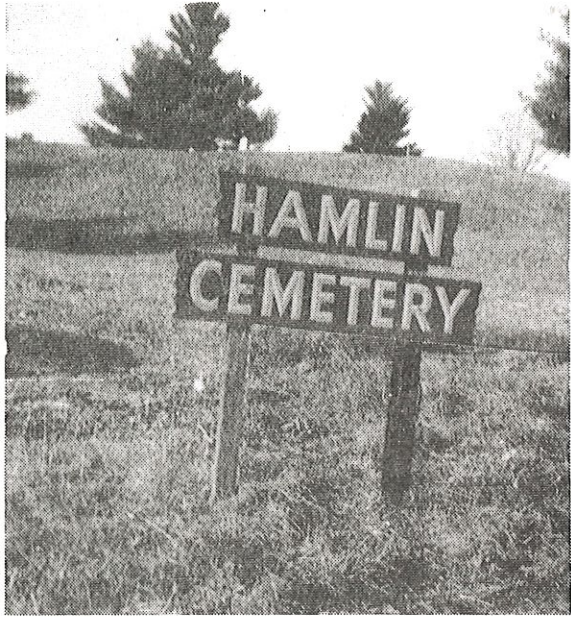
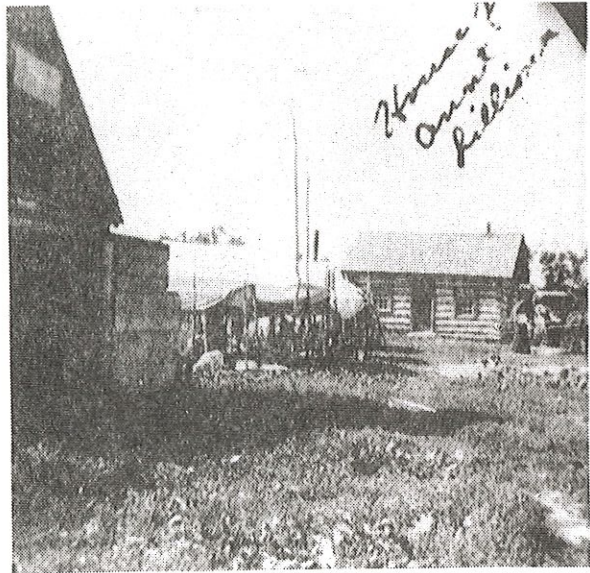




Above: Hamlin School, year 1938, out for recess. Bob Kelly, Rob. Holte, Helen Anderson, Ramona Goss, Don Van Pelt, Lucille Larson, Goodwin Alf.



Upper Right: Hamlin Cemetery, 1974.



Right: Early home of Wilbur and Lillian Rhodes in Hamlin area. Location unknown.



Early pioneers - Albion township. Some Civil War veterans and one of the Confederate Army. Taken in front of old Mercantile store, 1900 - now Nelson's Cash Market. Veterans of 1900 Civil War. Back Row: Tomleson, St. Clair Jones, Jimmy Grant, Tom McKernery, Brat Berg, Gibson, Hulet (of Confederate Army), Milo Gibson, Unknown. Right to Left: Brindelsson, Sever Neckleson, Dickson Cooper, Pratt, John Springer, Knute Holton, Unknown.

THE HAMLIN CEMETERY

A mark of an early settlement is a cemetery overgrown with weeds and brush, old markers with names strange to present generations though familiar in the area decades ago. Not so at Hamlin. The actual plot has been tidy for years due to the efforts of a public spirited resident and a few families. Outlying areas of the tract has undergone a facelifting this summer and fall.

Twelve mile station and Hamlin community story comes early in this book and these few pages concern the remaining "mark" of the pioneer settlement. Trade activities and school are gone, only the cemetery, atop the familiar knoll remains.

Many of you may know that, according to the markers, first interment was that of Thankfull Jones, wife of Wm. Jones, in February, 1866. There could be doubt as to this being the first burial. The settlement was then in its 8th year and with the high mortality rates of those years, one can easily believe a death must have occurred prior to that date. Also, it was the only burial place within a dozen miles in any direction for several years.

The plot is located on the very northwest corner of the original Rice farm and it seems the family allowed burials there possibly because the two acre space was unsuitable for agricultural purposes. County records show several cemetery societies had been registered just after the Civil War but there is no mention of Hamlin until 1902 and then merely an action by the Rice heirs setting the land aside for the purpose it had been used for years. There is no word or evidence the family ever exacted a charge at any time.

Be that as it may, burials continued after 1866 according to the many markers. No record exists of any caretaker and one assumes family members in the community cared for their individual graves. Many are unmarked and when death removed nearest kin all identity was lost, a frequent happening.

A plot of the area seems to have been made some time during the early 1900's and for some years Fred Bowers had charge of the cemetery and made the entries. An old-timer remembers a growth of brush covered the whole area, except for a number of graves on the level top. A practice of presenting a petition at the annual town meeting resulted in small appropriation for several years. Minor Goss, owner of the old Rice farm (1920-1956) remembers being paid fifteen dollars for two mowings per year. A team and mower were limited as to coverage, however.

But the situation changed, Tom Dean, a long time member of the Hamlin community, felt something could and should be done. Members of his family and many friends were buried on the hill, then he felt a proper respect was due the twelve Civil War veterans resting there.

He assumed an active interest in the early forties, organized the Hamlin Cemetery Association in 1948 and began a campaign for perpetual care funds that reached a great number of descendants. Results were good, reports at the County Judge's office show a continual growth in funds and the care provided by Dean reached nearly all burials. Many readers will remember Tom's most unusual fund raising promotion - the Hamlin Cemetery Benefit Dance held annually for several years at the Eleva log cabin.

Time moves on. Tom grew older and passed the responsibility unto his nephew, George Young of Eau Claire, present secretary, who, together with Florence Teeple Beals of La Crosse, have been instrumental in completing a general renovation and improvement this year.

It all began with erection of a cemetery sign, for which funds were solicited by Mrs. Beals. Many were interested, dollars kept rolling in and the two broadened their plans. Services of a Green Thumb crew were obtained, all brush was cut and burned, trees were trimmed and thinned and Mr. Young's last improvement was the widening of the south drive.

