

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa Brief History of the cemetery and 2024 Tour Notes.



Picture of Oak Hill Cemetery from center looking west/southwest. Taken before the 2020 derecho.

Oak Hill Cemetery is located east of Tama on E 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Mansfield Drive.

It first became a cemetery in 1853. On 30 Aug 1859, the Oak Hill Cemetery Association formed and went on to later own the cemetery. The first board of directors were James Harvey Hollen, President, William Ernest Newcomb, Vice President, Smith Patterson, Secretary, and Christopher Hively Kentner as Treasurer. Of these four, only Hollen & Kentner are buried at Oak Hill.



Along the south fence line along the road on Memorial Day 2017.

### Notice of the Incorporation of the Oak Hill Cemetery Association.

Notice is hereby given that a corporation to be known and designated as "The Oak Hill Cemetery Association" has been duly organized under Chapter 52 of the revision of 1863, Laws of Iowa, and that the principal place of said corporation is Tama City, in Tama County, Iowa.

The business of said Association is to purchase a suitable tract of land in Tama Township, Tama County, Iowa, for a burying ground, lying the same off in lots, streets, alleys, &c., and disposing of the lots, and doing any other thing necessary to be done in order to secure a good and suitable cemetery.

The amount of capital stock authorized by the articles of incorporation is Ten Thousand Dollars.

Said corporation commenced on the 30th day of Aug. A. D. 1869, and is to continue ninety-nine years with the right of renewal.

The affairs of the corporation are to be conducted by a board of Directors to consist of five, to be chosen by ballot from among the members of the Association, annually, on the first Monday of August — the election to be holden at Tama City. The present Directors are J. H. Hollen, Smith Patterson, B. A. Hall, C. H. Kentner and W. E. Newcomb.

The private property of the individual members of this association is exempt from all corporate debts:

J. H. HOLLEN, Pres.  
S. PATTERSON, Sec't  
Jr'd

The Tama Citizen, Tama City, Iowa, 30 Sep 1869, pg 3, col 3.

The Association bought land from Mr. & Mrs. J.C. Vermilya on 5 Nov 1869. They hired Charles Wood Irish from Iowa City, Iowa to survey and plat the cemetery. In July 1880, the City of Tama bought the cemetery for \$550.

Due to local concerns about the poor condition of the cemetery, a group of women formed the Ladies Oak Hill Cemetery Association on August 25, 1883. It was noted that it was men who were doing a poor job of ensuring the cemetery was maintained. According to a handwritten history kept in their minute books, the ladies organized to take "charge of an unkempt field, over grown with weeds, surrounded by a tumble-down fence, a home for the bodies of loved ones that added to the terrors of death."

What is interesting, then, like today, people wanted sidewalks, and at one time, a cement walk was built to the cemetery from Tama. Wonder what happened to it.

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

In 1947, a battle of wills developed between the Tama City Council and the Ladies Cemetery Association. Joe Dunlap, one of the council members, and Ray Zeller, the cemetery's sexton, wanted to cut down the oak trees and instead plant pine trees. Oak Hill become Pine Hill? The women prevailed. Then years later the derecho of 20 Aug 2020 came along and destroyed many of the beloved oak trees.

In a side note, it was an awesome thing to see when the call went out for help cleaning up the trees at Oak Hill from the derecho, people came from all over to help. As for the lost trees, if the soil moisture continues to improve with this year's rains, there are plans to plant more oak trees sometime next year.

Some of the improvements or changes made over the years noted in the newspapers were:

- Reported in April 1884, a new arch was installed over the cemetery's "gateway." It says Oak Hill Cemetery in raised letters.

**Those substantial seats placed in the Oak Hill cemetery add much to its appearance, and at the same time affords comfort to those who may visit the place. The ladies are to be commended for so many improvements in this city of the dead.**

**Toledo Chronicle, Toledo, Iowa 5 Aug 1886, pg 2, col 3. What happened to these benches?**

- In 1889, Albert Fife, one of Tama's well-known building contractors, built what we remember as the small house in the cemetery where now there is a shelter building. That building was described as an ornamental pavilion and was completed in December 1889 at a cost of \$700. It was replaced with an open pavilion.

- In the 1930's, a cement walk to the cemetery from Tama was built, the cemetery drives were paved, and city water was piped to all parts of the cemetery. Tama Township Trustees had a road built from the Lincoln Highway to the cemetery, now called Mansfield Drive.
- During May of 1959, there was the dedication of the new center gateway. The stone pillars were built by E.G. Turbett using leftover stone from the exterior improvements for St. Paul Lutheran Church on Harmon Street in Tama. Originally, this gateway had an iron arch with the name Oak Hill Cemetery in raised letters. This arch now sits right to the east of the east gate.



**Center Gate**



**East Gate**



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour



**West Gate looking northeast. Picture taken in 2012.**

Another interesting story to share was in an article in the 25 Jun 1936 Tama News Herald. It gives an overview of the cemetery and closes noting that in the days of prohibition, illegal booze was hidden in certain monuments behind hollow panels. They noted they were granite stones but it is the zinc monuments that have removable panels and another local history buff said it was reported to her that it was the metal monuments they hid booze in. There are several zinc monuments in Block 6 and one in Block 7. All look like the panels have been well in place for many years so unsure how true this is. Yet, it is a good story.



**Day monument in Block 5 including a close-up of one of the panels.**

### **Regarding the tour and handout of subjects**

For the tour, there are small flags placed throughout the cemetery with numbers that correspond to this handout's subjects. The subjects are placed somewhat in a numerical order as you might drive through the cemetery. The hand

out includes a map with each grave marked with the corresponding number.

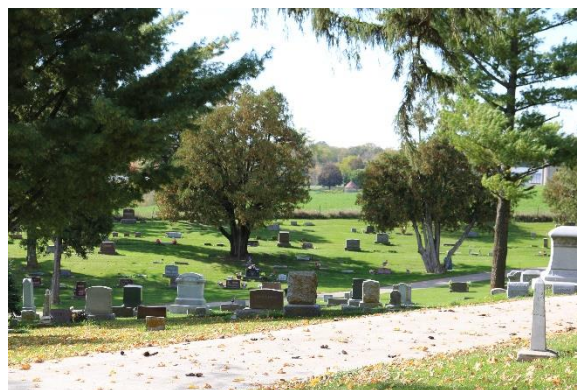
If you cannot find the grave and have a smart phone or device, you can download the findagrave app. Once installed, look for Oak Hill Cemetery and search the name you are looking for. We have set GPS coordinates for each of the subjects and if you click on the GPS coordinate for that person in the app on findagrave, it will show where you are in relationship to grave.

We thank the City of Tama and the Oak Hill Cemetery Association for allowing us to do this and hope you enjoyed it as much as we did organizing it.

Information was compiled and written by Joan Hayward Helm with assistance of Jean Bolen, Diane Caloud, and Connie Pugh, all volunteers at the Tama County Historical Society.

