

# The Iowa Land Patents of Christian Tenebahn

1. US Land Patent # 35060, April 15, 1857
2. State of Iowa Land Patent # 13810, August 19, 1864

In about the spring of 1852, at least two Tenebahn families emigrated to the United States from Tundern, Hameln-Pyrmont Germany. They landed in New Orleans and made their way north to Dubuque, Iowa. There, they split up, some traveling to Minnesota via wagon train. The Christian Tenebahn family remained in east central Iowa, homesteading for about three years. Here is their untold story.

- Primarily, during the time period of this story, Christian spelled his last name as Tenebahn or Tennebahn. We will use 'Tenebahn' in our story.

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## Principals

Christian Wilhelm Leopold Tönebön Tenebahn Tennebahn  
BIRTH 20 MAY 1809 • Tundern, Hameln-Pyrmont, Lower Saxony, Germany  
DEATH ABT. 2 MAY 1860 • St Louis, Missouri

Married: Abt: 1836

Caroline Louise "Carolina" Loges  
BIRTH 17 MAR 1815 • Hamburg, Germany  
DEATH 31 JUL 1896 • St Louis, Missouri

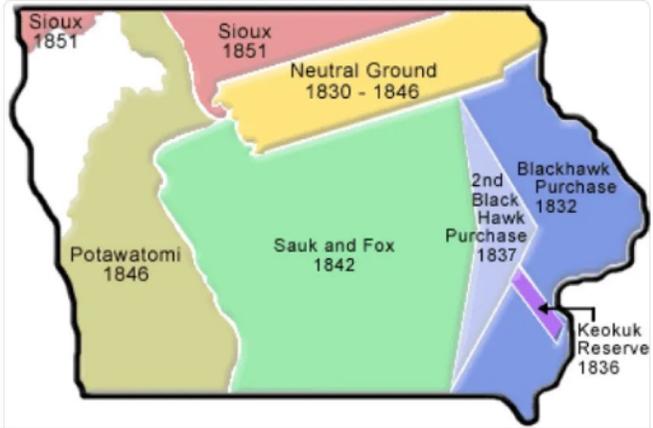
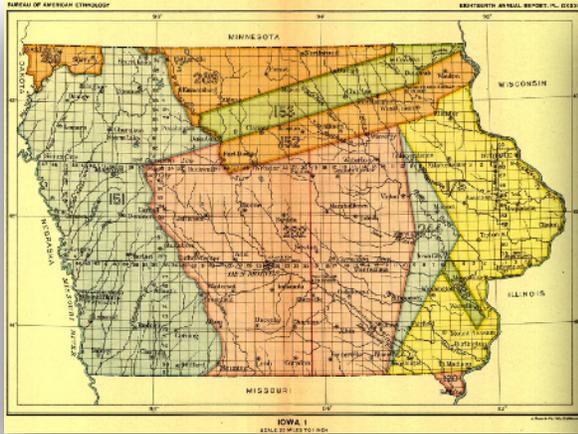
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## Historic Background

**Iowa:** In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson, for \$15 million (ca 1800) US dollars, completed the Louisiana Purchase from France. The territory that would become Iowa, was included in this massive land deal. Lewis & Clark, and later Zebulen Pike, were sent to explore the lands of the Louisiana Purchase. Pike, in 1805-1806, exclusively explored the upper Mississippi River in search of tributaries and headwaters.

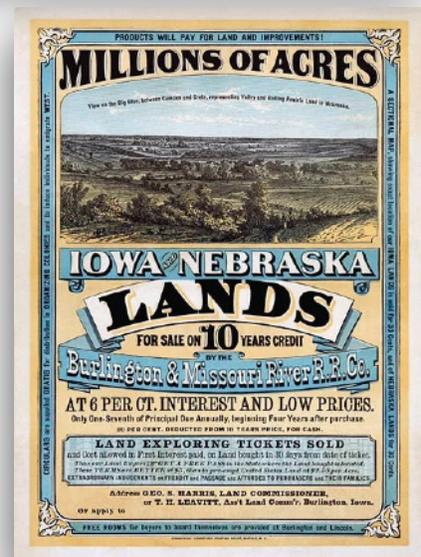
By the late 1830's, the Public Land Survey System was created by the United States government for the purpose of surveying, platting, and mapping this newly-acquired land in the west. These surveyors maps were vitally important for an accurate distribution of land.

Between 1832 and 1851 all Native American tribal lands had been "traded" away. The Black Hawk Purchase – following the 1832 Black Hawk War – opened on June 1, 1833, giving new settlers 'legal' access to six million acres of rich new land on the west side of the Mississippi.



Once admitted to the Union in 1846, Iowa set its direction to development and organized campaigns for settlers and investors, boasting the young frontier state's rich farmlands, fine citizens, free and open society, and good government. Among those early Iowa pioneers were the author's 3rd grandparents, Christian and Caroline Tenebahn, from Tundern, Hameln-Pyrmont Germany.

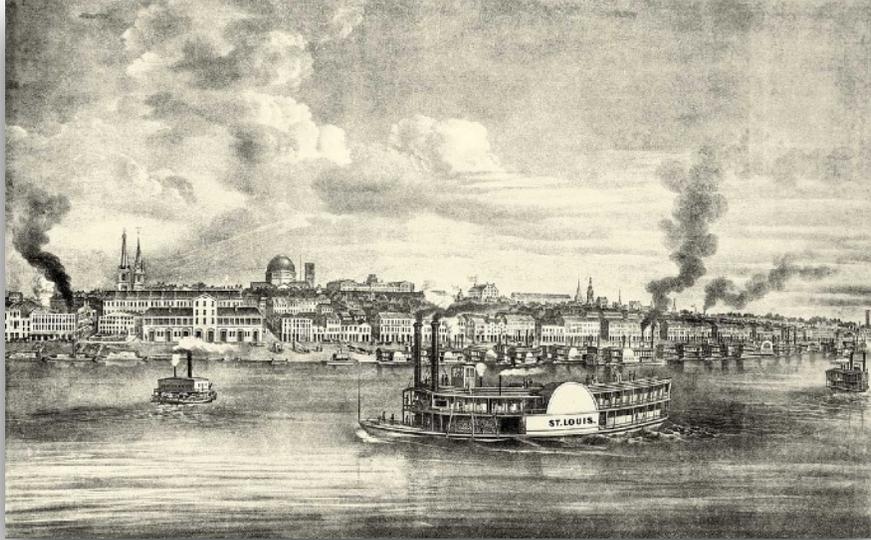
**Tenebahn Families:** We don't know the exact immigration story of the Tenebahn's. However, the following narrative is a likely scenario based available and discovered information.