A year previously, the Town Board of Albion had moved the town road and its hazardous junction with C.T. "V" from west of the cemetery to the east side as a safety measure. Land lying between the road and cemetery was then deeded to the latter, nearly doubling its area. Decision was made and the crew erected a new fence on three sides of the whole lot, and a new gate was provided for the north entrance.

So the Hamlin Cemetery now presents a neat, orderly appearance and with interest shown by so many there is reason to believe it will remain that way. The view is the same as that which greeted the first settlers who ascended the hill. Flags fly continually over the graves of the dozen veterans. The countryside below changes colors with the seasons in the same unchangeable manner.

RHM

Beneath those rugged elms, that Yew-
Tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a
moldr'ing heap,
Each rude forefathers of the Hamlet
sleep.

Gray - Elegy written in a country churchyard.

HAMLIN AND THE VETERANS

An interesting part of Hamlin today is the cemetery, located some forty rods west of the corner. A prominence about 50-75 feet above the rolling countryside has a level acre or so on the top, providing burial space and a wide, beautiful view of the river valley several miles in each direction. Early speculators and settlers undoubtedly ascended the steep hill for a better look at the rolling plain, and we can be certain the Indian used the place as a lookout in his quest for game.

Grave markers are many; some dating back to early pioneer days. It seems nearly all of the first comers are here. One unacquainted with history of the area might ask, "Why a cemetery here?" Answers may vary and reasonable.

In the first place, pioneer forefathers here were mostly of Methodist faith. They had a circuit rider make regular visits to the 12-mile settlement and the school could be used for out-of-ordinary gatherings. Then, the parcel was useless for agricultural purposes and suitable for a burial site. Third, it was the only early cemetery within a dozen miles and near the center of activity at that time.

The first burial took place in February 1866. Through the decades following, the number grew as death rates in a pioneer community were high. Although use of the parcel for the above mentioned purpose continued steadily, not until 1902 was two-acres-plus set aside as a cemetery by the Rice family, record owners of the property.

Aside from the outstanding view atop the little hill, there is a second impact on a visitor to the place. Flags from a dozen GAR standards are flying here and there among the many markers. Half of all old Civil War veterans over a wide area chose this spot as their last resting place. Why this particular place? No one has a ready answer.

John Rice died on Christmas Day in 1894 of tuberculosis contracted during the war, and was the first veteran buried there. Over a span of 32 years, 10 more followed, another wait of 15 years and the 12th burial was made.

These men passed away in near the following order, half of them over a period of 10 years: Wm. Tomlinson, David Wingad, Daniel Dutter, John Wingad, T. L. Pratt, Russell Bowers, St. Clair Jones, Almon Lampman, Joseph Cooper, J. Carter and James Grant. Several bore wounds. Lampman lost a leg, David Wingad had a severe neck wound, Joseph Cooper had been shot in a foot, and St. Clair Jones bore several scars. There could have been others also.

Several of the late volunteers were part of the 31st Wisconsin Regiment and fought with the army of Potomac under General Grant in Virginia. They saw the surrender of Lee's army and marched in the Washington, D.C. victory parade before discharge.

This may be a proper time to mention names of all area veterans of that war and where their graves may be found. A fair number settled in Albion after the conflict was over, some moved on. Eleva housed many through their last days, and their cemetery flies six flags from GAR standards every Memorial Day. Lt. N. I. Gilbert, Knut Bendickson, John Springer, Wm. Chatwood, Charles Burnett and Ole Severson rest there. Norden has three; Capt. Sever Nicholson, Paul Moe and Ole Harrison. Sam Hogue and Christopher Swenby are buried in Strum.

There is no record, nor can oldtimers now recall any GAR organization among these men. A few belonged to the Wheeler Post at Eau Claire. All marched in Memorial Day or Fourth-of-July parades as long as they were physically able. One can assume that a strong fraternal fellowship existed among and between these old soldiers because of danger and hardship that had been common to all. That half of all veterans rest at Hamlin must have been preceded by some agreement or understanding among them. Any record would be invaluable in further study of these men and post-war activities.

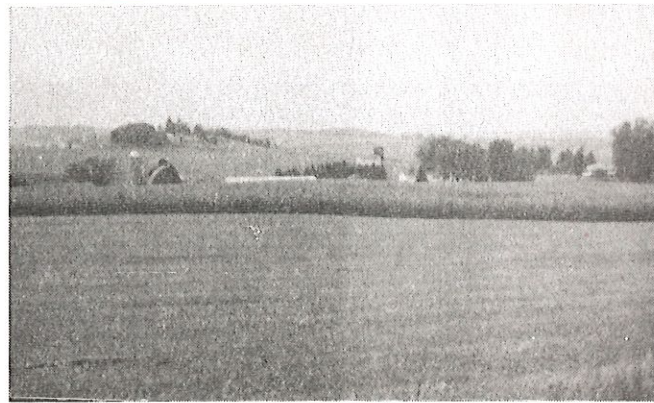
Until additional supporting information is forthcoming, we will agree that Hamlin was chosen because of its quietness and beauty.

RHM

Q: Why are most cemeteries situated on high grounds, usually hills?

A: It's a throwback to the early days when cemeteries were in churchyards. Churches were most often built on high ground because, for one thing, they were nearer to heaven. Also, because people preferred well-drained land for a final resting place.

Pictures of Old Hamlin Days



Hamlin 1973-Quiet, peaceful, school and cemetery in the distance.



—Tribune Photo
Mrs. Josephine Jensen, Strum, was delightfully surprised to see the old Hamlin post office on display at the Troup County county show at Whitfield. During the centennial celebration Friday, Mrs. Jensen, now 83, recalled how she walked four miles each week to get mail from the post office located between Eliza and Hamlin. Her father was the first settler in Johnson Valley, town of Hamlin. Back in 1866 when she was six years of age, she used to get mail from the trail and she shows us the illustration.

Mrs. Jensen and P.O. (self explanatory) - year 1948.