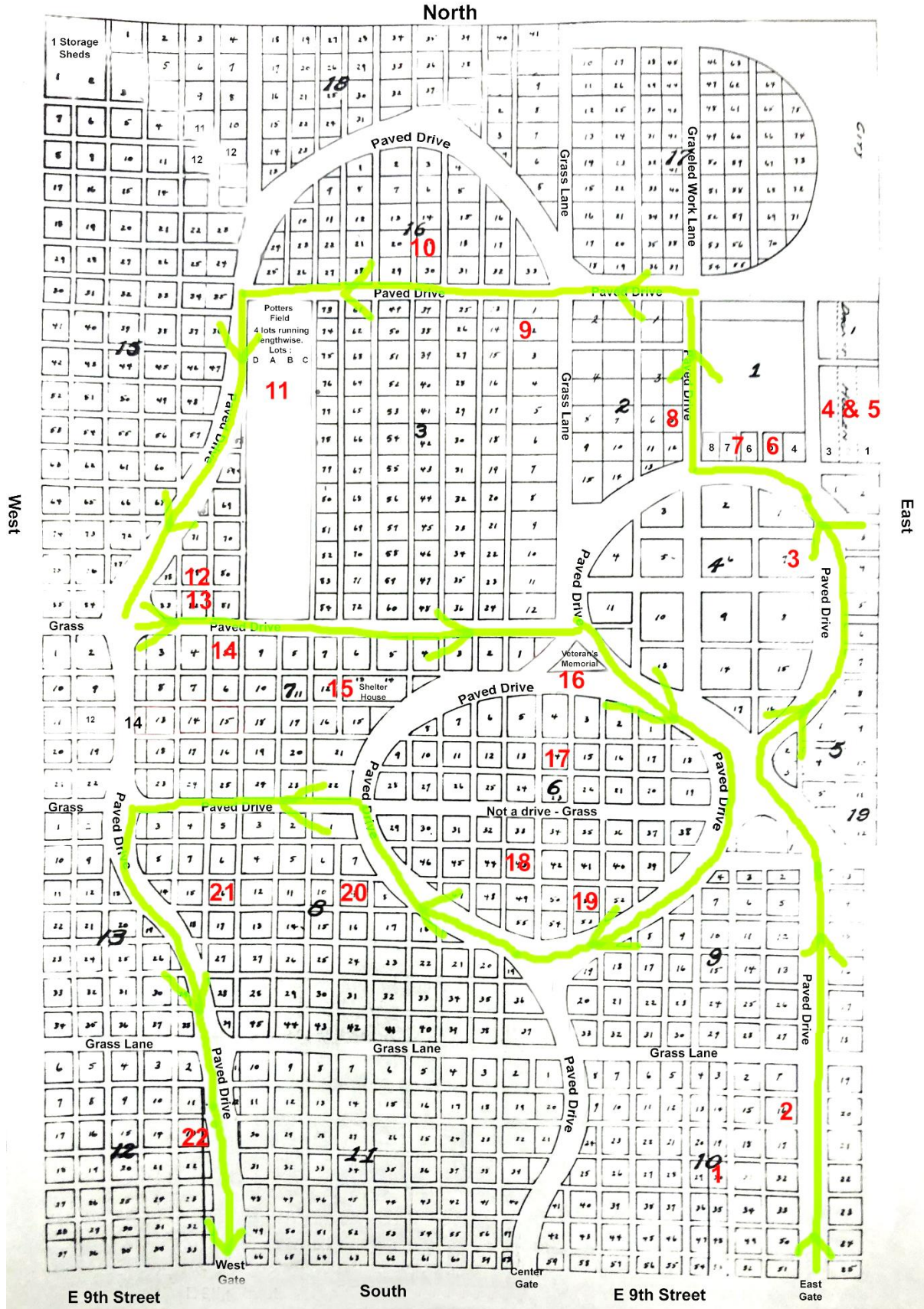
The information was taken from records & family files at the Tama County Historical Society Museum's library, the subject's obituaries, Tama County Histories, local newspaper articles as well as some families online family trees.

See the next page for Oak Hill Cemetery map.



**View in Oak Hill taken about 2012.**

# Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour





# Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

## Start of Oak Hill Cemetery Tour

### Carnal Families of Tama

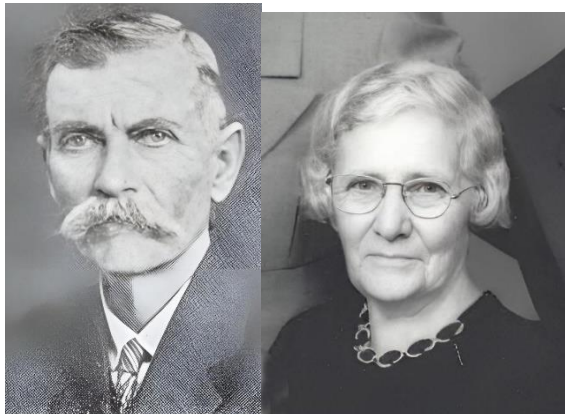
**#1 – Nathan Edward Carnal and wife Mary Salona (Carpenter) Carnal  
Block 10, Lot 30**



**Nathan & Mary Carnal family plot. Their three sons who drowned in 1907 are buried in unmarked graves to the right.**

We are going to start the tour with two families that included a Tama mayor and end the tour with another Tama mayor.

Nathan Edward Carpenter was born in Guernsey County, Ohio in 1865 coming to Tama with his parents about 1870. He became a broom maker and later worked for the Northwestern Railroad. Then he and William Ramsdell started the *Tama Herald* that later became the *Tama News Herald*



### Nathan & Mary (Carpenter) Carnal

Nathan was also very active in the City of Tama, serving 9 terms as a council person then the last nine years of his life as a member of the Tama County Board of Supervisors with the last four years as their chairman.

In 1888, he married Mary Salona Carpenter. Nathan and Mary had eight children; Edwin Clifford, Kittie (died as an infant), Leroy, Kenneth, Gerald, Mary Esther, and a boy who died as an infant.

#### **A Terrible Calamity.**

#### **Three Little Brothers Meet Their Death by Drowning in the Reservoir**

From The Tama Herald, Tama, Iowa, 12 Dec 1907, pg 5, col 3.

#### **TRIPLE DROWNING AT TAMA**

#### **Three Sons of Nate Carnal Go to Watery Grave—Mother Collapsed.**

From The Star Clipper, Traer, Iowa, 13 Dec 1907, pg 9, col 1.

Tragically, they lost three of their sons in a drowning accident at what we now know as Cherry Lake. Leroy, Kenneth, and Gerald Carnal were skating at what was called the “Reservoir” on a warm December 8, 1907 afternoon. When Leroy fell through the ice, Kenneth attempted to save him and fell in. Then the third brother Gerald, attempting to save both, also fell in. He managed to crawl back out and Leroy ordered him back to shore. However, watching his brother’s efforts to save themselves, he went back to help and fell in again. All died. The newspaper reports that they were buried in three white caskets together in a grave here in Oak Hill Cemetery.

Nathan died from a car accident in 1931 and Mary died in 1944 in Chicago, Illinois. Both are buried here in Oak Hill Cemetery with their family.

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### **#2 – Edwin Clifford Carnal and Family Block 10, Lot 16**



**Graves of Edwin & wife Grace Carnal with 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Grinnell Paxton Carnal to right.**

Edwin was one of Tama's well known businessman and mayors. I remember going with my father to Ed's barber shop on the southeast corner of W 3<sup>rd</sup> and McCellan Streets. It was the place for hair cuts and meetings. Many of you will remember the long bench that sat outside Mayor Carnal's barber shop facing the Tama State Bank. There was always several sitting there. And those occupants were in the know of what was what in Tama.