The Tenebahn families (likely multiple families, modestly wealthy) immigrated to the US - Bremen, Germany to New Orleans, spring of 1852. There, they booked northbound passage on a Mississippi River passenger steambot. Their intended destination was Dubuque, IA.



Along the way, they undoubtedly noticed the booming city of St. Louis, Missouri.



In Dubuque, they had a "Prairie," "Farmer" or "Freight" wagon built for cross country transport - likely built by the A.A. Cooper Wagon Company - using abundant wood shipped from Wisconsin and Minnesota. A one-horse wagon sold for \$65. A buggy and a two-horse timber wagon cost \$125.00 and \$65.00 respectively.



Some of the Tenebahn party split up and moved to Minnesota. Family lore is that the wagon train to Minnesota was attacked by native Americans and several members were killed. Christian, Caroline, and their nine children remained in Dubuque, intending to homestead in Iowa.

At Dubuque, Christian bought an initial 80 acres (@ .75 per acre) of Iowa prairie at the local General Land Office (Sep 1853) - US Land Patent 35060. Once their wagon was built and they had purchased horses and other supplies necessary for homesteading, they made their way west about 50 miles to their purchased land along Buffalo Creek in Buchanan County.

The Tenebahn's homesteaded along Buffalo Creek between 1853 and 1857. Christian bought an additional 160 acres - State of Iowa Land Patent 13810 - in Spring, 1854. This acreage was adjacent to their initial purchase and lay to the east of Buffalo Creek - 240 acres in total. In the spring of 1857, after four years on the homestead, they up and left Iowa relocating to St. Louis, Missouri. They never returned to Iowa.

Why did they abandon their 240 acre homestead and move to St. Louis in the spring of 1857? What happened to the 240 acres they left behind? Was the land sold, bartered away, given away, or abandoned?

If the Tenebahn's intended to be market gardeners, there were no towns in reasonable distance from their rural homestead to sell their produce. If they intended to farm large scale crops (e.g., wheat), they needed many more acres, equipment, and labor. It could be that local Native American tribes were still in the area, harassing immigrant homesteaders (e.g., the Blackhawk Nation). It could be that the bitter cold Iowa winters were unbearable. And, it could be that the extreme isolation and loneliness was just too much for the Tenebahn's. Whatever the reason or reasons, the Tenebahn's moved to St. Louis in the spring of 1857.

Christian and Caroline Tenebahn would purchase property just outside the city limits of St. Louis and would become market gardeners with a built in local market to sell their produce. Christian would die in St. Louis at the age of 50 in the Spring, 1860.

Let's take a closer look at the two specific Iowa land purchases and patents. These patents, until recently, were unknown to the descendants of Christian and Caroline Tenebahn. In fact, for most Tenebahn/Toeneboehn descendants, we knew nothing about the Iowa homesteading efforts.

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## United States Land Patents

*"Patented lands may be lands that had been granted by a sovereign authority in return for services rendered or accompanying a title or otherwise bestowed gratis, or they may be lands privately purchased by a government, individual, or legal entity from their prior owners." "A land patent, known in law as "letters patent," typically issues to the original grantee and their heirs and assigns in perpetuity." "...the land patent legally becomes the title to the land described within its boundaries.*

*The United States General Land Office, placed in charge of managing all public lands in 1812, adhered to a two-step process when granting a patent. Initially, the private claimant visited the land office in the land district where the public land was situated. The claimant completed entry papers to designate the public land, and the land office register verified the availability of the claimed land by checking the local registrar records. The receiver collected the claimant's payment, as even homesteaders were required to pay administrative fees.*

*Subsequently, the district land office register and receiver forwarded the documentation to the General Land Office in Washington. This office conducted a thorough review to ensure the accuracy of the claim, the land's availability, and the payment method. Ultimately, the General Land Office issued a land patent for the public land in question and forwarded it to the President for his signature."*

**[HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/LAND PATENT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_Patent)**

# US Land Patent #35060 (Accession IA1700\_.070), April 15, 1857

On April 15, 1857, Christian Tenebahn was issued a Land Patent (#35060) for 80 acres of Buchanan County. He apparently bought two 40 acre tracts, totalling 80 acres in Sep. 1853 at the rate of 75 cents per acre, \$60 (~\$2500 modern dollars). The official land patent was issued 4 years later (delay due to bureaucracy), Apr. 1857.

Middlefield Township, Buchanan County, Iowa  
 Section 17 of Township: 88N Range: 7W

1. SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 @ 40 acres
2. NE 1/4 of SE 1/4 @ 40 acres

BLM
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

General Land Office Records

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[Patent Details](#)

Accession Nr: IA1700\_.070    Document Type: State Volume Patent    State: Iowa    Issue Date: 4/15/1857    Cancelled: No

Patent Details
Patent Image
Related Documents
Printer Friendly

**Names On Document**

TENEBAHN, CHRISTIAN

Military Rank: ---

**Miscellaneous Information**

Land Office: Dubuque

US Reservations: No

Mineral Reservations: No

Tribe: ---

Militia: ---

State In Favor Of: ---

Authority: April 24, 1820: Sale-Cash Entry (3 Stat. 566)