After hard travel came the Inn.



4th of July, 1904. The community was there. 1 - John Teeple and wife, 3 - Byron Teeple and wife, Henry Teeple and indistinctly, the Lampmans, Carters, Bowers, Crockers, Clements, Rices, and Stoughtons.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

*National Archives and Records Service
Washington, DC 20408*



REFERENCE REPORT

INQUIRY: Information about postmasters and post offices at Eleva, Hamlin, and Strum, Wisconsin

Report: The records of the Post Office Department (Record Group 28) show that a post office was established at Eleva, Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, on January 30, 1885. The names of the postmasters who served at this office and their dates of appointment through September 30, 1971, are:

Alexander C. Hallanger	January 30, 1885
James H. Huntington	June 29, 1893
William White	October 3, 1894
Thumam Helgerson	November 13, 1894
Milo B. Gibson	January 15, 1895
Severt Nicholson	September 30, 1897
Fred T. Ruseling	September 26, 1910
Ida Englesby	February 26, 1915
Bertrand E. Sands	February 11, 1937 (confirmed)
Aldon S. Berglund	August 31, 1960 (assumed charge)
	September 8, 1960 (acting)
Keith S. Anderson	March 20, 1961 (assumed charge)
	March 29, 1961 (acting)
	April 25, 1963 (confirmed)

A post office was established at Hamlin, Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, on July 29, 1862. It was discontinued on August 15, 1892. The names of postmasters who served at this office and their dates of appointment are:

John F. Cutting	July 29, 1862
Russell Bowers	August 12, 1863
Henry Teeple	April 9, 1866
Russell Bowers	March 23, 1869

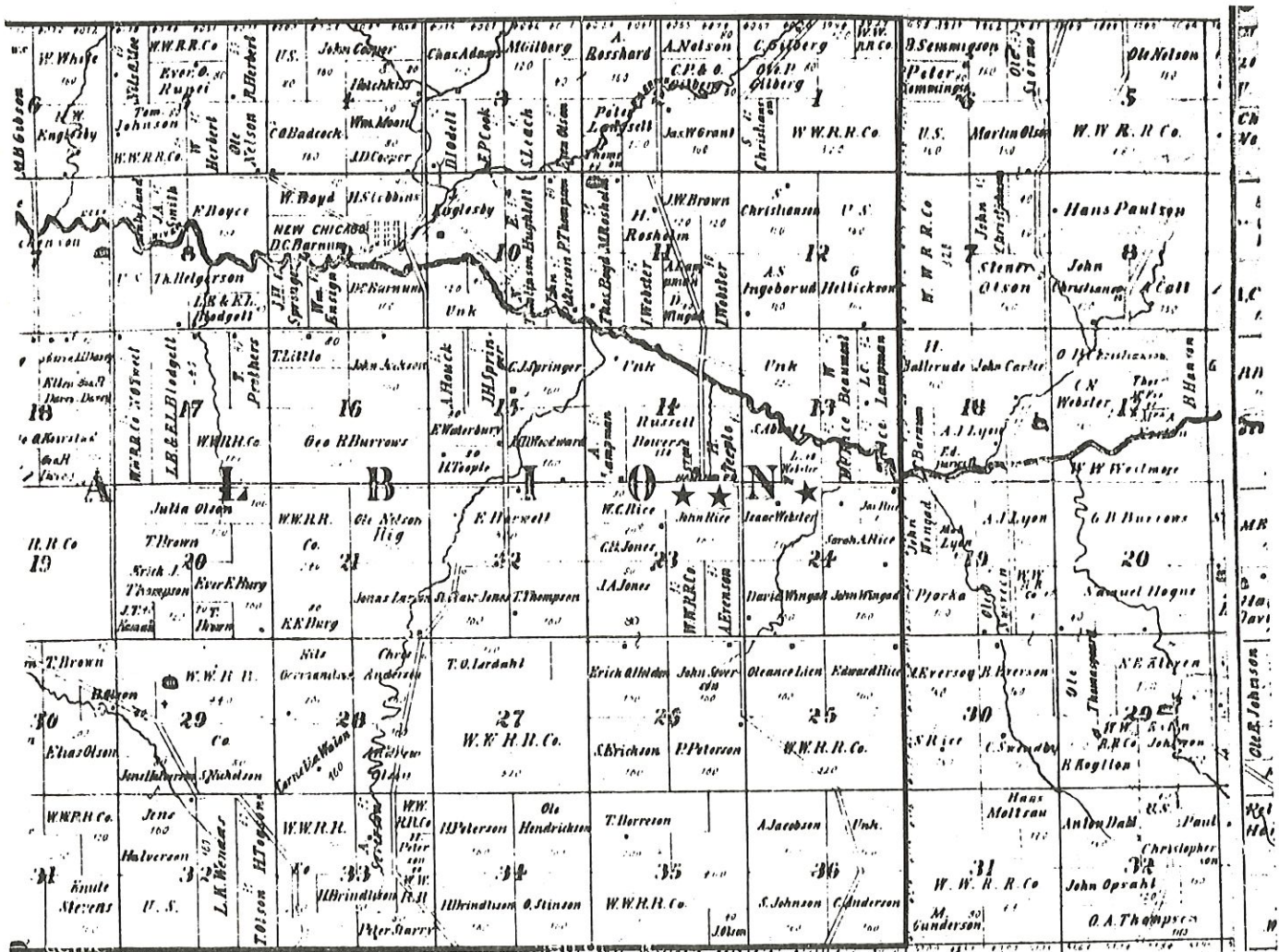
A post office was established at Strum, Trempealeau County, Wisconsin, on February 20, 1885. Its name was changed to Tilden on December 9, 1887, and again to Strum on November 25, 1889. The names of the postmasters who served at this office and their dates of appointment through September 30, 1971, are:

Ole Kittelson	February 20, 1885
Ole O. Nysveen	January 11, 1888
Ole Thomasgaard	June 25, 1889
Ole O. Nysveen	April 16, 1890
John A. Klungseth	December 14, 1897
Ole O. Nysveen	January 9, 1903
Claud E. Burton	July 22, 1915
William H. Call	February 17, 1925
Elvin E. Strand	September 10, 1927
Ralph E. Lyon	May 27, 1936 (confirmed)
Clarence P. Call	July 1, 1944 (assumed charge)
Gerald Bergerson	July 29, 1949 (confirmed)
Clarence P. Call	April 5, 1957 (assumed charge)
	April 12, 1957 (acting)
Forest C. Spangberg	August 5, 1958 (confirmed)
Clarence P. Call	August 26, 1960 (assumed charge)
	September 1, 1960 (acting)
Douglas G. Runkel	February 16, 1961 (assumed charge)
	February 21, 1961 (acting)
Douglas G. Runkel	August 31, 1962 (confirmed)

A VERY INFORMATIVE OLD MAP OF ALBION 1877

This old map shows the record owners of property as of that year. Location of Hamlin school sites are marked by stars. Eleva is still New Chicago as the Eleva addition to Albion was platted in December of 1877. Strum was non-existent although the newly built church is shown. The railroad act of 1862 provided the W.W.R.R. Co. with every other section of land for twenty miles on both sides of the track. Their line came through Augusta in 1870, thus Albion was within the twenty mile limit. Railroad land usually could be purchased for \$1.25 an acre or \$200.00 per quarter section.

Part of Unity (set-off in 1878) is shown also.



THRESHING AT HAMLIN CORNERS

In the lazy days of summer, when the grain in the fields was ripe - the time to make ready for threshing was at hand. Weeks before it was women's work to get the grain sacks in good shape. Some had to be washed, and some had to be mended with an old worn sack -- a few new ones to be bought each year. It did not matter how the sack looked just so it held grain. Many hundreds of sacks have been mended in the shade -- in this case under an acorn tree away from the house, where there would be some kind of a breeze. I can still smell the dust from the sacks, after they were turned inside out, to be shook as clean as possible. Sacks always became lined with fuzz from the grain the year before.

Grain was cut and a certain amount gathered in the machine, and tied - left laying on the ground, others picking it up, and making what was called a shock. Some years before this, the bundles were hauled from the field and made into stacks, which looked like pyramids, rather close together. It was thought the grain had to be in these pyramids for a certain time - 6 weeks - for the grain to finish maturing.

The day for threshing arrived with hustle and bustle. Maybe before breakfast was over, the whistle of the steam engine could be heard, and looking up the road one could soon see the big rig on its way, noisy and belching smoke. Soon men and wagons would be arriving, as the whole community took part in this, helping one another. There was always a few runaways to make the day a little more exciting. There was danger of the house catching fire as the big steam engine pulled along side of the house on the way to the area in back of the barn. Wooden shingles on the house made it very possible that a spark from the engine would light on a wooden shingle and lay there just long enough to start a fire. A ladder and water always ready in case of this. The worry got too much one year in a very dry season, so when it was time to come to Hamlin Corners a new road was made across a field.

On the day of threshing it was hoped for no rain to delay and no wind hopefully, to blow the chaff in another direction, than the house -- otherwise a general housecleaning - if it blew toward the house. Some seasons the rain would hold off until threshing time was over for all. Other times threshing could last far into the fall and cold weather.

At threshing time, men always knew from one farm to another where they were going to get the best meal. It was decided what kind of meat to have, by the kind women prepared the day before. One day stands were the usual, except if the grain was heavy, and some farmer had more than usual acreage.

Morning lunch was at 10 o'clock if the crew got started by 8 o'clock. Then dinner at twelve o'clock. The whistle always blew at twelve o'clock to call the men in from the fields. The engine crew and the ones that happened to be near the house got the first serving. These men ate like the saying goes, "they ate like threshers."

There was always a lot of joking and good humor at these gatherings and a lot of horse play, as the saying goes. At one of these dinners a large coarse looking man came into the dining room, sat down with a cup of coffee in his hand. When he went to put the cup down his middle finger had become stuck in the handle of a "Havilan" china tea cup that was pressed into service. He came into the kitchen a little embarrassed with this cup stuck on his finger. The lady of the house soaked his finger and cup in the soapy dish water and got the cup off without breaking it. He was very apologetic. More laughter erupted when he returned. From 12 to 16 men could be seated at one time. By the time the men came in from the fields with their loaded wagons, the first table had been cleared, and ready for the second group. From 30 to 50 people would sometimes be fed. Some just happened to drive in to see how things were going and of course were always asked to have a bite.

Judge Cowey of La Crosse, Wisconsin, and a good friend of John Teeple usually came the day of threshing. My mother said he always was asked to dinner and said he came for some of her good apple pie. Food was plentiful and a few more did not matter.

Then there was lunch at 2:30 or 3 p.m. of sandwiches, cakes, cookies, doughnuts and plenty of hot coffee. In the early 1900's suppers were served. It made a long hard day for the housewife. It was finally voted on to have all the men go home for supper. It was too much of a hardship on the women, especially if the women had little help.

At 1 p.m. the steam engine whistle would blow to call the men back to work. There was many a team that would run away as the whistle would startle the horses, and if one team started to run most likely it would start another team. Then a lot of excitement. Some horses were gentle and maybe just one horse would be able to take the rolling of the belt from the steam engine to the seperater. That horse would be put next to the rolling belt to steady the nervous horse.

Then there was the grain wagon. As the grain was seperated from the straw, it was caught in grain sacks and tied, until a large wagon box was full, then to the grainery to dump these sacks in an open bin or grainery. It was always a delight when the men were through and the rig pulled out of that farm and on to the next. If still daylight, or whenever the job was finished, and the family alone, then the good wife and farmer and all the kids would walk around the large hay stack and look at the large bin full of oats. So much slippery fresh straw all around one could hardly walk. We were always warned to stay away from the large stack for fear it would roll off the top and bury someone. After the straw settled for a few weeks, no danger of this, then farm kids could climb on top and slide down, if no one was looking. This stunt caused the straw to be pulled down and on the ground, which meant a loss to the farmer in bedding for the livestock in winter.

