed to the Iowa Supreme Court and the ruling was reversed in 1906. Burroughs intended to give the land to the City of Cherokee as Burroughs Park one day and as a result of this lawsuit, ended up changing his mind.



The "grass-like" marks on this 1904 map represent fencing. Red arrows point to a couple of streets where fences were cut.

In 1907, Burroughs approached the Mayor and City Council with a proposal asking if they would "cede to me all of the streets, avenues, and alleys in Burroughs' Magnetic Springs addition" as well as in Satterlee addition, then he'd trade them a strip of land and install a street, allowing the Council to judge the "passability" of the sixty foot wide strip. On November 26, 1907 an ordinance was passed to vacate the 1904 section of Saratoga Ave. The roadway put in place by N. T. Burroughs was then accepted as the new location of Saratoga, the street that we drive up and down today.

By walking around Magnetic Lake on this trail (red), you are walking down part of the old Saratoga Ave. The intersection is marked on the map by the red arrow.



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# The Fall of the Fountain House

## “THE WATER HAS LOST ITS KICK”

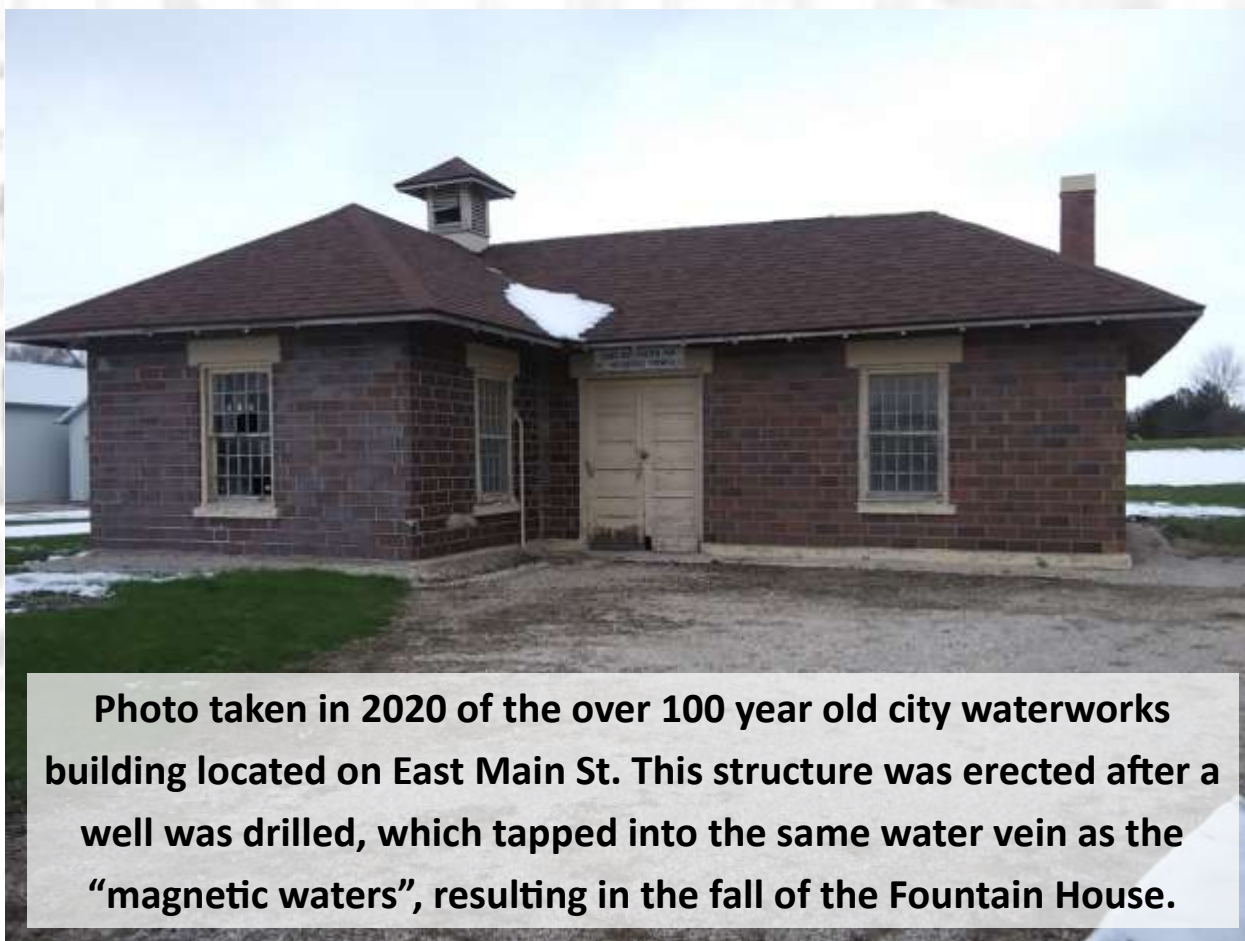


Photo taken in 2020 of the over 100 year old city waterworks building located on East Main St. This structure was erected after a well was drilled, which tapped into the same water vein as the “magnetic waters”, resulting in the fall of the Fountain House.

The downfall of the Fountain House came in late 1880’s. Dr. Gee had departed after a scandalous divorce and in 1889 the City of Cherokee formed the Cherokee Water Works to provide water to the city’s residents. The city drilled a 200 foot well on East Main Street that tapped into the same vein of water that supplied the Fountain House. As a result, the flow of water to the Fountain House was greatly diminished and a newspaper article stated “the water has lost its kick”!! Burroughs was not pleased with the City. In 1892, The Keeley Institute operated in the Fountain House providing cures for smoking and alcoholism. By 1898, Dr. Charles O. Seaman temporarily operated his cancer sanatorium there before moving one block west on Magnetic Avenue.