General Remarks: ---

**Document Numbers**

Document Nr: 35060

Misc. Doc. Nr: ---

BLM Serial Nr: ---

Indian Allot. Nr: ---

Coal Entry. Nr: ---

**Survey Information**

Total Acres: 80.00

Survey Date: ---

Geographic Name: ---

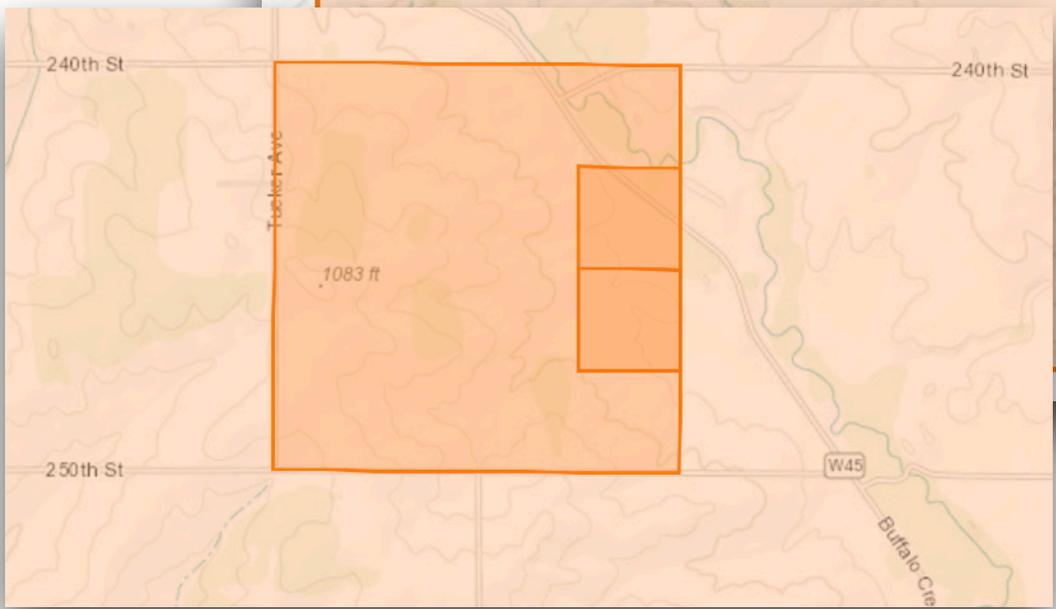
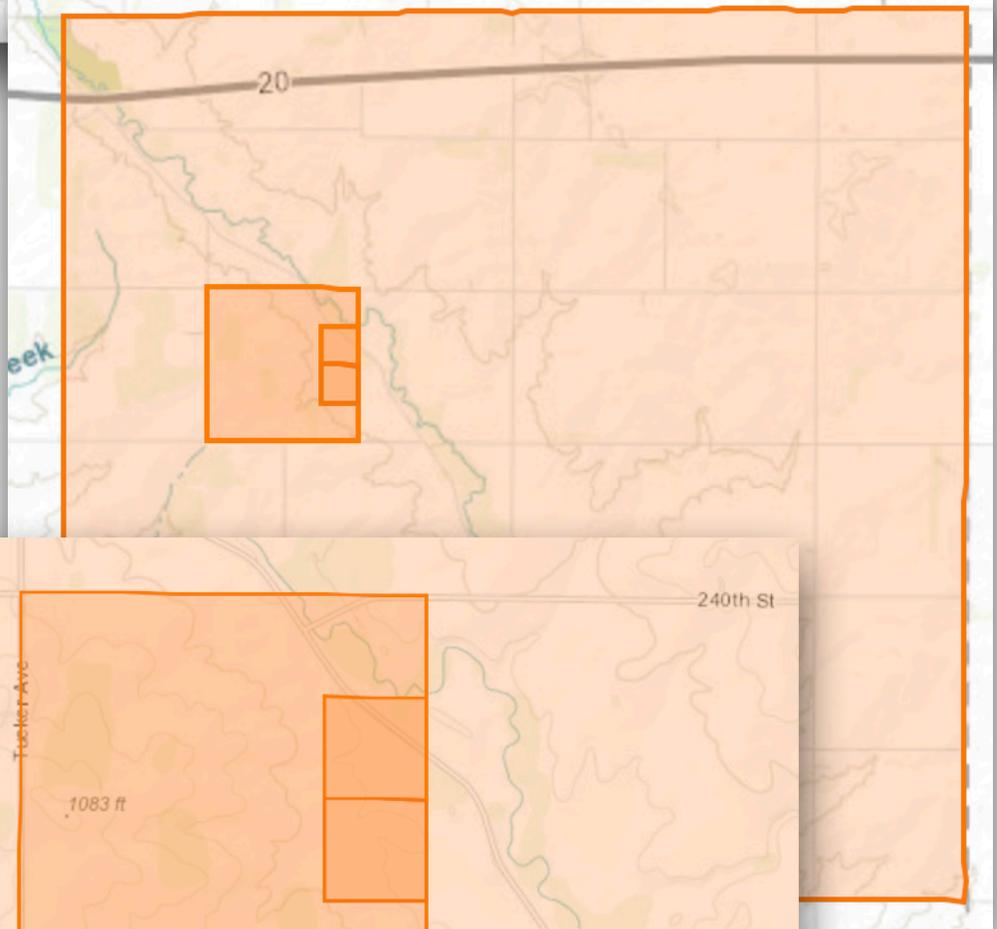
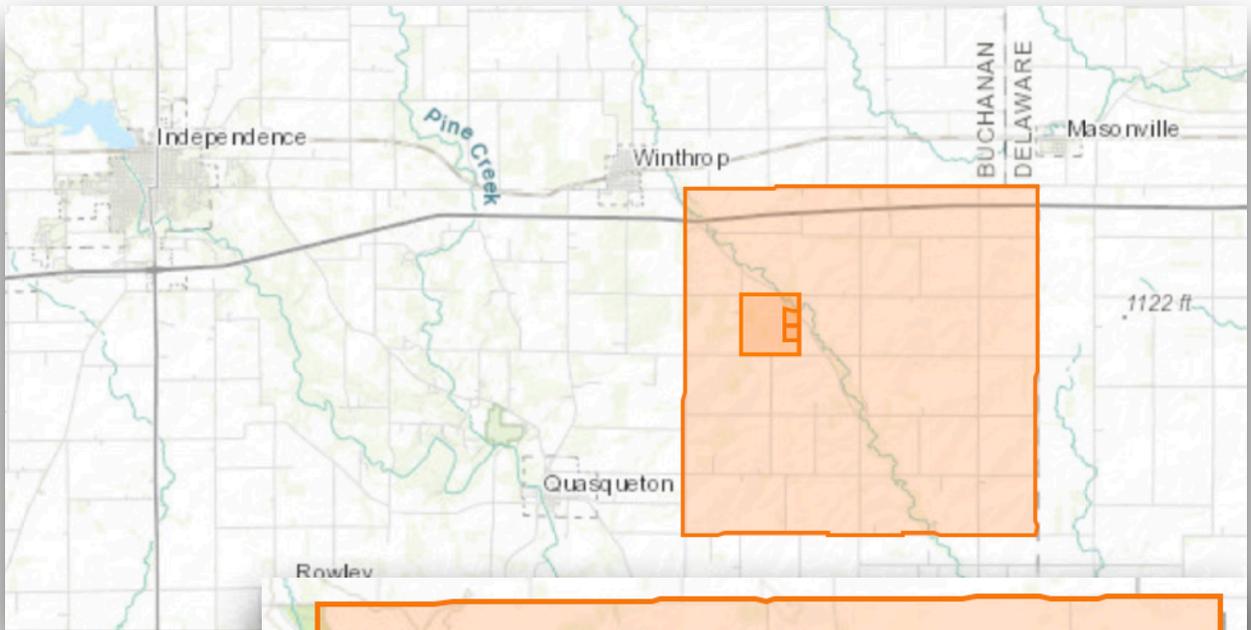
Metes/Bounds: No