Women's work was not done, even after all the food preparation and cleaning up. There was the fresh straw to be gathered for straw mattresses that had been made before hand in the lazy summer days. These were filled with fresh straw and as much as one could stuff in. If a lot of beds, it meant a lot of straw to be stuffed in. Fresh

straw might be good to sleep on, but it also meant dust to get in one's nose at night until the straw got matted down. Besides the crackling of the new straw when one turned or moved, it also meant warmth in the winter. This was usually under a feather tick.

Feather ticks were made in another operation. The feathers taken from geese, chicken and even turkeys. I remember as many as fifty geese herded into the barn, and plucking feathers began for pillows, bed ticks. From two to three women usually did this. Then a goose dinner from maybe a smaller goose. This would be done when the weather got colder and the fowl ready for market. This was a very tiresome job.

One year, and the last time it was done, I helped my mother bring bushels of fresh straw into the house and dump it on the parlor floor. It was heaped high. Then a large carpet (strips sewn together) was nailed down around the edges. It covered the whole floor. This was to keep out the cold and make a padding for under the carpet. This room I remember was 15 x 16 feet so it was a large carpet. The carpet had to be restretched from time to time as the straw got matted down. About the year 1912 large 12 x 12 rugs were bought from Sears Roebuck and out went all the straw and old rag carpets. Then the old bare floor was painted a gray around the edge about 3 feet. This all seemed very elegant.

This same floor with the wide board, originally was used as the barroom floor in the Old Teeple Stage Coach Inn. Captain chairs, round tables, The United States Post Office letter box, wall kerosene lamps with reflectors, and the bar, was the furnishings of this room during the Inn's operation. It was also customary to have a chair rail around the room to protect the wall. This was in the last half of the 18th century.

Many a weary traveler, government men, fur traders, business men, preachers, early school teachers, lumber jacks and even outlaws walked over this floor. This floor is still in use in 1974, except a new hardwood floor has been laid over it. The old Inn remodeled many times as the years went by.

A number of funerals were held here, and many a wedding took place. In October 1913, a few years after the Inn's closing, two people came from Washington D.C. to be married here. The Eleva Methodist minister came out by horse and buggy to perform the ceremony.

ELEVA, WIS.

Compliments of

STATE FINANCE COMPANY

Where a dollar is available

H. P. Havenor, Pres.

Records-- Every evening in very wooded sections many pioneers formed the habit of going outside and firing a musket three times. If any one was lost in the woods it would be a signal that they could find shelter, food and comfort not too far away.

NELSON'S CASH MARKET

We are proud and happy to serve the same area as R. P. Goddard, the first Eleva merchant, who gave the Village it's name.

Don Nelson, Prop.

GLEANINGS OF 100 YEARS

Jack Carter had a life of varied experiences. He was born in 1838 in England, crossed the ocean in a sailing vessel as part of a colony under the British Temperance Society. Fought in the Civil War; owned several parcels of land in the Strum area; traveled west and mined gold in Colorado; lived in Eleva for a time and then moved to South Dakota where he died. The body was returned and buried in Hamlin Cemetery.

Russel Bowers had a small store near his home. When it closed for lack of business, Jack Carter purchased the building, moved it across the river and it became part of the living house in section 11, now owned by Ronnie Bjorgo. Bowers killed an elk near his place in 1866.

Boys try anything. An 8th grader had a horse at school one rainy day. On a dare he led the animal into the entry way. The big red roan had no footing on the well oiled floor, it fell down with a loud crash, pawed frantically and had everyone in an uproar until it somehow got out.

The stage route began at a Whitehall hotel, traveled west to Independence area, north along Elk Creek, onward up Chimney Rock, turned east in section 14, swung up the valley in the east half of section 36 in Albion, then west between sections 25 and 26 in that township to Hamlin. The river crossing north of the Inn was west of the present Hamlin road bridge. The path continued straight north over the hills to connect with the present Hwy. 93 right-of-way to Eau Claire.

When the Teeples' new barn was built in 1910, chicken pie dinners were held to raise money for the Eleva Methodist church. These were held in the new barn before it was used for barn purposes. The real use of the barn was held off for a season by popular demand.

Higher education was not required in pioneer days. An example can be found on the picture sheet following page 7. Leona Webster was a pupil a very short time before editing her souvenir.

The top entry on page 29 should have an interesting story coming so closely after the 4th of July. Would the Civil War veterans have had any influence in this purchase?

As a young lad Tom Dean attended several 4th of July celebrations held in Hamlin at the Bowers Grove. Tom remembers the huge dinners, lemonade, homemade ice cream and contests of all kinds. There were no intoxicants.

R. P. Goddard, Eleva merchant, freighted much of his merchandise from Augusta rather than Eau Claire. The Western Wisconsin Railroad reached both in 1870.

Remember the "Hamlin Cemetery Benefit Dances" promoted by Tom Dean, who served as Secretary-Treasurer, caretaker, sexton, and most everything else for years? Probably called the square dances at those benefits also.

The spur from Fairchild, built by N. C. Foster, reached Strum in December 1889 and Eleva in January of the next year. The latter village had a big reception that day.

A canteen, carried by Russell Bowers during the Civil War, will be placed in the Strum Library soon. Courtesy of Hans Jacobson.

Strange tales live on and on. As a young man, Tom Dean's father worked as a cook in a lumber camp on the Eau Claire river. The owner "shined" around a young Indian maid at a Chippewa encampment nearby and finally won her hand. The father of the prospective bride put up a loud howl, "whites had ruined his hunting" etc., but was finally pacified when he demanded and got two barrels of salt pork for the girl.

J. S. Anderson, a circuit riding Methodist preacher, organized a Bible study class at "12-Mile Station" in 1860.

It seems all mail at Hamlin was not handled solely by Bowers. The stage delivered and received at the Teeple Inn also. Some mail was forwarded from that place.

And then there was Jesse James, rumored to have stayed a night at the Inn.

George Young of Eau Claire is present Secretary (1973) of the Hamlin Cemetery Association. He places new flags in the GAR standards for Memorial Day also.

Lot for the third school was set off in 1888.

