

Prairie Towns

24. Mechanicsburg was platted in February of 1846 for John D. Elbert, Albert Spain and Nicolas Warner. The town hosted a "wool factory" owned by Spain and two parsonages used by circuit riders of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

25. Hartford was platted in January of 1842 for John D. Elbert and Josephus Lee but the town never developed. Lee sold out to Chappell H. Bonner who with Elbert went on to help found **Mechanicsburg**. The latter two were involved with the Lebanon M. E. Church. then located at the Lebanon Cemetery.

26. Hedvolante was surveyed in July of 1839 for Aaron Word Harlan, an early settler in the Des Moines river valley. The plat was filed on October 4th shortly after he sold his store in **Desmoines City**. The town failed to develop and Harlan returned to **Sweet Home, MO** in 1843.

27. Niles was platted on July 7, 1855 by Henry King, Calvin Thorton and Benjamin Holland. Located at the intersection of the Alexandria to Bloomfield and the Keosauqua to Memphis roads, it hosted the Dodge House hotel operated by Henry King.

28. Upton, located on the Missouri line, was platted by John Upton in May of 1852. It's sister city, **South Upton** in Missouri was platted by William Phanes in May of 1856. Initially a rough and tumble town, it later hosted a Literary Society and Methodist church.

29. Mt. Sterling's original plat is lost but lot sales commenced in May of 1853. Levi Hayes, Asa Blanchard and Samuel Laden all sold lots from their lands along the Bloomfield Road giving rise to one of the town's nicknames, String Town. Originally called Union Corners, the town hosted two mills and a distillery.

30. Gwinnupsburg was platted just East of **Mt. Sterling** by John and Isabel Gwinnup in May of 1872. The Burlington & South Western railroad had just laid tracks nearby. In 1907, **Gwinnupsburg** and **Mt. Sterling** incorporated under the name of **Mt. Sterling**.

31. Rushville was surveyed for Israel Kister in October of 1840 and the plat was filed in December of 1841. Kister came to Van Buren County from Rushville, IN which was named after Dr. Benjamin Rush. Only three lot sales were recorded at the courthouse.

32. Winchester was platted by John Runnells and Jefferson Cox in February of 1840. The town was located on the Keokuk to Agency road and hosted the Union Protection Society of Winchester. This group was more commonly known as the Anti-Horse Thief Association.

33. Parkersville/Parkersburg was found by the 1837 Congressional Survey to be a "village regularly laid out" with a store but no inhabitants. Samuel Parker, who lived in the area, was elected to the 1st Iowa Territorial Legislature but removed to the Oregon Country in 1845.

34. Utica's plat was filed in June of 1857 by John and Emma Whetsel. By January of 1864 he had sold out to Samuel Nixon who deplatted part of the town. **Utica** was a crossroads town with buildings for a store, a school and two churches.

35. Pierceville was surveyed as **Dibbleville** in 1852 but was platted as **Pierceville** by Roswell T. Dibble and Thomas Dibble, Sr. in 1855. Father Dibble was a member of the 1846 Iowa Constitutional Convention and father-in-law to George G. Wright, the future Senator and Iowa Supreme Court Justice,

36. Summit's plat was filed in April of 1860 by John and Alexandria Taylor. As the name suggests, it was the highest point in the county on the Keokuk, Ft. Des Moines & Minnesota Railroad. In 1880, the Keosauqua & Southwestern railroad was built from what was then known as **Mt. Zion** to **Keosauqua**.

37. Business Corners was platted in August of 1853 by Walter and Rebecca Whitten. It took its name from the Post Office opened there in 1849 with the early abolitionist, Charles T. Gardner, as Postmaster. Coal and limestone were extracted at several locations around **Business Corners**.

38. Crowderville was surveyed in about 1855 for John Crowder and Stephen & Sarah Gnash but the town plat was withdrawn in 1856. The only lot sale recorded was in 1859 to the local school district for the Elm School. This one-room country school was active from 1862 until the early 1950's.