**Land Descriptions**

Map	State	Meridian	Twp - Rng	Aliquots	Section	Survey #	County
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IA	5th PM	088N - 007W	SE¼NE¼	17		Buchanan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	IA	5th PM	088N - 007W	NE¼SE¼	17		Buchanan

Iowa DNR, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS

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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CERTIFICATE }  
No. 35060 }

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greet

Whereas Christian Tenebahn of Buchanan County  
Iowa

has deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States, a Certificate of the REGISTER OF THE LAND OFFICE at Dubuque whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said

Christian Tenebahn according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," for the South East quarter of North East quarter and the North East quarter of South East quarter of Section seventeen, in Township eighty eight North, of Range seven West, in the District of Lands subject to sale at Dubuque, Iowa, containing eighty acres,

according to the official plat of the Survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL, which said tract has been purchased by the said Christian Tenebahn

NOW KNOW YE, That the

United States of America, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said

Christian Tenebahn

and to his heirs, the said tract above described: with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances of whatsoever nature, thereto belonging, unto the said

Christian Tenebahn

and to his heirs and assigns forever.

In Testimony Whereof, I, James Buchanan

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these Letters to be made: PATENT, and the SEAL of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the fifteenth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty seven and of the INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES the Eighty first

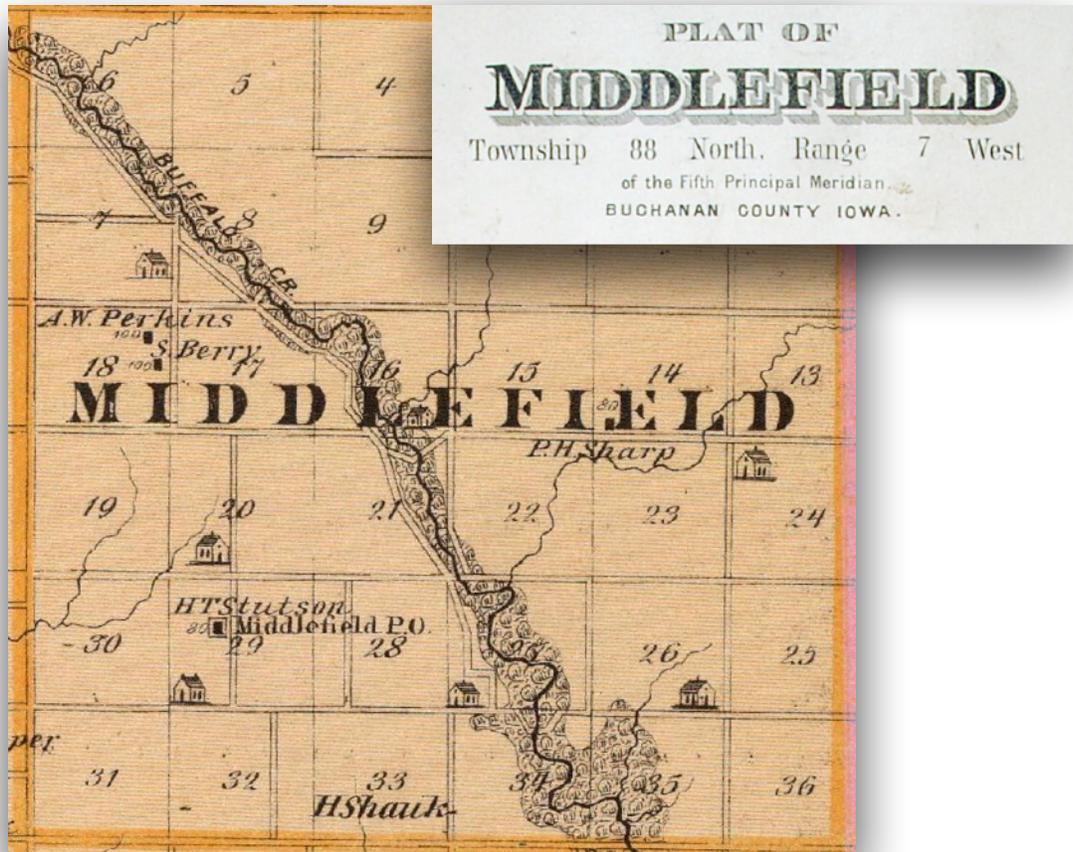
BY THE PRESIDENT: James Buchanan  
By G H Jones

Secretary.