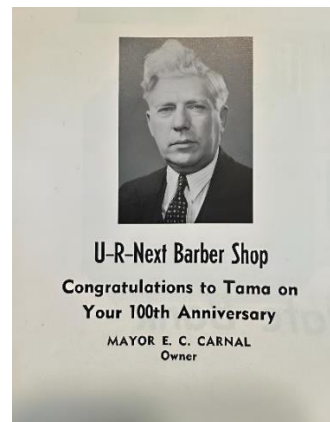
**Ed Carnal in his barber shop in Tama, Iowa.  
From the 1962 Tama, Iowa Centennial Book.**

Edwin was born in Tama in 1889 to Nathan & Mary Carnal who we talked about ahead of this segment. He grew up in the Tama area and like his father, became active in politics, specifically the

City. As a young man, he played professional baseball according to the 1962 Tama Centennial Book. In 1909, he started his career as a barber.



**Back; Edwin Clifford Carnal & son Edwin Richard Carnal. Mary Carpenter Carnal holding Mary Willa Carpenter.**



**A page from the 1962 Tama, Iowa Centennial Book featuring Mayor Carnal's advertisement.**

In 1911, Edwin married Grace Kentner. They had three children; a baby girl (dying in infancy), Edwin Richard, and Donn Wallace Carnal.

Grace was born in 1890 in Tama, Iowa to Wallace H. & Amy Lavina (Porter) Kentner. She too was raised in Tama. She died in 1952.

In 1953, Edwin married Eulalia Grinnell Paxton. She was born in 1910 in Tama County to Amos C. & Carrie I (Isbell) Paxton. After their marriage they lived in Tama until Edwin's death in 1968. She died in 1988 in Manchester, Iowa. All are buried in Oak Hill Cemetery with the exception of Edwin Richard Carnal who was cremated, burial unknown.



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### #3 – Amelia Christina Meves Kanzmeier Block 4, W ½ Lot 7



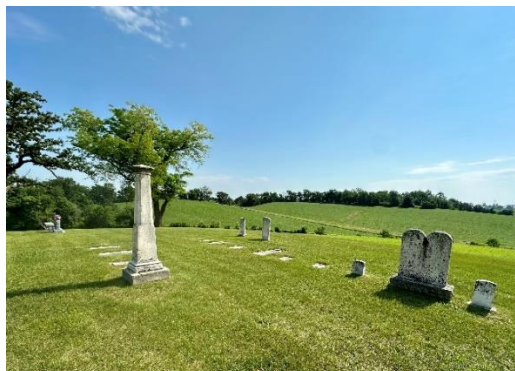
**Kanzmeier Memorial**

Everyone in our family knows of this memorial. Amelia was the daughter of William Henry Meves who was brother to our ancestor Christian Henry Meves who is also buried in Oak Hill. Amelia is buried in the lot next to the brother's sister and her aunt Caroline Meves Bruhn.

It was told as a romantic, but sad story. Amelia married John H. Kanzemeier yet she had health problems for several years, probably tuberculosis. She married John in 1912 dying after ten years of marriage. It was said her husband was so devastated that he wanted a monument to reflect not only her beauty, but her grace, resulting in the monument you see today. I remember as a child, and in later years, when the Meves relatives came from Wheatland, Iowa, we always had to stop and “visit” Amelia as well as her sister Emma Meves who is buried next to Amelia.

Amelia and Emma lived in Wheatland but at one time lived south of Tama in Columbia Township with their family with their paternal uncle and aunt's families living close by. Her sister Emma Meves died here while 11 years old and their father bought a plot then at Oak Hill. Amelia said before her death, that she wanted to be buried next to her sister. Shortly after Emma's death in 1880, her cousin Christina Meves, daughter of Christian also died.

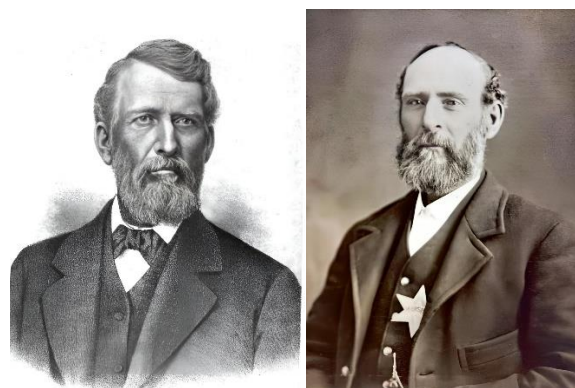
### #4 & 5 – Hollen Family Block 1



**Family burial plots of the Hollen families located in the original part of the cemetery located in far northeast at the top of a hill.**

**Several of the stones are laying down, missing, or covered with sod. All the above graves are in Block 1.**

The first death in what is now Tama, Iowa was a young boy named William “Willie” T. Hollen. He is buried in the original block that was once called I or now as Block 1, Lot 3, Grave 1. Supposedly there is a tombstone but it was laid flat over the grave to protect the writing on the stone. It may still be there, but under the sod.



**Brothers James & William Hollen**

William was the son of James Harvey and Eliza Ann (Graham) Hollen. James and Eliza, along with many of their children, are buried in this area. Also buried in this area is James' brother William Thompson Hollen and members of his family.

Both brothers (James & William) came to Tama and were active in the establishment of

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

Tama, Iowa and had farms in what covers much of the area of Tama.

When the town of Tama (then Iuka) was platted, it was said there were three residences and they were occupied by Benjamin A. Hall, James Hollen and his brother William Hollen.

James Harvey Hollen was born in 1820 in Jackson County, IN. He was married to Eliza Ann Graham in 1843. They had ten children; Adelaide Sara, Eva, Mary, Laura, Josephine, Orpha, Annie, Katherine, James Clarence, & William T. Hollen. The parents and all but two of their children are buried in Oak Hill in the Hollen plots in the original burial ground.

William Thompson Hollen was born in 1831, also in Jackson County, IN. He first married Sarah Bruner in 1854 and after her death in 1863, he remarried Mary J. Batchelder. Sarah Bruner is the daughter of Christian Bruner who started the town of Monticello northwest of Toledo. William was a deputy sheriff, constable, marshal, and a justice of the peace.

William & Sarah's children were Leonidus, Leota, James B., Adahlia, James H., & Bruce Hollen.

William & Mary's children were Sarah "Sadie," Libbie, an infant who died in 1869, & Willie Hollen.



**Mary Jane Batchelder Hollen**

William and his wives Sarah & Mary are buried in Oak Hill also in the original section of the cemetery along with all their children except three of them.

### **#6- Baby Clark Block 1, Lot 5**



**Baby Clark in Block 1, Lot 5**

This is a grave that citizens of Tama took to their hearts. A family coming through Tama in either 1858 or 1868, had a little boy with the last name of Clark who became ill and died. He was buried in Oak Hill and the family moved on.

In the early days of many cemeteries, they did not have regular maintenance but several citizens decided to take care of this little grave. They built a fence and planted flowers around the grave ensuring the child would not be forgotten. Also, a tombstone was later made with inscription Baby Clark as recorded in Oak Hill Cemetery records.

The plot is recorded in the name of Jason E. Clark. It appears his parents were Jason E. & Lizzie A. (Geer) Clark who at some point went back to where they came from; Oswego County, New York. They are buried in Riverside Cemetery there. Their tombstone includes the inscription "J. Raymond Son of J.E. & L.A. Clark Died Nov. 21, 1858 at Tama, IA."



