

## **King's Hall [No. 330]**

*1876 – Charles King*

**King's Hall** became the town center for entertainment, meetings, balls, revivals and more into the early 1890s. It hosted numerous musical events, minstrel shows, and theatrical productions. The Cataract Engine Company's Masquerade Ball became an annual event. In 1877, Graves & Leland's week long temperance revival drew large crowds. A week long Musical Convention under Professor Stillman that featured 50 musicians from abroad was held here in 1880. In the winter of 1883, King briefly converted the hall into a roller skating rink. Unfortunately, he did not put in a new floor hard enough for skates and by the end of each evening, the place was filled with sawdust.

The spacious lower level was rented to various enterprises. A steam laundry was located here in the early 1880s. A side bonus to this business was that it provided ample heat for the hall above. In 1890, **Weins & Shillinglaw's Poultry** operation moved in. They used it as a hatchery through 1896.

In 1892, a lavish new opera house was built as part of the Gedney Hotel and King's Hall was no longer needed as a performance venue. The local **Y.M.C.A.** and **Iowa Guard** rented the building as their separate headquarters in 1896. Two years later, the **Iowa Wholesale Grocery Co.** moved operations to this location and completely renovated the interior of the building, adding a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. This permanently ended the building's career as a meeting hall. The

**Wells-Keagy Co.** owned by James A. Wells and H.R. Keagy leased the building in 1908 for their gloves, mittens, whips and baking powder business. By 1912, Wells had moved on leaving Keagy to form the **People's Supply Co.** that resided here until 1917. In 1918, the **Mel L. Webster Co. Wholesale Garden Seeds** relocated its extensive business to this location, remaining for the next 30 years.