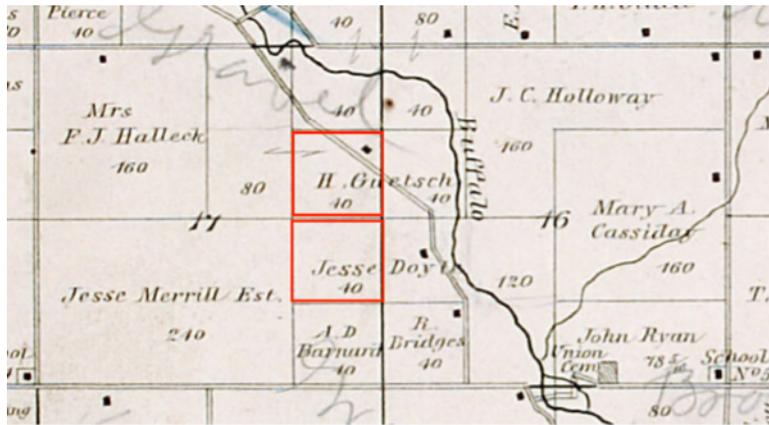
G A Granger Recorder of the General Land Office.

1155875





MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP PLATTED OWNERSHIP, 1875



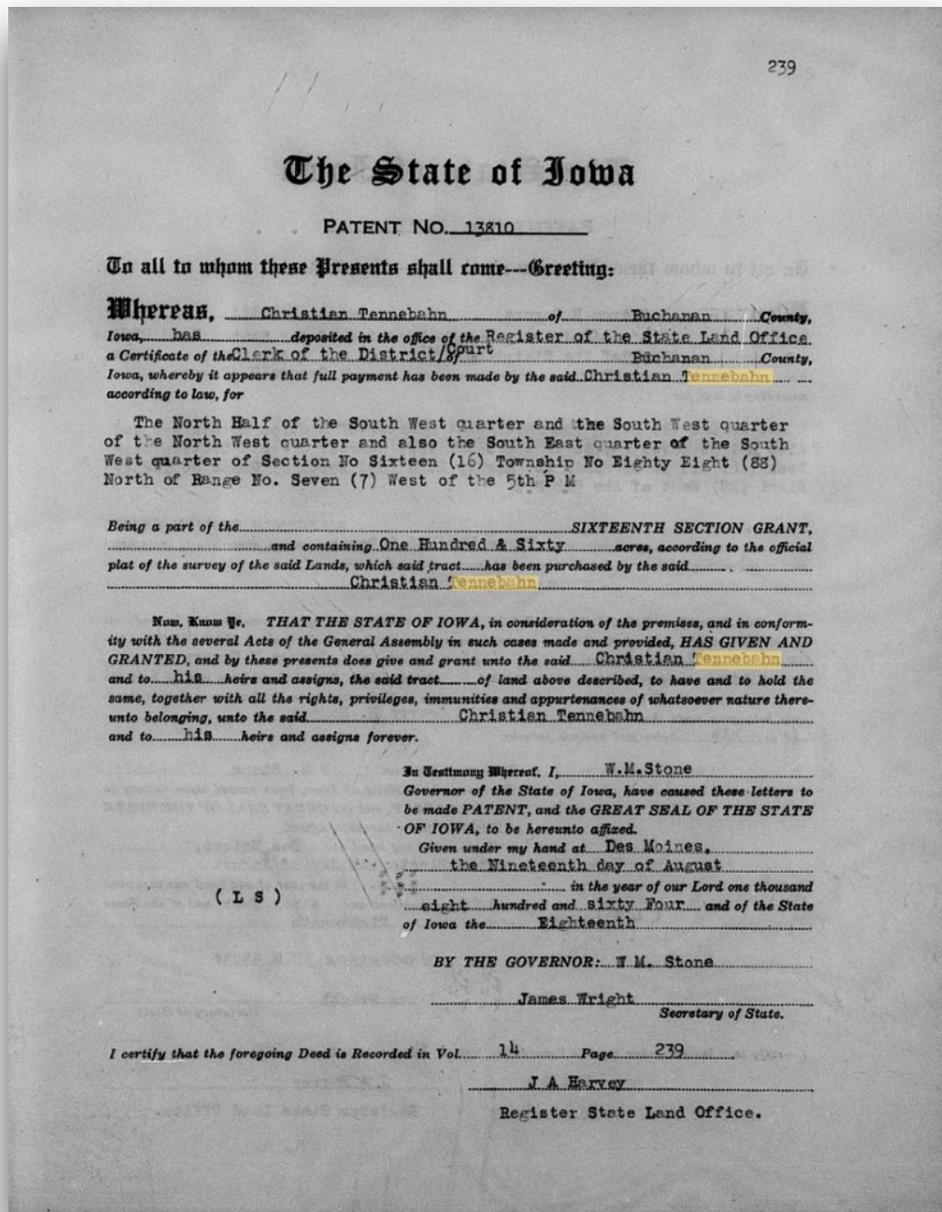
MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP PLATTED OWNERSHIP, 1886  
TENEBAHN LAND PATENT 35060 OUTLINED IN RED

