

2 letters sent to John & Helen (Wiese) Ohde from James Kemp in the early 1980s.

June 6th from Kemp Studio James F. Kemp Danbury, Iowa 51019

Dear Owners of 304 Ann Street,

My grandfather & grandmother, James L. & Emeline Hall, built the house in the 1890s. I was going thru Manning on May 2nd, and stopped at the cemetery first to visit the Hall graves then drove by the house and also stopped hoping to get a "glimpse" inside --- no one home.

The front porch replacement, looks beautiful as does the outside of the home ---- really a nice feeling, knowing that someone cares about the place.

Tho't perhaps you might like a print of one of the older scenes, showing their 2nd lot and the old barn on it.

The prints were very yellowed so the copies were filtered blue and printed on color paper.

Also their daughter Azubah Hall Pollock, owned and built the 2nd home next to yours and my parents, Frank & Ida Hall Kemp owned the 3rd house on the same block. I think this one partly burned and it was completely rebuilt. The 2nd one over looks just the same as it did years ago.

My grandmother died in 1933 and her daughter Azubah lived in the house until her death in 1938. The last time I was in the place was possibly April 1938. It was rented a year or so and finally sold to Mrs. Navin then I lost track.

Remembering from my childhood visits there one of the "wonders" was the "water-fall" toilet in the basement. The water was in a big container above the stool and you pulled the chain and you heard a "water-fall". It was fun!

My sister Helen Schrank and I hope to decorate the graves this summer sometime and possibly could we stop and just have a glimpse in the home?

Keep the prints.

Most sincerely, Jim Kemp

September 3rd

Dear Mrs. Ohde,

Delighted to get your letter -- was beginning to wonder!

First thing, we don't want a "tour" of the house, especially up-stairs since that is rented. Just a glimpse or two of the main floor. I have cousins from Montana who visited every few years in Manning and since I am a photographer I would like to take a couple of "snaps" of the interior and several outside.

The design of your new front porch is really stunning and I am glad the house is being so well cared for.

Getting my sister motivated on a certain day is a task but hopefully it will be in the next couple of weeks. I will call you the day or so before and we won't be there for more than

1 hour.

The day I looked thru the front door I tho't the stairs were bare.

My grandmother had both front & back stairways carpeted with many fancy spindles of wood held with brass rings and the back of each step to hold the carpet on the step. My special job at each visit was using a small whisk broom and brushing all those steps. It was fun. None of us could figure out why, two people, both in poor health, would build such a large home. My grandmother was very small and the amount of coal she shoveled over the years to keep the furnace going must have been terrific. After her daughter came to live with her (Sue Pollock -- they were former builders of the house to the south of you) they eventually went to a stoker, possibly around 1931. Even that took a lot of work to keep the steam up!

Actually I don't know too much about the abstract. I never saw it. We never knew exactly when the house was built and would appreciate this info if its given.

As far as I know the home was in my grandmother's name, Mrs. James L. Hall, until my aunt died March 1, 1938 (grandmother died November 13, 1933) and then it was rented and about 1940. I think it was sold to Mrs. Navin who helped with the house-work etc. during my grandmother's later life --- that's the extent of my knowledge.

We often drove to the cemetery, always up around "the place" and we usually were at Jimmy & Ola Surridge once a year for the afternoon. I seem to remember a period of years, possibly the late 1940s when the house looked run-down. Then it had work on it and its been quite nice since but now its beautiful!

I'll bring some other pictures with me that were taken in the front room, early in the 1900's of my Grandmother & a couple of her sisters, Emeline Williams Hall was a descendant of Roger Williams of Rhode Island, founder of that colony and of the Baptist church in America.

During the winter I hope to go thru some other pictures, copy etc. and I know there are a couple of others that you might like of the earlier years as long as you are interested in the home.

Will phone when I know the day --- we also may visit my Great Grandmother's grave (Kemp) at Westside, on the return trip, etc.

Sincerely Jim Kemp  
Box 319  
Danbury, Iowa 51019