**Clark monument at Riverside Cemetery at  
Oswego, NY.**



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour



**Clark monument and close-up of inscription at Riverside Cemetery at Oswego, NY.**

So, did Jason die in 1858 or in 1868? All we know is that he is buried in Oak Hill and he was remembered not only by the people of Tama, but by his family who were passing through our community when their child died.

### **#7 – Marlene McFate Berkheimer Memorial Block 1**



**Bench in remembrance of Marlene McFate Berkheimer in the northeast area in Block 1.**

Marlene McFate Burkheimer was born in 1950 to Delmar & Edna (Mikkelson) McFate. She graduated from South Tama and attend UNI graduating Magna Cum Laude. She later married Dennis Berkheimer. She loved traveling, puzzles, history & genealogy. This memorial sits on the original block of Oak Hill Cemetery high on the hill. It has wonderful views of the cemetery and of

Tama. You can sit there under the tree and enjoy the breezes and the views.



**Looking south/southwest from the bench.**

### **#8 – Joseph H. Tesson Sr. Block 2, N ½ Lot 5**



**Joseph's military marker.**

While working on the Oak Hill Cemetery records, I came across Joseph Tesson along with several pictures and an interesting life.

Joseph was born circa 1841 in the Pine Ridge area of South Dakota where he grew up. He served in the Union Army of the Civil War with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Nebraska Cavalry. After the war, he lived in New Mexico, then Nebraska, other locations, and later coming to Iowa where he lived for almost 50 years. Due to his ability in speaking English, Spanish, and some other Native American languages, he was an interpreter at Fort Laramie, Wyoming and in Washington DC. He was also an interpreter for the Meskwaki.

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour



Back row: Joseph Tesson Jr., Bessie Tesson Rhodd, & Mary Tesson LeClere.  
Front row: Joseph Tesson Sr., Millie Tesson Neff, & Sarah White Cloud. On the back of this picture has Joe Jr., mother Du Me KA, Pottawatomie. Copied & retouched from: <https://pocketsights.com/tours/place/Tesson-Cemetery-1685:242>

Joseph Tesson Jr with his father (Joseph Tesson Sr) and his siblings and wife of Sr at the website:  
<https://pocketsights.com/tours/place/Tesson-Cemetery-1685:242#lg=1&slide=1>



Joseph Tesson Junior (the 2<sup>nd</sup>)

Joseph Tesson 1841 – 1921 is the son of Joseph Tesson 1811 – 1898. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Joseph called Joseph Tesson Jr. who also had a son named Joseph Tesson Jr. 1878 – 1916.

The first of this family's Joseph Tesson was born in the St. Louis, MO area in 1811. He worked as a scout and Indian trader. This Joseph is buried

in the Tesson Cemetery in Kansas. His son and grandson are buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Tama.

Later in Joseph the 2<sup>nd</sup>'s life, and due to his health, he went to live at the Iowa Soldier's Home in Marshalltown where he died. His funeral was attended by local Civil War veterans.

He was married to a Mary and at his death was survived by a brother Harvey Tesson and three sisters; Mary Tesson LeClere, Bessie Tesson Rhod, and Ida Tesson. He had a son Joseph Tesson who preceded Joseph Sr. in death and is buried next to him. He also had a daughter Sophie Tesson who married Michael "Max" Seymour. Michael & Sophie's son Frank Seymour and other family members are also buried in Oak Hill. There may have been other children but could find no further information.



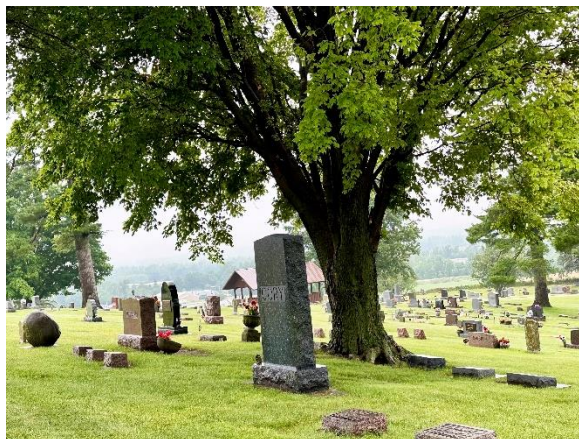
Caption was Pusheqonekwa or Old Eye (Meskwaki), Nas-qua-bas or Me-skwa-pu-swa or Joseph Tesson (Ioway Meskwaki) – 1890. Copied and retouched from:

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/533113674617444472/>

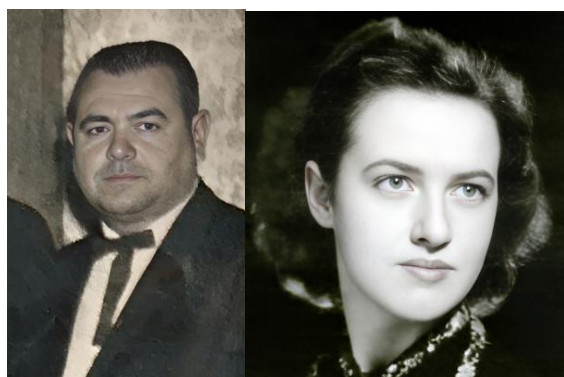


## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### #9 – Cory Family Block 3, W ½ Lot 2



**Cory Family Plot. To the left (south) is the Maynard and Storm plot.**



**Duane Melvin Cory and wife Marilyn Storm Cory.**

Duane & Marilyn (Storm) Cory both graduated from Tama High School with Duane graduating from Iowa Wesleyan College at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. After his service in the US Naval Air Force, he married Marilyn Storm in 1946.

Duane was the son of W. Clair & Ethel (Stuart) Cory. Besides teaching, he later opened the Double D Restaurant with a partner. Double D stood for the two partners Duane Cory and DeVere Fahling. This restaurant became well-known throughout central Iowa. Besides a dining room, it also had a bar with a dance floor and stage. The entire theme was “Western” and was very nicely done.



**The Double D circa 1972 from a newspaper clipping.**

Marilyn was believed to have been born on 14 Sep 1917 and came to live with Henry & Leah (Maynard) Storm in Tama at 303 E 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Henry & Leah are buried directly south of the Cory's along with members of the Maynard family.

Marilyn graduated from Drake University in 1943 where she met President Ronald Reagan before he went on to fame from acting and politics. Marilyn taught for a while, then she and Duane had 3 children; Ron, Barbara, and Hank Cory.

Both Duane and Marilyn were another example of staying involved and supportive of our communities.



**303 E 7<sup>th</sup> Street was built by Thompson J. Bracken. Henry & Leah Storm were the next owners then their daughter Marilyn Storm Cory and her family became the owners. Our generation remembers it as the “Cory House.” It is now owned by someone else.**

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### **#10 – Maralyn Fuller Hotchkiss Block 16, SW 8' of Lot 19**



**Tombstones of Maralyn Hotchkiss and her parents, Walter & Mildred Fuller.**



**Maralyn Fuller Hotchkiss**

Another one of Tama's professional women who was active in our communities. Maralyn Ann Fuller Hotchkiss was born in 1937 in Des Moines to Water and Mildred (Merryman) Fuller. The family then lived in Winterset where Maralyn graduated from high school. Her father ran a radio shop there and later one in Tama called Walt's Radio & TV Shop starting in 1957.