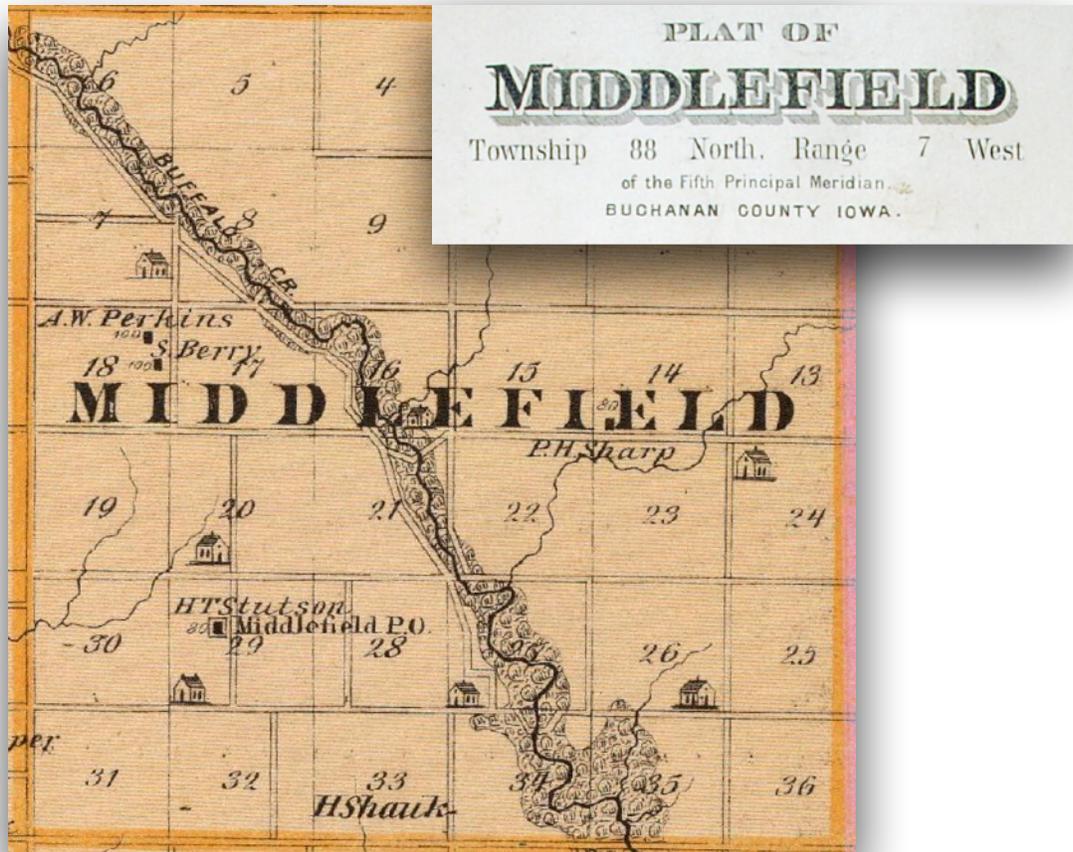
State of Iowa Land Patent #13810, August 19, 1864

In May, 1854, Christian Tenebahn (spelled Tennebahn) was granted four 40 acre parcels in Section 16, adjacent to his Section 17 parcels (Patent #35060). This grant (no payment) was patented by the State of Iowa, August 19, 1864 - Land Patent # 13810.

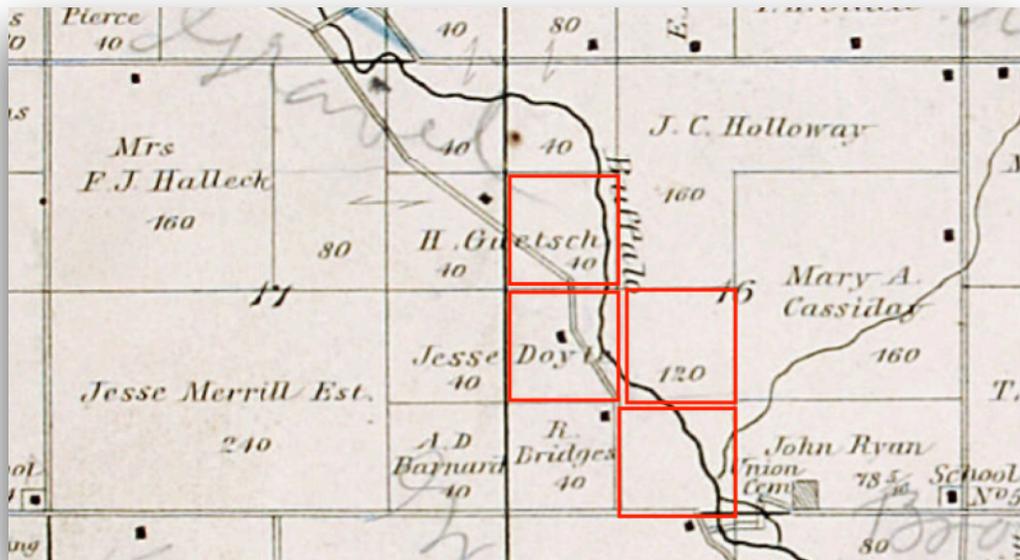
Middlefield Township, Buchanan County, Iowa  
Section 16 of Township: 88N Range: 7W

- 1. SW 1/4 of NW 1/4 @ 40 acres
- 2. NE 1/4 of SW 1/4 @ 40 acres
- 3. SE 1/4 of SW 1/4 @ 40 acres
- 4. NW 1/4 of SW 1/4 @ 40 acres