## Disassembling the fountain house

Due to litigation with the City of Cherokee, N. T. Burroughs did not gift this land to the City as he had initially planned, but ended up selling the buildings and ground to George S. Jones in 1915. Jones began the process of changing some of the Fountain House structure into a dairy barn. Grounds that were once home to a race track, 10-day Chautauquas, and various other gatherings were changed into pasture land and field. The race track was filled in to make the land tillable. In 1928, John Ogilvy purchased 60 acres from the Jones Estate. By 1934, the Fountain House structures were completely removed. Some items like lumber from the Fountain House were repurposed into different buildings and a marble table top was brought into John Ogilvy’s home. John turned the center section of the Fountain House into a duplex and moved it to Saratoga Avenue.



This is believed to be the center section of the Fountain House, which was relocated after John Ogilvy purchased the land and tore down the buildings. Wood from the parts torn down were used to build John’s barn and outbuildings at this location. (Notes from this photo written by Muggy Ogilvy Rhodes.)

Jack and Muggy Ogilvy lived in the duplex until 1951. By the mid-1970s, land had transferred to Jack and Marge Ogilvy. After Jack’s death, the land transfers to Thomas and Phyllis Jenness. Before the City of Cherokee owns the property in 2019 with the assistance of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, various land transfers happened between the Jenness, Doherty, and Lundquist families as well as various estates. It may not have become Burroughs Park, but it did eventually become a park.