Maralyn attended Iowa State Teachers College. After graduating, she worked for Look magazine while living in Des Moines. When her parents moved to Tama, she also moved with them.

She was once married to Dallas Hotchkiss and they had two daughters; DalLynn and Diane.

She worked for the Tama News Herald for most of her career and was very well-known in Tama's business community. When I was working at my grandmother's store, Maralyn stopped in often to discuss advertising as well as Tama events encouraging us to get involved. She was outgoing, funny, and friendly.

Maralyn was also an active volunteer for many organizations including the Tama Food Pantry, Senior Citizen's Center, and St. Patrick's Catholic Church.



**Diane, DalLynn, Maralyn, and Dallas Hotchkiss**

Maralyn was also a volunteer with the Tama Ambulance Service. She was constantly on the go and a wonderful person to know.



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

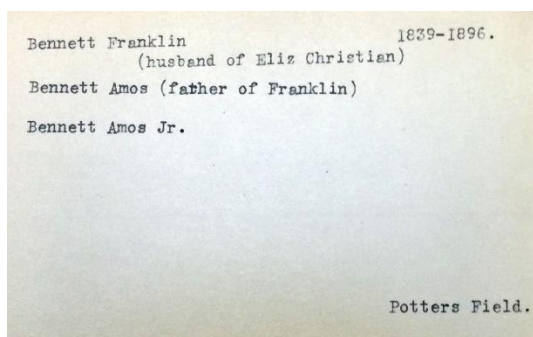
### **#11 – Potters Field Block 13, Lots A, B, C, & D.**



**What was once called Potters Field in northwest part of the cemetery. Looking north.**

It is an area where it looks like a bare strip of land but it has many unmarked graves. It is on the east side of the west drive in the northwest part of the cemetery. It has 4 lots running in long segments from south to north; lots A, B, C, & D.

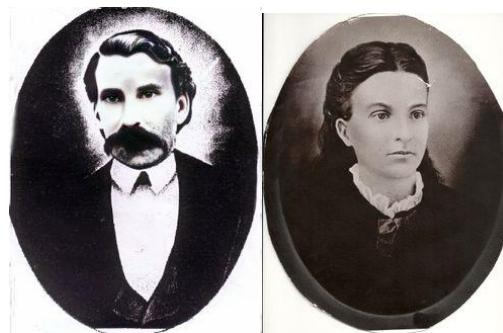
Some of the burials here were of people who died without family, financial means, or even those with unknown names. There are little to no records for this area. However, it is known from oral history, that the area is full of burials.



**An Oak Hill Cemetery Burial Card noting Bennetts buried in Potters Field.**

One burial is Franklin Bennett. He was born in 1837 in Warren County, Ohio to Amos Bennett Sr who is also buried in this part of the cemetery. Amos Jr. is also buried in this part according to an older Oak Hill Cemetery Burial Card file.

Franklin was married to Elizabeth Christian in 1876. She was born in Little Rock, Arkansas. They had four children; Thomas Jefferson, Franklin E. Jr., Frederick C., and Mary Bennett (married Walter Stegall). Franklin Sr died in 1896 and Elizabeth died in 1931. She is buried in Block 13.



**Franklin “Frank Bennett Sr and wife Elizabeth Ann (Christian) Bennett.**

On the west side of the drive, where there is nothing but grass at the bottom of the hills, was once a pond. Due to upkeep and the inability to keep the pond filled, it was eliminated and seeded down. There are no burials there.

### **#12 – Baby Land in Block 15, Lots 79, 80, & 81**



**From a paved drive looking north to northwest part of Oak Hill Cemetery.**

Also, along the east side of the west drive after the previous area, you will see some statuary with some as little cherubs. This is the area designated for infants and still born babies. There are some with stones and some with plaques. Over 50 babies are buried in this area.

Many local families for many years have buried their precious children here. The earliest recorded

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

baby buried here is a Baby Harlan son of Raymond S. & Mildred (Roach) Raymond. It is a beautiful spot to view the cemetery from.

**FUNERAL SERVICES FOR  
1½ POUND BABY HELD  
HERE LAST SATURDAY**

Funeral services for the one and one half pound baby boy of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Harlan were conducted Saturday afternoon at the Harrison Funeral Home with the Rev. W. O. Ecklor in charge. Burial was in Oak Hill cemetery.

The baby was born a week ago Tuesday and passed away early Saturday morning. He was kept in an improvised incubator consisting of a shoe box lined with cotton on a heating pad.

The baby is survived by his parents, two sisters, Norma Jean and Beverly Ann, and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Harlan, and Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Roach of Tama.

**Tama News Herald, Tama, Iowa, 31 Mar  
1932, page 1, column 3.**

**#13 – George Taylor  
Block 15, Lot 82**



**Taylor  
Assassinated  
July 19, 1913**

**By a dirty coward whose name is not worthy  
to be mentioned here.  
(Exact spelling as on tombstone.)**

The facts behind this burial are that the man buried here was shot and killed 19 Jun 1913 by unknown person(s) on the Chicago Northwestern Railroad about a mile east of Tama, Iowa. He was either the manager, renter or owner of “The Beanery”, a diner east of Tama by the Chicago

Northwestern Railroad’s coal chutes located east of Tama.

There was an inquest of which the Tama County Historical Society has the original copy in their files. However, for the public, only a photocopy can be accessed by researchers.

There has been much speculation to who this Mr. Taylor was. His first name is mostly given as George but was also noted as Joe. If you notice, there is no first name on the stone. The stone was also once featured in Ripley’s Believe It or Not. The museum has had people ask for the location of the stone having read about it.

Throughout the years, and even today, there still is speculation as to what happened as well as who the dead man really was.

Some have thought he was connected to the Tama County Taylor families; the William Taylor family in Indian Village Township that came to Tama County around 1852/1853 and the Taylor family from the Traer, Iowa area. Yet all of these respective family’s descendants are accounted for so if the deceased man is a Taylor, it appears he is connected to some other Taylor family.

If you read the inquest, one witness thought this George Taylor may have originally been from Kentucky. The same witness testified that George had told her that he had two brothers but did not know their location and a sister who might be living somewhere in Iowa.

This story made the news throughout the state but no one claimed the body of this murdered man and Tama businessmen, as well as other locals, pooled money and buried him and erected the tombstone in his memory.

I found it interesting that he banked in Cedar Rapids according to the witness who also testified about what she knew about George. Maybe connections there?

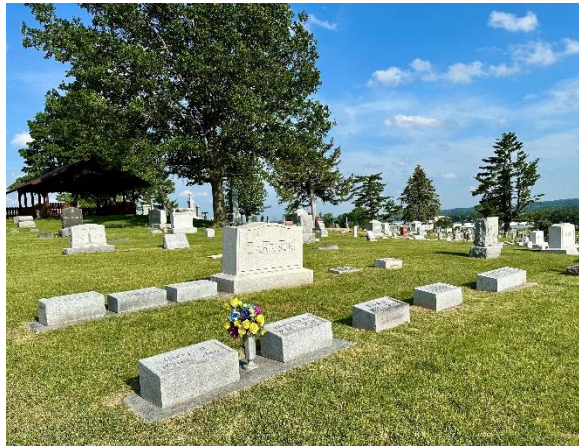
In closing, he was George Taylor or someone else. The only clear facts are that he was murdered, a large amount of money seen in his possession that day has not been found, no one was convicted of his murder, and that he is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery. The only way someone might find out who the dead man was, is maybe to get some DNA if there is anything even available after so many years in the grave. It is one of Tama’s mysteries.