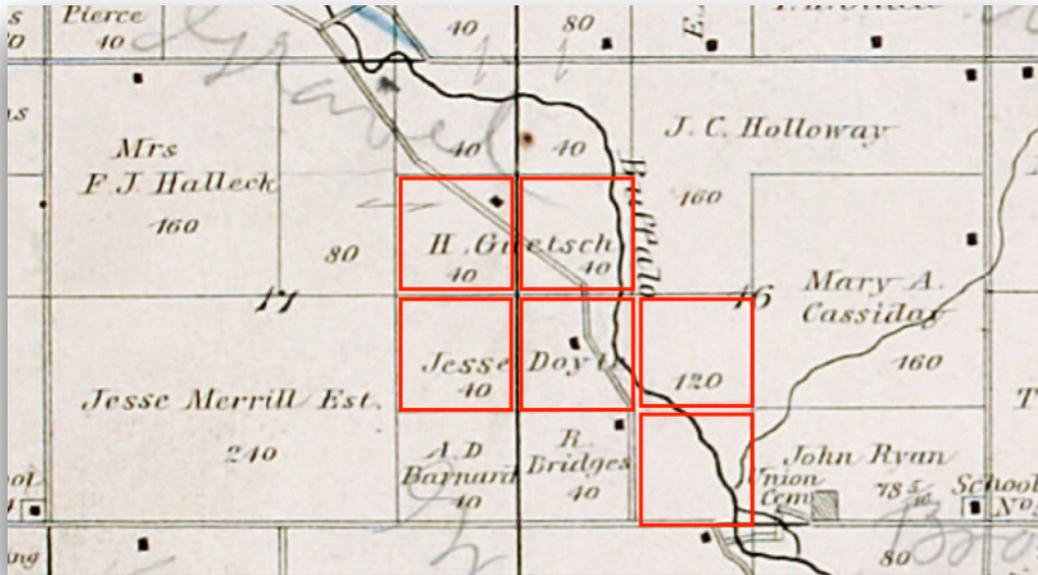


MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP PLATTED OWNERSHIP, 1875

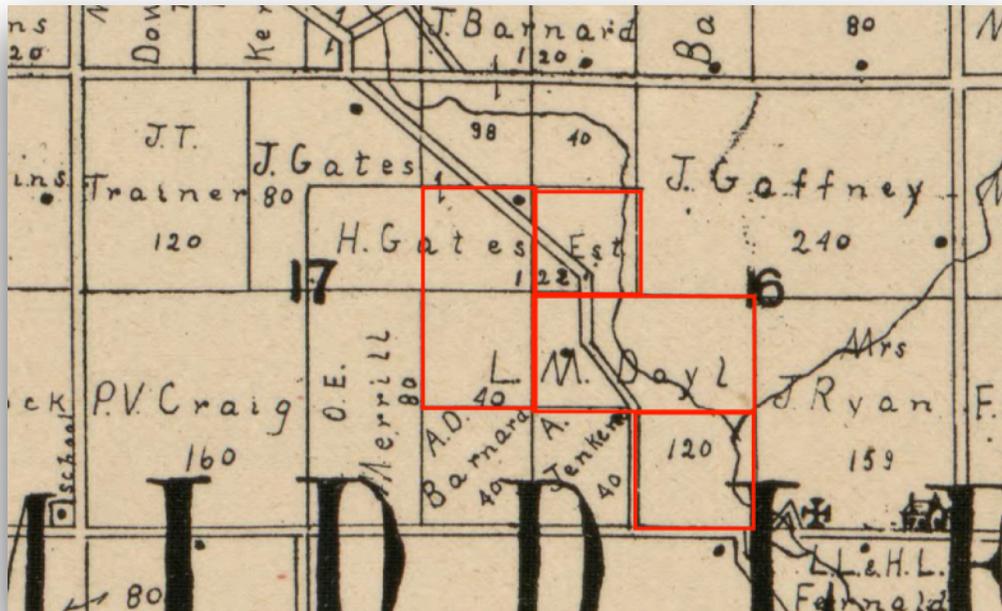


MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP PLATTED OWNERSHIP, 1886  
 TENEBAHN LAND PATENT 13810 OUTLINED IN RED

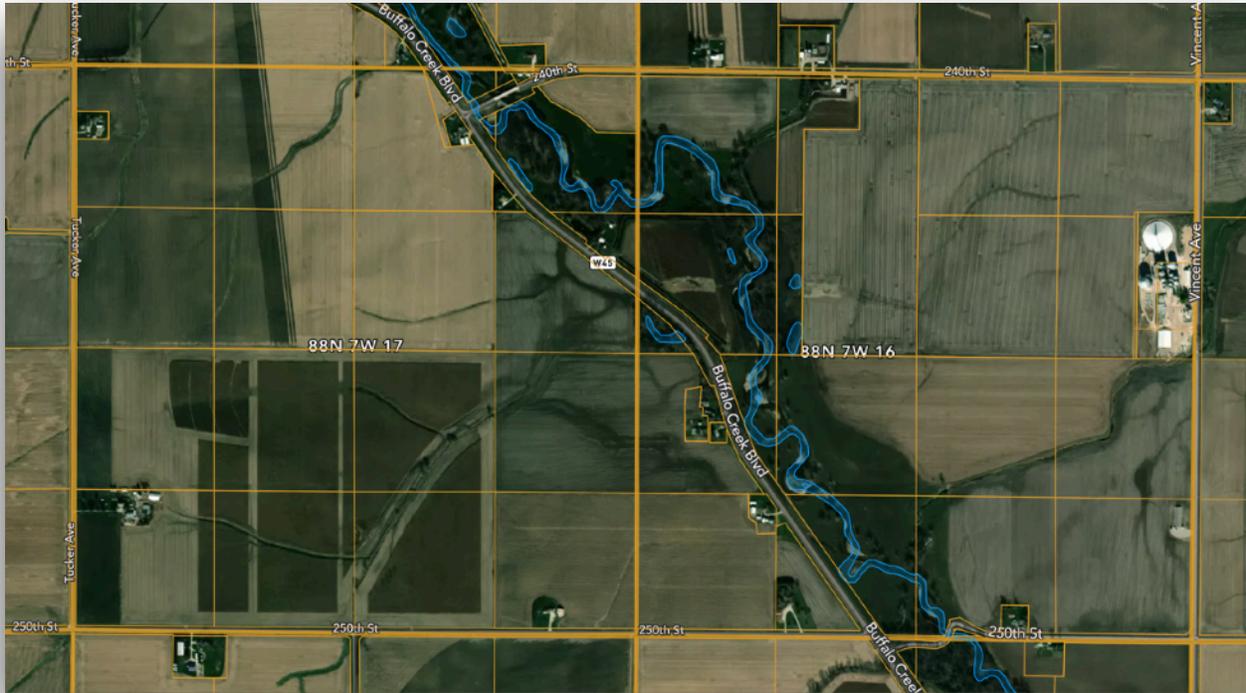
Land Patents 35060 and 13810 Combined; 1886 and 1900



MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP PLATTED OWNERSHIP, 1886  
TENEBAHN LAND PATENTS 35060 AND 13810 OUTLINED IN RED



MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP PLATTED OWNERSHIP, 1900  
TENEBAHN LAND PATENTS 35060 AND 13810 OUTLINED IN RED



MIDDLEFIELD TOWNSHIP, SECTION 16 AND 17, CURRENT DAY

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## Tenebahn Land Patent Sale and Successor

In May, 1857, Christian and Caroline Tenebahn sold the 240 acres under the two land patents to Charles Stahler for \$2600 (~ \$100,000 in modern dollars). Charles Stahler and his descendants became the successors to the original Tenebahn Land Patents.

\* See next page for sales transaction document, filed May 27, 1857.

In summary, Christian bought the initial 80 acres @ .75 per acre for about \$60 (~\$2500 modern dollars). He was granted another 160 acres by the State of Iowa for a total of 240 acres. He sold the 240 acres in May 1857 for \$2600 (~ **\$100,000 in modern dollars**). That is a more than 4300% increase in value in just four years.

As a side note, this period (~1847-1860) was the time of the great western migration. Hundreds of thousands of individuals and families migrated west along the Oregon Trail. The Tenebahn's were not among those emigrants. For whatever reasons, they remained in St. Louis, MO and built a life there.

Husband, *Witness my hand and seal the day and year aforesaid*

*Hiram Hull* 

State of Pennsylvania  
Mercer County

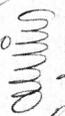
I David H. Findley Prothonotary of the County of Mercer  
Do hereby certify that Hiram Hull Esqr before whom  
the foregoing acknowledgment was made was at the time of making the same  
an acting Justice of the peace in and for said County duly commissioned and  
qualified and authorized by law to take the same acknowledgment of deeds and  
other instruments of writing, and that the signature Hiram Hull, thereto subscribed  
and that ~~the~~ is the genuine signature of the aforesaid Hiram Hull Esqr.

 Given under my hand and the seal of said County at Mercer  
this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April A.D. 1837.

*D. H. Findley* Proth.

Filed May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1837.

Christian Fenebach  
Charles Stabler



Deed X May 27/57

For the consideration of Twenty six hundred  
Dollars we hereby convey unto Charles Stabler the following tracts of land to wit  
Lot 2<sup>nd</sup> of section 7<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> being the North half (2) of the North West fourth (34)  
& Lot 1<sup>st</sup> of section 17<sup>th</sup> being the South West fourth (36) of the North West quarter of  
Section six<sup>th</sup> Township Eighty Eight (88) & South East fourth of South West fourth  
of Section six<sup>th</sup> Township Eighty Eight (88) & the South East fourth (44) of North  
East fourth & the North East fourth (44) of South East quarter of Section seven<sup>th</sup>  
Township Eighty Eight (88) all in North of Range seven<sup>th</sup> West containing  
all 240 acres more or less and we do hereby relinquish all contingent right including  
right to down which we have in said land and we will warrant the title against  
all persons whomsoever, *Witness our hands this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May A.D. 1837.*

*Christian Fenebach*  
*Ernestine Fenebach*

State of Penna  
Buchanan County

On this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May A.D. 1837, before me a Justice of the peace  
in and for said County came Christian Fenebach wife to me known to be the  
identical person whose name are subscribed to the above conveyance as grantor  
and acknowledged the same to be their voluntary act and deed, *Witness my*  
*hand this day and year above*

*A. C. Gageby* Justice of the  
Peace

Filed May 27<sup>th</sup> 1837.

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## References and Notes

- **Surname Note:** Last name spelling variations: Tönebol, Tönebön, Toeneböhn, Tönebühn, Tenebahn, Tennebohn, Tenebin, Teneben, Tenebehn, Toineboin, Toineboihl, Tonebohn, Tonnebohn, Teonebeohn, Toeneboehn, Toeneboen -  
Pronounced like: "Ten - a - ben" in quick fashion

### **A. A. COOPER WAGON AND BUGGY COMPANY**

<https://encyclopediadubuque.org/index.php?title=A. A. COOPER WAGON AND BUGGY COMPANY>

### **PastPorts, "Rollin up the River", Nov. 2012**

[PastPorts](https://www.slcl.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/pastports-11-2021.pdf) is published by History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library  
<https://www.slcl.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/pastports-11-2021.pdf>

### **Our Iowa Heritage; Three Hundred Years of Iowa Maps**

<https://ouriowaheritage.com/our-iowa-heritage-iowamaps/>

### **BLM Land Patent #35060**

[https://glorerecords.blm.gov/details/patent/default.aspx?accession=IA1700\\_070&docClass=STA&sid=wnaohng.lxh](https://glorerecords.blm.gov/details/patent/default.aspx?accession=IA1700_070&docClass=STA&sid=wnaohng.lxh)

### **State of Iowa Land Patent #13810**

"Iowa, United States records," images, FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C37P-LSZS-K?view=fullText> : Dec 19, 2025), image 136 of 333; Iowa. Land Department. Image Group Number: 008585401

### **Middlefield Township Plat Map, 1886**

<https://digital.lib.uiowa.edu/node/376399>

Note: Before 1859, part of Middlefield Township was in present day Liberty Township.

### **Land Patent Search Reference**

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Land\\_Patent\\_Search](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Land_Patent_Search)

### **Gold Dust Title**

<https://golddusttitle.com/land-patent-issues-your-legal-options-for-federal-patented-property/>

### **Buchanan County Abstract Company**

<https://www.buchanancountyabstract.com/>

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