Aunt Kit Teeple was startled one day to see a large, befeathered Indian in her doorway. He spoke no English but made signs that he wished food for himself and his pony. He was accomodated and handed her a flint spearhead, which the writer yet has.

James Grant of Big Creek was a second cousin of U. S. Grant, General and later President of the United States, was a first cousin of Mary C. Teeple, as their mothers were sisters. James was buried in Hamlin Cemetery and last of the Civil War vets.

John & Ole Wold drove the stage during its last years of operation. Evidences of the old trail it first followed can be seen in the woods just off the highest point on C.T. "H", on the Gullicksrud farm.

John P. Teeple

Long Time Hamlin Resident

One man who saw and experienced the rise and decline of Hamlin as a trade center was my father, John Teeple. Dad was born at Cross Plains, Dane County, in 1857, married Minnie Weaver at Morrison, Ill. in 1903 and passed away in 1925.

He was seven when Grandfather, Henry, decided to leave Dane County, Wisconsin and try his fortune further west. According to family notes and re-tellings, they crossed the Wisconsin River at a ferry near Merrimac, hewed a trail through hills and marshes, finally reaching the Rice home at the twelve mile station (Hamlin) three months after beginning the trek. Several times they were slowed by the unerring instinct of their horses who would break loose at night and return to the old home in Dane County.

Their first house was a crudely built log cabin and the Teeple children would tell in later years of deer and wildlife feeding near their home.

Dad attended school at both the first and second locations and completed the eighth grade class of that time. Youth worked and he was no exception. One job, furnishing scarce wood for the school, meant trips five miles south over the ridges into the Chimney Rock area during bitter cold weather.

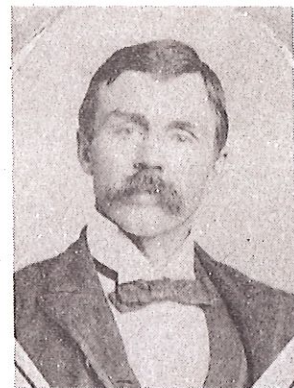
When the stage run from Whitehall, on the Green Bay line, to Eau Claire was established, the Teeple Inn became a logical point to keep the horses. The low old barn had stalls for twenty, ten on each side, although never that number were housed. Probably a dozen belonged to the stage operators and it became my father's job to have teams ready for exchange when the stage rolled in each day.

His work aroused an interest in horses and through the years the family always had a driving team possibly used for livery hire at times. The favorites were likely a jet black team of fast drivers owned about 1898, and when work did not interfere, a fast drive to the river and back was routine. Pictures of the famous Dan Patch adorned the stable walls.

Across the road at Hamlin lived the Bowers brothers, Fred and George, who also witnessed the settlement's growth and change. As would be expected, all were good friends, neighbors during those years, and my one regret is not having paid more note to their conversations and reminiscences. I do remember George Bower telling of his dad being a poor writer. It seems the old postmaster had written a letter that had been returned. He had spent some time trying to decipher the contents and finally called for help. "George" he said, "you read this, begad such writing I never did see."

Dad was a fair violinist and would entertain often for his kind next neighbors. They also had many a laugh at his habit of firing a shotgun about 4 a.m. each Fourth of July.

A road separated the homes of these men during their life; all three are now buried at Eleva, the cemetery drive separating their graves.



JOHN P. TEEPLE
Long time Hamlin resident

FIRST HAMLINITES

Russel Bowers

Russel Bowers was born in Jefferson County, New York in 1825. He came by wagon train with early pioneers to Dane County, later pioneering to Albion Township, Trempealeau County, arriving June 22, 1857. He homesteaded and later named the area Hamlin.

Issac Webster

Issac Webster was born in 1816, died October 27, 1897. He married Mary Jane Rice Grant. No state or county given in the source - a notebook paper saved by the family. He bought his farm in 1859.

Eliza and Jane Rice

The Rice home was just southeast of the Bowers homestead. Eliza and Jane Rice came to this area the same time with Russel Bowers, in 1857, and settled along the creek to the southeast. Many people lived with the Rice's for a short time, until they could find a place to live. It was a place of welcome. James Rice, father of the large Rice family, came here from Dane County, a short time later and made his home with part of his family for awhile. The rest of the family had gone farther west.

D. J. Odell

D. J. Odell was born in Geauga County, Ohio, July 3, 1832, one of eight children. He was one of the early settlers of Buffalo County. Lived on the Rice farm, before Eliza and Jane Rice came to the area. In 1868 he bought a farm in Albion township.

Henry Teeple

Henry Teeple, who resided on section 14, town of Albion, was one of the early settlers of Hamlin. He was born in Hamilton County, Ohio February 18, 1832. The Teeple family were formerly from New Jersey. At the age of 22 years Henry married Mary Catherine Rice of New Jersey. In 1855 they started westward with a wagon train to Dane County, where he bought his first farm.

Dickson Cooper

Dickson Cooper was born in Harden, Ohio, came to Albion Township with his wife, Mary, in 1861. He was a member of the Wheeler Post, G.A.R.

St. Clair Jones

St. Clair Jones was born in Victor, Ontario County, New York, June 9, 1836. They were natives of Maine, a resident in Dane County, and from there he enlisted in the Civil War on August 9, 1866. He took part in the campaign against Vicksburg under Grant and was actively engaged until the surrender. All four of his brothers were in the army. In July 1867, St. Clair Jones settled in the township of Albion. They lived with some early settlers by the name of Jackson till their house was built. Archie Little's father and Mrs. Jackson were brother and sister. These people all had a close relationship with Hamlin, even though they did not live right at Hamlin Corners, which would be about 1 mile southeast.

Dave Odell

Dave Odell, from Ohio, bought a farm in 1867 in Albion Township. He lived on the Tom Dean farm first. Tom Tomulson also lived many years on the Tom Dean farm. Tom Dean lived in the area many years and at this writing is still living on the same farm. The Dean family had many farms, some around Chimney Rock.

R. Goddard and E. Carpenter

These men were born in lower Canada and settled in Dane County before coming to Albion in 1868. They set up a store in Eleva. The Hamlinites brought in their produce to this store.