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### **#14 – Harrison Furniture Store & Funeral Home**

#### **The Harrison Family Block 14, Lot 5**



**Harrison Family Plot. Looking southeast.**

The Harrison family is a well-known Tama family that ran the Harrison Furniture Store and the Harrison Funeral Home. The first funeral home in Tama County as we know them today, was theirs. They also had the first motorized hearse and the first to place tents over the graves for burial services. Three generations operated these businesses as well as being very active in our communities. It was started by Carl Baxter Harrison and his wife Nina Barkman Harrison



**Former Harrison Furniture & Undertaking businesses on the west side of McClellan Street in the 300 block.**

Carl was born in 1855 in Humeston, Iowa and grew up in Hedrick, Iowa. He graduated from the Hoen-Schuk Carpenter College of Embalming in Waterloo, Iowa. Afterwards he worked at several furniture stores and mortuaries. Typically, in the earlier days of Iowa, furniture stores were

combined with the undertaking business. In 1905, he came to Tama and worked for J.J. Hayes furniture and undertaking business located in the Odd Fellows block. This would have been the building directly north of the Tama State Bank once located on the NW corner of W 3<sup>rd</sup> Street & McClellan Street.

He also worked for Peter P. Schrock, then worked for a few years for Cochrane & Plumb later purchasing the firm in partnership with George Washington Youngman. Carl later bought out George and then sold out to the Cordes Brothers. He then bought a building known as the Hill Building. He was in partnership with Charles J. Belknap and conducted an undertaking parlor until 1921 when Mr. Harrison took over the entire business. He was then assisted by his son Robert Carl Harrison.



**In the first McClellan Street store with employees is Carl Harrison in the center wearing a vest and Arthur Mason on the left who later ran the Mason Funeral Home.**

Carl also bought out the Randolph Vault Company of Tama that manufactured waterproof vaults made of concrete and steel. They made about 110 vaults yearly.

Carl married Nina Barkman in 1906. She was born in Tama, Iowa. Her parents were Elhannon W & Orrena M. (Hill) Barkman. Orrena “Rena” is buried in the Harrison burial plot. Carl & Nina had two children; Robert Carl who married Ruth Wild and Lillian Harrison who married John R. Hinegardner.

Carl & Nina, who also worked in both businesses, bought the home of Frank B. Penrose on 511 McClellan Street in 1929. And it was Frank’s father, Emlen Penrose, who built what is now the Kruse-Phillips Funeral home on the NW corner of

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

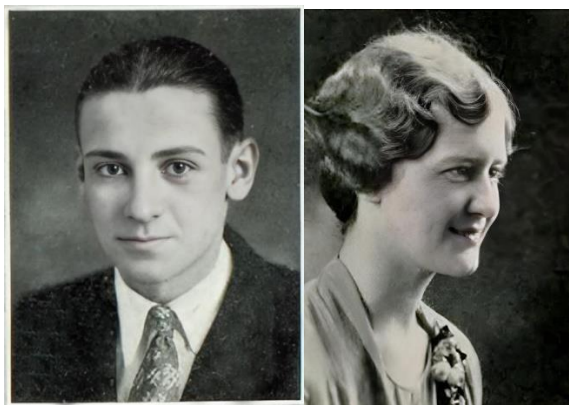
E 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Hall Street formerly the Mason Hand Funeral Home.

As for 511 McClellan Street, after extensive remodeling and updates, it became the first funeral home of its kind in Tama County. The living quarters were on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and the funeral parlor on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The building also had the newest type of heating and air-conditioning.



**Former Harrison Funeral Home at 511 McClellan Street in Tama, Iowa.**

Robert Carl Harrison became partners with his father in 1932. He was born in 1908 in Tama, Iowa and graduated from Tama High School. In 1934 he married Ruth Wild whose father owned the Toledo Brick Yards. Robert became a partner with his father and became an undertaker.



**Robert Carl Harrison in 1926 and Ruth Marilla Wild in 1931.**

Ruth graduated from Iowa State University in Ames and became a teacher. Many of us remember her as a wonderful grade school teacher at South Tama. Robert and Ruth had two children; Robert Wild and John C. Harrison. Robert C. died in 1975 and Ruth died in 2007.

Later their son, Robert “Bob” Wild Harrison, became the owner of the Harrison Furniture Store and Harrison Funeral Home.

Robert was born in 1940 to Robert & Ruth in Marshalltown. He grew up in the family funeral home. He graduated from Tama High School, Marshalltown Community College, and the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science. In 1959, he married Joyce Urhammer and they had a daughter Candy who is married to Jeff Tichy. Both he and Joyce ran both businesses throughout their lives retiring when they sold the businesses/buildings in 2007. Both were also very active in the community. Bob died in 2018 and is also buried in Oak Hill Cemetery but in the northern part along his brother John C. who died in 1987. They are in Block 18, Lots 18 & 19.

### **#15 – Oak Hill Shelter House/Pavilion Block 7, Lots 13 & 14**



**Oak Hill Cemetery's Shelter House looking west at east side of building.**

As noted in the beginning, there was another shelter house that was built in 1889 but replaced with this open pavilion. It is another great spot to sit and enjoy the views of the cemetery and surrounding views.



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### **#16 – Oak Hill Cemetery’s Veterans Memorial Corner of Block’s 3, 4, 6, & 7**



**Memorial honoring all US Military Branches  
and the veterans buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.**

### **#17 – Benjamin Hall and Family Block 6, Lot 14**



**Benjamin Hall family burial plot.**

Benjamin A. Hall was one of Tama’s biggest cheerleader, as well as one of the first to own land in that area. He and his family invested in the idea of Tama throughout their lives here. He was born in 1821 in Guernsey Co., OH and later married Elizabeth Milhouse. They came to Tama area in 1857 and had a farm that took a large part of the Tama area. They were one of three that built the first log cabins in what is now Tama, Iowa.

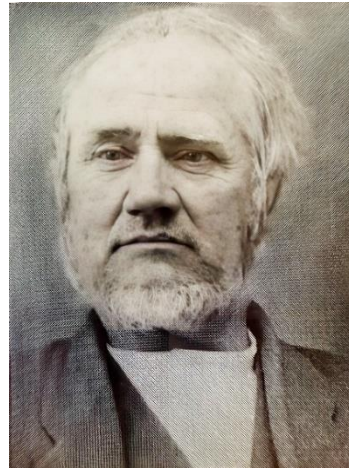
From their property, he and Elizabeth could see the Iowa River from a later home they built on the hill. It still sits today on the north side of the T intersection of E 8<sup>th</sup> St & Hall Street.



**301 E 8<sup>th</sup> Street – Tama, Iowa**

Benjamin was a farmer, grain dealer, lumber yard owner, organized the Tama National Bank one of the main proponents of bring water power to Tama as a source for potential factories. Cherry Lake grew out of that project and helped to bring manufacturing jobs to Tama.

There is a ditch that ran along State Street eventually becoming a storm sewer that many of us as kids explored. It was Benjamin Hall that plowed this furrow so water would drain better to the Iowa River.



**Benjamin Hall**

He was involved in the creation of what we now call Cherry Lake. They felt that if industries were to come to Tama, they had better invest in some sort of power mechanism.