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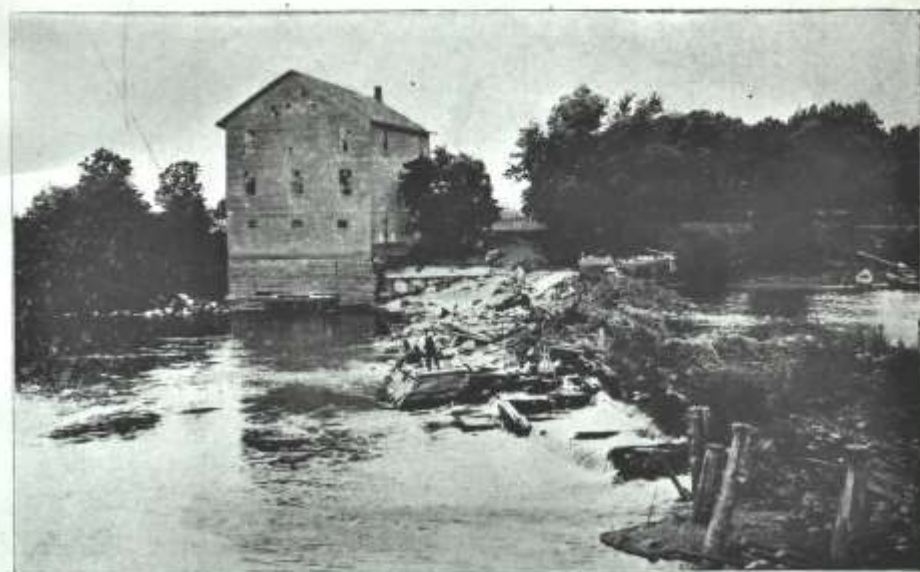
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# Reading, writing, Arithmetic, and History

## Millstones

### FORMAL DEDICATION SITE OF THE OLD WHITE MILL



"When thoughts turn back, as oft they will, We've things to remember about The Old White Mill"

THAT cherished memories which still linger from the olden days may be preserved ere they have passed forever, the Webster School of Cherokee has conceived the idea of permanently marking the site of this historic spot, using for the marker the original millstones, which have been set in place and mounted with a bronze tablet, with the kind co-operation of the Holden Monument Company. Upon the tablet is this legend:

"These Millstones, hauled from Denison by oxen, mark the site of the old White Mill, built in 1871, by J. B. Bliss. Marked by Webster School in 1926."

The dedication ceremony will take place at the site at 3:00 o'clock P. M. on Tuesday, October 19th, 1926, with the following program:

Early History .....	Dr. P. B. Cleaves
Old Settlers .....	Mrs. J. C. Wilson
Recitation .....	Kathryn Allen
Dedication .....	Bobby Coon
The Significance .....	Rev. N. E. Lambly

**Webster School Invites You to Attend This Service.**

In 1871, J. B. Bliss built a flour mill that ran on water power on the west bank of the Little Sioux River where a wagon road, now Spruce Street, crossed an iron bridge NE of Cherokee. The millstones were hauled by oxen from Denison, IA. The mill, at first known as Cherokee Mills, would later be referred to as the "Old White Mill." Some time after 1887, P.F. Fassler erected a steam powered flour mill in New Cherokee and the Old White Mill was abandoned, to be removed in 1906. When wheat ceased to be grown in the area, the steam mill was also abandoned. The great flood of 1891 washed out the dam and in the early 1920s, the Old White Mill was torn down. These millstones, though there is disagreement as to whether they are from the White Mill, were placed in this location and are like those that would have been used in the "Old White Mill". Students held a dedication in 1926 for the mill.