Wilbur Rhodes

Wilbur Rhodes was a decendent of Yorkshire England people. These families settled in Trempealeau County. An early pioneer relative obtained 1,000 acres of land from the government. Wilbur Rhodes was from a decendent of Trempealeau County. He owned a store in Eleva and was one of the first school teachers in Strum in 1888. He was married to Lillian Teeple.

David and John Wingad

Both David and John were born in Lincolnshire, England. David came to America in 1842, going to Pittsburgh, Penn. Later on to Iowa and then in 1873 to Trempealeau County, Albion Township. John came to America in 1852 and lived in Unity Township. The John Wingad park was established along the river from his farm. This park had a grove of trees, a road and a picnic area. Reports are that it was well kept.

David Wingad

David Wingad received a severe gunshot wound, during the seige at Vicksburg, which nearly proved fatal, the ball passing entirely through the back part of his neck. He fell on the field of battle, where he lay four hours without water or assistance of any kind. When he finally recovered consciousness he found that a dead soldier, whose weight was 200 lbs., laying across him. He had considerable difficulty, but finally succeeded and he later recovered.

Olaf Indgjer

Olaf Indgjer was a long time resident of Hamlin. His name has been mentioned often in the tax rolls and on the school boards, but all available records have been lost. He lived on a farm at the east end of the district.

James W. Grant

James "Jimmy" Grant was born in Boone County, Kentucky in 1846. About one year later the family moved to Indiana. Soon after the father died and the mother married Issac Webster, the family again moved to Dane County, Wisconsin, and later to Trempealeau County, in Albion township in 1865. They settled on what was then called the 12 mile settlement, later known as Hamlin.

James W. Grant enlisted as a private in the Union Army at Crossplains, Wisconsin and was enrolled at Madison, Wisconsin, in Company G. 38th Regiment of Wisconsin, Volunteer Infantry, 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 9th Corps on the 30th day of August, 1864.

James Grant was the first clerk on the town of Albion and was reported to be the first teacher in his home district, which was held in a vacant house. He was the last of the Civil War veterans to be buried at Hamlin of this wide area. He was second cousin of U.S. Grant. He used his soldiers right, and homesteaded in 1867 on the farm where he lived almost continuously for 64 years, to the close of his life.

Thomas Richard Dean

Thomas R. Dean was born in 1889 in the town of Hale, Trempealeau County. He was the son of pioneer settlers who came to this county from Banty County, Cork Ireland. The family homesteaded, as so many did at this time. In 1902 the family moved into the Hamlin area and became pioneer Hamlinites. He was one of the last to arrive and stay in the area. Since 1920 Mr. Dean has served in the public interest for many years. One of Dean's outstanding accomplishments is the organization of the Hamlin Cemetery Association on March 30, 1948.

RESIDENTS OF THE HAMLIN COMMUNITY
A GENERAL CENSUS OF RECORD OWNERS

1863-1904	1910-1920	1970's
Bowers Farm	Fred & Geo. Bowers	Percy Missell
Rice Farm	Minor Goss	L. Gullicksrud
Henry Teeple	John & Kenneth Teeple	Hensel Vold
John Skogstad	Joe Mathison	Ade Myren
William Boyd	Olaf Martinson	Clifford Ulberg
Morris Clement	Walt Enger	John Alf
E.H.Harwell & others	John Wold	Minor Wold
Woodward-Stoughton	George Back	Roy Back
Webster Farm	Wm Bockhause	Gene Hardy
Olson	J. P. Hanson	Gene Hardy
Dave Wingad	Frank Wingad	Robert Bockus
John Wingad	Albert Wingad	Bud Rosman
S. A. Abbott	Louis Crocker	Vernal Ellifson
Lawrance Lampman	Ben Babcock	Joe Eide
Jack Carter	Gus Skogstad	R. Bjorgo

Hannah Gray, retired rural school teacher, living in Strum, has an interesting reminder of Hamlin stagecoach days.

Her father, John Gray of Bennett Valley, purchased a chestnut mare from John Call, prominent local implement dealer, about the turn of the century. The gentle horse was a favorite of his children and doubly so when they learned it had traveled the stage run for several years.

When "Fanny" died, one of the brothers had the hide made into a lap robe, which Miss Gray has to this day (December 1973). A true memento of another era.

HAMLIN HOMEMAKERS

The original Hamlin Homemakers were organized fifty years ago. Mrs. Emma Bowers, Mrs. Minnie Teeple, Mrs. Minnie Skogstad and other Hamlinites were first to meet for a social time and a work period. Mrs. Minnie Skogstad was president for two years. They met mostly in homes, but sometimes in the Hamlin school building. Meetings were held in Whitehall, two delegates were sent to bring back information for work projects. They made dressings and learned how to make splints for broken bones. Layettes for needy children, knit sweaters, stockings, mittens and things as needed were made. Real life demonstrations on how to act in emergencies were conducted. The Homemakers are now affiliated with Trempealeau County. Meetings are held in Eleva Community Hall and well attended.

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ADDENDUM

The second school stood close to the west bank of the creek on the Rice farm. Minor Goss, owner of the land during 1919-1958, plowed into the foundation in the early twenties. The foundation for the first log house on the Rice land, built in the early 1860's was found at the head of a spring, near a grove of trees. The stones used in this foundation have now been removed. The Old Stagecoach trail was found to the southeast, and in recent years middle "1900" has been plowed under. The trail was used also by the drayline or wagon to haul the supplies they could get off a steamboat on the Mississippi River. A historical marker at Trempealeau, Wisconsin has been erected at the river's edge -- once the site of much activity.

Minor Goss was prominent in community affairs, served on the Hamlin School Board for many terms, and served as Manager of the Creamery at Strum, Wisconsin for 27 years.