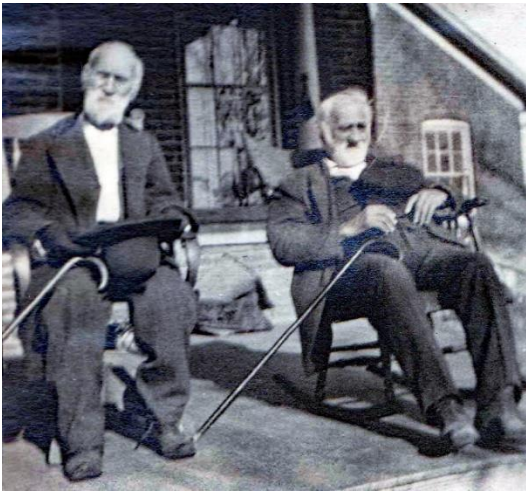


## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

Benjamin became to be known to everyone as “Uncle Benny.”

His wife Elizabeth was born in 1831 in Ohio. She was raised as a Quaker but they attended the local Tama Methodist church. She was also considered a woman of character and was known for her love of reading.

Benjamin and Elizabeth had two daughters; Ada B. who married Weston Theodore Plumb and Mary E. who married Henry Farnham Carmichael. They and their children and their families became involved in all areas of Tama. All of them are buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.



**Brothers Stephen Hall & Benjamin Hall sitting on Benjamin's porch of 301 E 8<sup>th</sup> Street**



**Siblings Stephen Hall, Benjamin Hall & Grandma McCarty**

**#18 – Julius Henry Lauderdale & 1<sup>st</sup> wife  
Hannah Russel Lauderdale & 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Sarah  
Hardon Lauderdale  
Block 6, Lot 43**



**Lauderdale monument in Block 6, Lot 43 looking north. The tallest monument in Oak Hill Cemetery.**

The tallest monument in Oak Hill is the Lauderdale monument. It measures around 12' 6" high. Buried in this plot is Julius, his 1<sup>st</sup> wife Hannah, his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife Sarah, along with Julius & Sarah's daughters Isabelle and Maudie. Another daughter Bessie is buried in this plot along with her husband Irvin Hardon and their son Vernon Hardon.

Julius Henry Lauderdale was born in Livingston County, New York to Edward & Janet (Elliot) Lauderdale. He grew up in New York and later moved to Walworth County, Wisconsin and had a milling business along with a farm. In 1858, he married Hannah Russell.



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

Julius served with the Wisconsin Volunteers in the Union Army during the Civil War as the Captain of Company I.

After being honorably discharged due to a severe illness, Julius & Hannah came to Tama County sometime between 1864-1865 and bought a farm in Section 19 of Columbia Township. He and Hannah lived there until Sarah's death in 1879. There is no mention of any children born to Hannah and Julius, nor is their evidence of children in the 1860 and 1870 US Censuses.

Julius then married Sarah Catharine Hardon on 25 Dec 1880 in Tama. They had several children; Hannah (married Clyde Anderson), Hettie L. (married Ralph Beadle), Julius Edward (married Irma K. Kepler), Betsey "Bessie" (married Irving Hardon), Isabelle "Belle," Amanda "Maudie," & William Henry "Bill" Lauderdale (married Ruby L. Varner). Many of their descendants still live in this area including some that live on part of the original Lauderdale farm in Section 19 of Columbia Township..

Julius died in 1892 after a horse-drawn buggy accident. They were by the train tracks in Tama, and a train passed through scaring the horses. Julius and a Mr. Jacobsen, who was working for him, were thrown from the buggy. Mr. Lauderdale died a few hours later of his injuries. Mr. Jacobsen survived.

Sarah was left with seven children to raise, the oldest being 11 and the youngest was 1. However, in descriptions of her in local history books and in her obituary, she not only maintained their farm, raised their children but helped to grow their living. She was very active in the Maple Grove Church that was on their farm. It was organized about 1880 and was discontinued around 1910. The building was sold in 1911 and when the building was moved, the land reverted to Sarah Lauderdale. Sarah later died in 1923.

At one time there was a school in Columbia Township called the Lauderdale School (Columbia No. 4). It was located by the Lauderdale farm but it no longer stands.

### **#19 – James Lemuel & Nathanette "Nettie"**

**A. (Adams) Bracken**

**Block 6, Lot 51**



**Bracken & Brice burial plot.**

James Lemuel Bracken was the president of the First National Bank in Tama for more than 40 years. He was born in 1844 in Whiteside County, IL where he grew up. He attended college in Illinois and the University of Michigan. He also served in the Union Army during the Civil War becoming a Sergeant-Major.

When he came to Tama in 1867, he was in the grain business for many years before becoming a bank president. He married Nettie Adams in 1878.



**James & Nettie Bracken**

Nettie was born in Walworth County, WI in 1851. After graduating from Milwaukee Downer College, she went to study at the Chicago Musical College and a Florence Ziegfeld was an instructor. Florence was the father of the famous Flo Ziegfeld of the Ziegfeld Follies. Nettie later went to New York to study voice and had Torianni as her teacher. About 1876, she came to Tama & Toledo and was the music teacher for the area. She lived

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

in the home of Judge George Struble and his wife in Toledo until her marriage to James L. Bracken.

Nettie loved music and the arts of which Tama benefited. She even organized a women's suffrage group called Political Equality in Tama as well as many other groups. She was part of the first Women's Federated organization and PEO in the area.

Nettie was one of the driving forces behind the beginning of the Tama Public Library. She wrote a letter to Andrew Carnegie resulting in a gift from his foundation for \$7500.00 to build Tama's first library that was located on the northwest corner of W 9<sup>th</sup> and McClellan Streets.

James & Nettie's children grew up the home they bought at 111 E 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Then these children then had their homes within one block of this house; Alice Brice Bracken at 611 Hall St and Thompson Bracken at 303 E 7<sup>th</sup> Street which they built and later became the Duane & Marilyn Cory home. Their homes are pictured below.

James & Nettie along with their daughter Alice and her husband Carl Brice, are all buried together in Oak Hill Cemetery. Thompson Bracken is buried in Mason City, Iowa.



**Their son Thompson & wife Mattie (Ellis) Bracken built 303 E 7<sup>th</sup> Street, living there a short time before moving to Mason City, Iowa.**



**Home of Carl & Alice (Bracken) Brice at 611 Hall Street in Tama, Iowa**

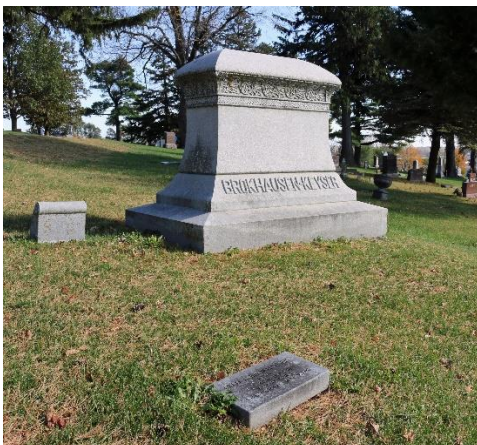


**James & Nettie Bracken home on 111 E 7<sup>th</sup> Street in Tama, Iowa. The original owner was C.K. Bodfish.**



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### #20 – Frederick William & Minnie Lapman (Keyser) Brokhausen Block 8, Lot 9



**Brokhausen Family plot**

Frederick and Minnie were the original owners and builders of what is now called the “Cherry Mansion” in Tama, Iowa located at 1412 State Street.