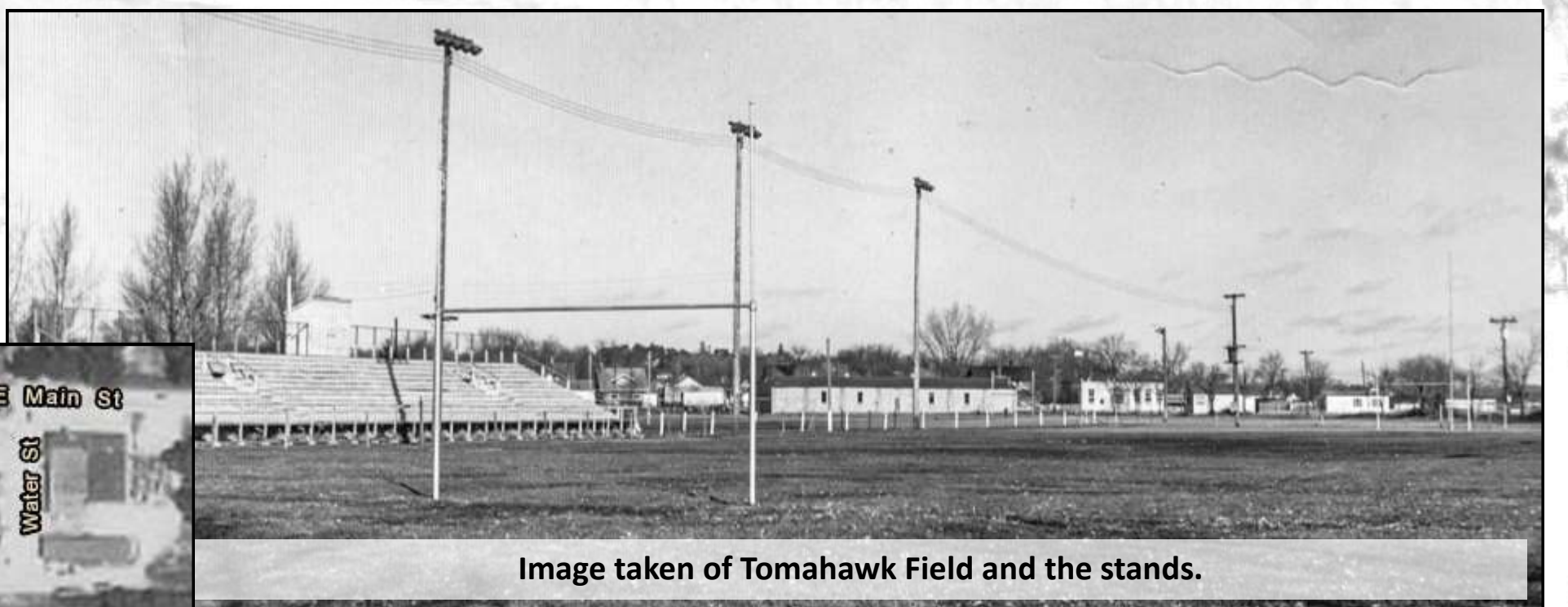


Image taken of Tomahawk Field and the stands.

## Tomahawk Field & Lincoln School

Dedicated in 1926, the field between you and the river (to the east) was named "Tomahawk Park" by Miss Peebles, one of the teachers in the local school system. Lincoln Elementary School made its debut in 1961, though it closed in 1984 due to frequent flooding and declining enrollment. This location was chosen due to its ability to expand in the future if needed. In fact, the building was held onto in case enrollment were to increase. The building was razed in 1993.



Aerial photo from the 1970s.