Moon was engaged in a very controversial matter with the newly formed town of Unity about 1880. It seemed he freighted merchandise for R. P. Goddard at Eleva from Augusta depot at that time. The bridge crossing at the present Strum location was hazardous, his load broke through and dropped into the stream, a leg was broken on one horse and the merchandise went down the river. Lawsuits were popular, Goddard sued for \$500, Moon for \$5,000. Citizens of the newly formed township held a mass meeting and the huge sum of \$750 was pledged to contest the case, the officials to obtain the "best lawyers possible." Goddard was amiable, town records show he settled for half. No record can be found anywhere regarding Moon, nor does anyone live who can remember hearing of the event.

The first sermon was preached in Eleva in 1877 by the Rev. C. C. Swartz of Mondovi Methodist Church, held in back of Goddard's store. In 1878 an old granary owned by Wilbur Rhodes was used for services, Sunday School and Temperance hall. In 1905 a Ladies Aid was organized when five ladies met. The collection at this first meeting amounted to twenty-five cents.

In 1886 the Lutherans were holding services over the Jenson Blacksmith Shop. In 1897 Rev. Helsem of St. Paul's Church of Strum was Pastor.

JESSE JAMES

Through near a hundred years the story has persisted that Jesse James spent a night at the Hamlin Inn. Just about every resident of the community had an opinion about the happening, but "Aunt Kit" had a reputation for veracity and no one dared hint otherwise in her presence. . . "Jesse James had slept here."

Highway men and petty thieves were common in sparsely settled areas in those early days. Many a struggling settler would awaken to find a valuable horse gone, or a cow missing, with only a lone sheriff of a wide spread county to aid in locating a culprit.

Boldest of these men were the James brothers. Jesse James and the younger brothers of Missouri ranged far and wide through the midwest. All had been members of "Quantrils" raiders in the Civil War, and had continued desperate pursuit in the following years. They seldom bothered the hard-working settler. Railroads and banks were their prey, and their raids were usually well planned.

Tellings of the visit fix the date. After the bank robbery at Northfield, Minnesota, examination of newspaper files (early September) at Faribault, the county seat, reveal the raid as occurring one of the first days of September 1876. Three people, a bank employee and two bandits, were killed. A determined posse hastily formed chased the gang out of town and closely pursued them south. The third day had the remaining members surrounded in a wooded area near Madelia in southern Minnesota. During the night the outlaws mutually agreed to break for freedom separately. The younger brothers were captured, but Frank and Jesse James escaped.

It is entirely possible the notorious robbers spent a night at Hamlin. Operations of the gang were always well planned and a look at a Mississippi River crossing possibility on the escape route could have been considered.

Henry Teeple and his son John took care of a "jet black" high spirited horse in the Teeple stables over night. Jesse ate supper at the table in the dining room with boarders, was given a room at the head of the stairs, while his partner sat in the kitchen all night on guard. The Teeples also stayed up all night and kept vigil as they knew somehow they were outlaws. Re-tellings by Mrs. H. Teeple to her granddaughter Florence, tells the exact position Jesse James sat at the table this historical night. Dining room running east and west. James facing the west while he ate his meal, and a black bag beside him at his feet. He retired at once after eating.

Very anxious moments during the long night were when his partner would go outside every hour and blow a whistle. The operators of the Inn suspected there were others outside watching.

Jesse arose early, ate breakfast, paid for his board and room and that of his partner. He asked for some sandwiches to go. He complimented Mrs. H. Teeple on her good cooking and was a perfect gentleman.

At 5 A.M. he asked for his horse, which was brought to the side door, and he dashed away. Others in his gang followed. At 10 A.M. that same morning a posse of riders came looking for the outlaws.

It has been rumored that the outlaw spent considerable time (3 months) in and around Chimney Rock. This being a very wooded area with lots of large rock and a good place to hide. This has all been proven up to a certain point. He slept in the Goddard Hotel in Eleva, before Eleva had a name. The same procedure was repeated. A partner sat in a room at the Hotel on guard all night and would go outside and blow a whistle every hour. Jesse left a \$5 gold piece on the dresser when he left the Hotel. He was reported staying other places also. It is possible he stayed at the Goddard Hotel before the Teeple Inn. The night he stayed in what is now Eleva, on the following day a posse of two men in a buckboard and two fast horses came from Northfield into the village looking for what they could learn, but all they found out was the gang had come and gone. Two large iron kettles were reported missing from a farm house after the gang had stopped for water and some food. It was reported one man had blood on his shirt.

Soon after that, the late Christ Spangberg of Strum and the Chimney Rock area herding cattle on the hillside saw a fresh mound of dirt on the ground. Christ, being but 14 years old, did not say anything about it for a long time for fear of his life. He also saw a man roasting a chicken in the wooded area, with a black horse standing nearby. It was later speculated it was either the injured man who had died and his companions had buried him, or the stolen money had been hidden. It had been reported later that at this same time, Christ saw a posse of riders with large objects on the side of their saddle, ride into this ravine and disappear. At this boy stood there pondering how to get out of there unseen, the riders all came charging out, without the black object on their saddles, and rode away.

History books tell us Jesse James and his brother reached their headquarters in Missouri. He was later shot by Robert Ford.

After that, Chimney Rock became a popular picnic spot. If you wanted to find anyone on Sunday, you went to Chimney Rock. Even grand-fathers got the prospector's needle. If anyone ever found buried treasure it was never reported, but people kept looking for years. Chimney Rock by reputation became a fun place. Church groups came on picnics. Women spread the lunch and men dug for treasure. The Rock still stands this year, 1974, a little weather beaten and fenced in.

That is why a bowery was built on the plateau surrounding the peculiar shaped rock that prompted people to call it Chimney Rock. People climbed the steep hill to the dances. The narrow road was crowded with horse and buggy. There were other peculiar rocks there too. One was a chair-like formation called the Golden Chair. It had arms and could be sat in. Sometimes a beer keg would be put in this chair at gatherings. Chimney Rock is about 5 miles across hills, south of historical "Hamlin Corners."

The "Rock" is the highest point in the vicinity. It was originally called Devils Chimney and was a land mark to guide travelers of early days. The Rock is now obscured by trees.

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Hamlin School - Teacher Selma "Hanson" Call, Strum, 1930-1934 and 1945-1947.



Hamlin School - Teacher Viola Jacobson, Strum, 1952-1956.