They had local builder Abraham Lincoln Beal build it. The architect was Dieman T. Fiske of Cedar Rapids who would later design Tama’s innovative high school on the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> & Siegel Streets.

The Brokhausen family owned this home from 1903 to approximately 1915. Herbert T. & H. Louise (Henderson) Cherry then moved in about 1921 and further improved the house & property thus becoming known as the “Cherry Mansion.”

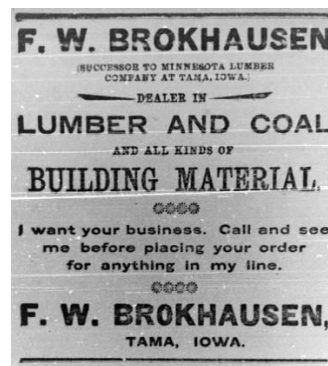


**The Brokhausen family built what we now know as Cherry Mansion.**

Frederick William Brokhausen was born in 1862 in Freeport, Illinois, and married Minnie

Keyser in 1885. Frederick came to Tama in 1884 and was the local manager for the Minnesota Lumber Company. He bought this business and another and owned two lumber yards. This lumber yard was in the area where the original Spahn & Rose Lumber Yard was located off State Street in Tama, Iowa.

Fredrick sold the lumber business in 1905. He organized and was president of the Mutual Loan & Building Association and was vice-president of the Tama Commercial Savings Bank. He was 50 years old when he died 13 Jun 1912 at his home where he had only lived for about 9 years. His funeral was held in his home.



**Ad from local Tama newspaper for Brokhausen lumber yard.**

Minnie moved to Cedar Rapids where her parents lived and later remarried James A. Plumb in Cedar Rapids.

Frederick & Minnie’s children were born in Tama, Iowa. Both Mae and her brother were married several times. Both are buried alongside their parents in Oak Hill along with Mae’s 4<sup>th</sup> husband Emil H. Bernegger.



**Frederick Brokhausen as a young man.**

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### **#21 – Harold John Davis and wife Mae West Davis** **Block 13, E ½ Lot 16**



**Harold & Mae Davis tombstone**



**Harold & Mae Davis**

Many of you will remember the Tama Shoe Store owned by Harold & Mae Davis in Tama. Harold John Davis was born in 1906 in Tipton, Iowa but grew up in Clarence, Iowa. In 1930 he married Mae West. Harold worked in shoe stores until he and Mae moved to Tama to manage the Brownhill Shoe Store which later became known as Denny's Shoe Store. In 1935, he became partners with James L. Chiodini, who was his boss, in the Tama store. When Mr. Chiodini died, Mr. Davis bought out his partnership. He and Mae ran the shoe store until Harold retired in 1970.

Harold also served in the Navy during WW II in the Pacific.

Hannah Jane Mae West was born in 1910 on a ranch in Kansas. She moved with her family to Corydon, Iowa. After finishing school, she taught in rural schools for several years. Mae was another one of Tama's business women who became involved in many organizations. She was one of the charter members of the Tama and Business and Professional Women's Club. Many of remember Mae as a friendly and outgoing person. Both she and Harold were another of Tama's supporters.

They had two children Betty Jean who married Ronald Schmidt and Durwood "Woody" D. Davis, DVM who married Melody Wheeler.

### **#22 – Robert Eugene & Bess L. Shefchik Ingles** **Block 12, East ½ Lot 13**



**Robert & Bess Ingles tombstone.**



**Bess Lucille (Shefchik) Ingles and husband Robert Eugene Ingles.**

We end our tour with another of Tama's Mayors; Bess Ingles. According to her daughter, the area where Bess is now buried in could be called "Mayor's Corner." It is also the area where Ralph Franklin and his wife Shirley (Williams) Franklin are buried as well as John "Jack" Peters and his wife Esther (Kleinlein) Peters are buried.



## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

Bess Ingles was another Tama business woman that was very active in the community. Her career included being the Tama City Clerk, serving on the Tama City Council, and was Tama's only woman Mayor. She also owned and operated the well-known Gas Light Club in downtown Tama known for its bands on the weekends.

Bess also was an active member of many organizations including at one time the Chair of the Tama County Democrat Party. She is also one of the founders of the Tama Business & Professional Women's Club.

Bess Lucille Shefchik Ingles was born in 1909 in Nebraska to Frank & Rena (Pierce) Shefchik. However, her family moved back to this area. Bess graduated from Tama High School later attending a Business College in Illinois. In an interview with her, she talked about how hard it was to find jobs during the depression. She plucked chickens (a job she did not cherish or excel in) as well as playing the piano at the local theaters for the silent films.

In 1940, she married Robert Eugene Ingles and they had a daughter Anne. Anne Michaels is a retired educator and active in many organizations, served on the City Council and, like her mother, one of Tama's biggest supporters.



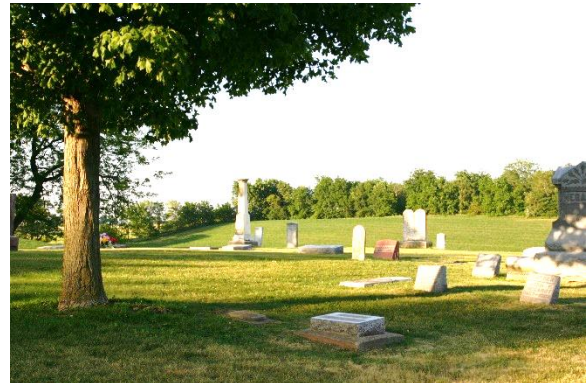
**Bess Ingles during the 1962 Tama Centennial with Hugh J. Hill on the left and Mr. & Mrs. J. Will Brooks on the right of Bess.**

Robert Ingles was born in 1907 in Ottumwa, Iowa to Roy and Anna (Doan) Ingles. He worked as a federal meat inspector. He too was active in our community by serving on the school board and the Tama Library Board. They were big supporters of local community involvement and encouraged many others to also participate in supporting their community.

### **Conclusion of the Oak Hill Cemetery Tour.**

We hope you enjoyed this tour of Tama's past citizens. There is so much history here in Oak Hill Cemetery and so many more stories to get to know that we hope you will explore further. The Tama County Historical & Genealogical Society are always happy to help you find out more.

Also, we would like to mention how grateful we are that our communities' cemeteries are so well-kept. It takes quite a bit of work and it is appreciated. Many in our communities also use them as to walk or ride bikes.



**Two other views in Oak Hill Cemetery.**

## Oak Hill Cemetery, Tama, Iowa 2024 Self-Guided Tour

### Subject Index

Subject	Pages
Babyland	13-14
Bennett	13
Berkheimer (McFate)	9
Bracken	19-20
Brokhausen	21
Carnal	5-6
Cemetery Map	4
Clark	8-9
Cory	11
Davis	22
Hall	17-18
Harrison	15-16
Hollen	7-8
Hotchkiss/Fuller	12
Ingles	22-23
Lauderdale	18-19
Oak Hill Cemetery	1-3
Potters Field	13
Raymond Baby	13-14
Shelter House	16
Veteran's Monument	17
Taylor	14
Tesson	9-10