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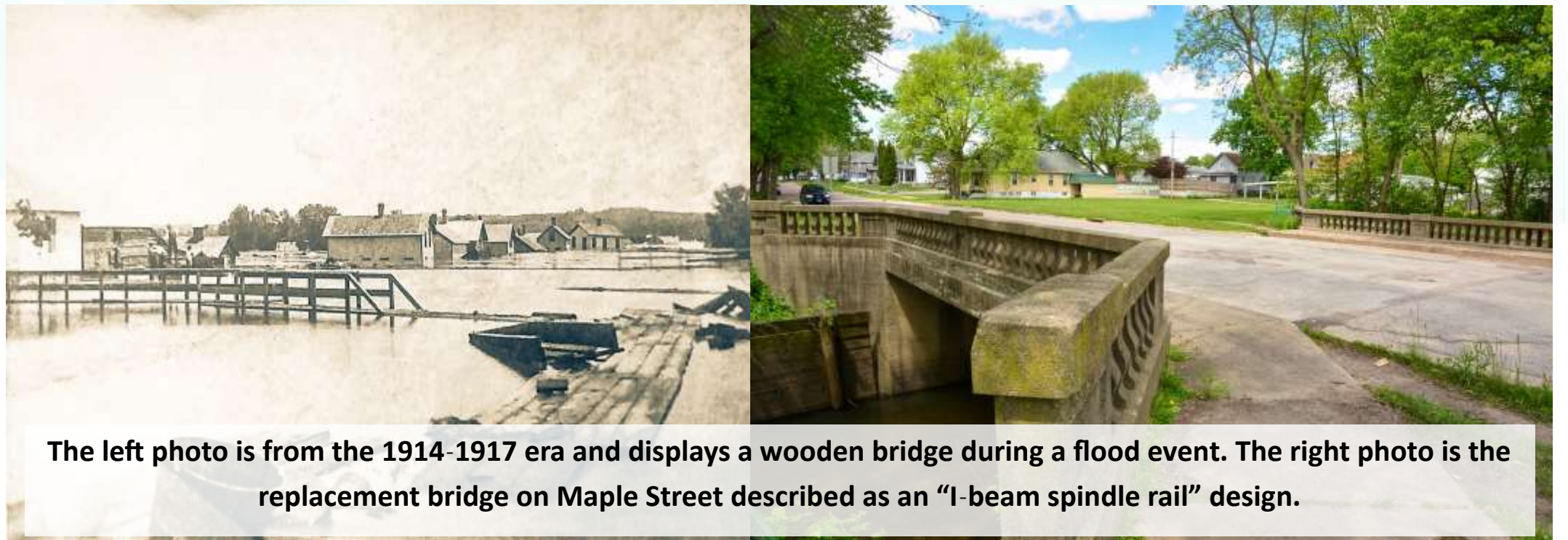
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# Little Sioux Bridges over Troubled Waters

Cherokee's geography, history, and development have been defined by the Little Sioux River and the two important streams running through it. Mill Creek runs north of Old Cherokee and Railroad Creek runs through the center of New Cherokee. Constructed over Railroad Creek following the major flood of 1891, were five wooden

bridges east of downtown. Regular flooding shortened the lives for the wooden bridges and each were replaced with concrete bridges between 1914 and 1917, according to newspaper accounts. The new structures were built along the routes of Union Street, E. Willow Street, Euclid Avenue., E. Main Street and E. Maple Street. Koss Construction Co. from Des Moines was the successful bidder for the new "I-beam spindle rail" bridges.



The left photo is from the 1914-1917 era and displays a wooden bridge during a flood event. The right photo is the replacement bridge on Maple Street described as an "I-beam spindle rail" design.



## "THE GREAT FLOOD"

Cherokee has suffered through many floods. The flood of 1891 is remembered as one of the most disastrous floods in the history of Cherokee County. The spring and early summer of that year were abnormally dry, but on June 23<sup>rd</sup> the rain and the accompanying electrical storm caused Railroad Creek to flood. Fireman George Thompson happened to wake up at about 3:00 a.m. and seeing the water, awakened Fireman Owen Faus and together they rang the fire bell warning the Cherokee residents of the danger. When it looked like Railroad Creek had crested at about 7:00 a.m. on the morning of June 24<sup>th</sup>, it started to rain again causing the Little Sioux River to flood. The river rose 6 feet in one hour. In all, rising 30 feet in five hours. Albert Phipps, who had been recording high water marks on his land for thirty years, reported that this flood was 6 feet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches higher than ever before. The entire Little Sioux Valley was a raging river with the water being two miles or more across in some places. Governor Horace Boies responded to a request for aid by personally visiting the City and bringing supplies. It was estimated that 50 houses were washed away along with out buildings. Train tracks were washed out and as well as all the bridges on Railroad Creek, Mill Creek, Gray Creek, and Rock Creek. The only two wagon bridges over the Little Sioux still standing where Scurlock Bridge, six miles south, and the river bridge east of Larrabee.

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The Steamboat "City of Cherokee" landing in Washta during the great flood of 1891. This boat was built and owned by C.A. Stiles, Thomas McCulla, Tom Sims, and Frank Millard. The man standing on the bow is Top Sims who acted as the engineer. Each summer the boat was hauled overland by Ben Crowl's dray team to Arnold's Park, a week's job. (Cherokee Area Archives)



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# green neighborhoods to greenspace

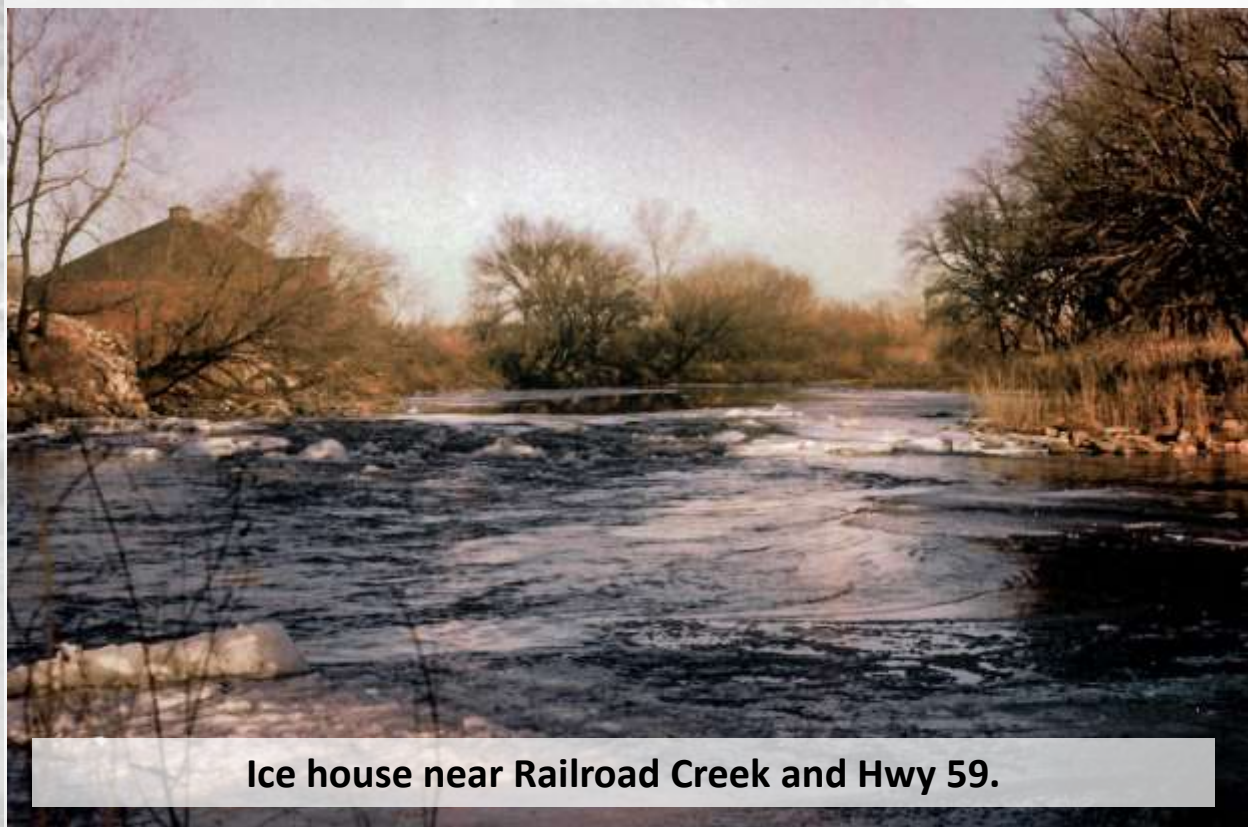
Various flood events throughout the years have changed the landscape dramatically. Turn and look all around you. Can you believe that this spot was once in a bustling neighborhood full of houses and children playing in the street? Since that time, the chatter of neighbors has turned into the silence of an area that has been repurposed into a greenspace.

## Welcome to the neighborhood

On July 18, 1993, the Little Sioux River poured into the streets of Cherokee, flooding homes and businesses, causing thousands of dollars' worth of



Flooding in the 1950s.



Ice house near Railroad Creek and Hwy 59.

damage. Volunteers by the hundreds turned out to help their neighbors try to hold back the rising water. Basements filled with water that was four feet above the street level in some areas. Over 150 homes in a 48-block area were touched by the disaster. Eventually, over \$8 million in state and federal money would be available to help residents either move or take precautions to prevent a repeat of the damages. Over 200 properties were identified in a target zone, which encompassed nearly 20 city blocks, containing the homes and businesses most affected by the flooding. Many houses were physically moved to Colony Drive, other empty lots, or razed. This area was then turned into a greenspace with walking paths, picnic areas, and a horse arena.

## 115 East Locust Street

There was a house near here that was once owned by George & Sarah Lebourveau. Their house, located at 115 East Locust Street, was razed due to the flood damage it received from the Railroad Creek flood in 2013. It had been deemed possibly eligible for the National Historic Register due to its association with significant events, association with lives of significant persons, and its distinctive architectural characteristics. This house was

constructed or possibly relocated to this location on Locust Street in 1869 as the residence for George and Sarah Lebourveau. George was a member of the Milford

Western Emigration Society and was among the earliest pioneers in Cherokee arriving in 1856. In 1857, Mr. Lebourveau was elected Cherokee County Treasurer and later was a Cherokee County Supervisor. In 1873, he was elected Mayor of Cherokee.



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# The Source of The Magnetic Spring



An 1880's view of the Fountain House from its location on the north side of Magnetic Lake. The magnetic well was on the right of the photo near the lake.

In 1879 George Satterlee leased the mineral rights on this land from N. T. Burroughs, a successful Cherokee businessman and landowner. Satterlee thought there was a large vein of coal underground here. He acquired mining tools and began exploration. To his dismay, he did not discover any coal; however, on June 28, 1879 he struck an artesian well which gushed water with highly magnetic qualities. Townspeople visited the site in great numbers to obtain the water as it was believed that it could remedy many diseases and afflictions. Newspaper articles called the find "more valuable than a gold mine."



Remnant of the artesian well.

It was later described by author Thomas McCulla in 1914, who wrote as follows:

*"It is the finest and most healthful of any water possibly to be found, as unlike other mineral waters this has no bad taste, but gushes up cold and sweet and pure from the caverns of the earth. It is strongly magnetized and is semi-soft. A pocket knife, pen or nail is readily magnetized by coming in contact with it for a few minutes. That this property in the water is highly beneficial to the human system has been proven years ago; especially in cases of rheumatism and diseases of the nervous system does it work wonderful cures."*

In 1880, Burroughs noticed the growing interest in the well and bought out Satterlee's lease. He then began construction of the three-story Fountain House and Spa. It was very popular, with patients and visitors coming from miles around. The downfall of the Fountain House came in 1889 when the City of Cherokee formed the Cherokee Water Works to provide water for its residents. The city drilled a 200 foot well on E. Main Street that tapped into the same vein of water that supplied the Fountain House. As result, the flow of water to the Fountain House was greatly diminished. As stated in a newspaper article - "the water has lost its kick!"



An existing section of the gate at the NE corner of Park and Saratoga Avenues.



These signs were made possible with support from the Cherokee Area Archives, Cherokee county conservation board, Cherokee historic Preservation commission, Cherokee County Legacy Foundation, and the City of Cherokee. Scan the QR code for more Cherokee history.



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