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BUFFALO COUNTY

NEBRASKA

AND ITS PEOPLE

A Record of Settlement, Organization,
Progress and Achievement

BY

SAMUEL CLAY BASSETT

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME I

CHICAGO

THE S. J. CLARKE PUBLISHING COMPANY

1916

INTRODUCTION

NEBRASKA—A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY

For centuries the supremest praise possible to bestow upon any land has been, "A land flowing with milk and honey." Were some modern Moses to send out spies in this our generation, in search of a promised land, and were these spies to traverse this our land, in the fall of the year, when the harvests are ripe, what possible phrase could those spies invent which would briefly and more fittingly express its richness and fatness, its home-making and nation-making qualities?

For the purpose of this toast and this occasion let us consider as "this land of ours" the twelve states lying in the valley of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, and of which states our own Nebraska is by no means the least in importance.

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"A land flowing with milk and honey."

A land fertile and fruitful, a land abounding in running waters, sweet and wholesome, a land having a healthful climate has been the supreme desire of all people, of all nations since time had a beginning. To possess such a goodly land, to enjoy it as a heritage and to transmit it to posterity, mankind, in all ages, have labored and endured, have suffered toil and privation, have fought, bled and died.

Where, let me ask, in this wide, wide world, can you find a valley of like area so fertile and so fruitful and of such producing capacity? Where a climate more healthful and invigorating? Where a land whose waters, sweet and wholesome, are more abundant and unfailing?

And where, let me ask, can you find a rural population of 16,000,000 souls having so small a percentage of illiteracy, so small a percentage of poverty, so small a percentage of wretchedness, so small a percentage of vice and crime?

Where can you find a people among whom you would prefer to make your home, to have for your neighbors and friends, among whom to do your life work and to enjoy the fruits of your labor? A people whose character, whose enterprise, whose public spirit, whose customs, whose habits, whose form of government, whose traditions, whose religious beliefs, together with the goodly land which they inhabit, you would rather leave as a heritage to your children and your children's children?

This land of ours.

The heart of a continent.

The bread basket of the world.

The desire of all the earth.

A land to be enjoyed and by us transmitted as a heritage to our children and our children's children.

A land flowing with milk and honey.

S. C. BASSETT.

A DREAM-LAND COMPLETE

Dreaming, I pictured a wonderful valley,

A home-making valley few known could compare,
When lo! from the bluffs overlooking Wood River
I saw my dream-picture, my valley lies there.

Miles long, east and west, stretch this wonderful valley;
Broad fields of alfalfa, of corn and of wheat;
'Mid orchards and groves the homes of its people—
The vale of Wood River—a dream-land complete.

Nebraska, our mother, we love and adore thee:
Within thy fair borders our lot has been cast;
When done with life's labors and trials and pleasures,
Contented we'll rest in thy bosom at last.

S. C. BASSETT.

Gibbon, Neb., 1913.

PREFACE

A lot of people never take time to read the preface of a book, seemingly thinking it don't amount to anything and is put in because it is a customary thing to do. Now, if the readers of this history—real students of history—will take the time to read this preface they will better understand the idea, the plan, the purpose, which the editor has constantly kept in mind in compiling this history of Buffalo County and the achievements of its people.

First—Much time and effort has been given to gathering a history of the organization of the county in 1855 and up to the reorganization in 1870; that period in which no official records seem to have been kept, at least preserved; that period in which it seems that the people who dwelt in Buffalo County understood little and cared less about legal methods of doing county business; that period in which, while the county retained its name and boundaries and in some sort of a way elected county officers, that the County Commissioners of Hall County levied the taxes, the county treasurer of Hall County collected them, keeping such taxes in a separate account, and the commissioners of Hall County audited and authorized the payment of claims against the County of Buffalo. There seems no warrant of law for so doing the county business, but it was so done. The county, once organized and its business conducted in accordance with legal provisions, there is little in that feature of its history of special or unusual interest.

Second—Let us turn to the achievements of its people, which are of absorbing interest to a student of history and ought to be of intense interest to every citizen of the county.

In the beginning our lands were in a state of nature, our resources wholly unknown.

What were and have been the ideals of our people in the civilization we have striven for?

What have we, as a people, achieved, as we have labored and struggled, suffered and endured to accomplish the purpose in mind?

The first concern of our people has been to establish a home, this our highest ideal. In the beginning, in 1870, there was not within the borders of the county any place, any habitation, worthy to be called a home; today there are in our county more than four thousand homes, where abide a happy, contented, prosperous people.

The assessed valuation of the property of the people of the county for taxation purposes (not including the assessed value of railroads) in 1870 was \$23,668. A like valuation of the property of the people (not including railroads) in 1912 was \$6,186,707, the real value being quite seven times the assessed value. This

represents in a measure what we have achieved in the development of our resources, in the accumulation of material wealth.

Next to the home the highest ideal of our people in civilization has been the public school. From the very beginning our people have taxed themselves to a reasonable limit of their resources in support of the public school. In the beginning there was one school district, comprising all of what is now Buffalo and Dawson counties. Today there are within the borders of Buffalo County 120 school districts. In the year 1914-15 more than five thousand school children were enrolled, the payroll of teachers exceeding eighteen thousand dollars each school month. The people of the county are now (1915) expending, approximately, one-fourth of a million dollars annually for support of the public school; have expended for this purpose alone more than eight million dollars since the year 1870. This is why there is a public school in easy walking distance of every child of school age in the county.

This is why our children, reared in the county, educated in our public schools, have gone forth into the world, into states too numerous to mention, yes, gone to the uttermost parts of the earth, and made good; achieved success not only in a material way, but far better, in being largely useful in the world, helping to advance the cause of a higher civilization.

It will be noted that in the very beginning the settlers in the county began the organization of churches, the charter membership being in many cases as few as four, six or eight. It will be noted that church organizations have increased each year in number, the membership increasing many fold, so that in the year 1915 there is a church organization and a church building within easy reach of every family in the county.

One of the ideals of our civilization has been to provide organizations for social purposes, where people might meet on common ground, having a common purpose, and enjoy each other's society.

Such societies as the Masons, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Workmen, Woodmen, Knights of Pythias, Grand Army of the Republic, Woman's Relief Corps, Woman's Club, the Grange and others too numerous to mention. It will be noted in this history that as early as 1872 there was organized a lodge of such a nature, and from time to time other like organizations. These have continued in existence, increasing each year in membership, so that such social, beneficial, and fraternal societies are within the easy reach of our people, and have proven a most important factor in our civilization.

In the beginning there were no established highways, not a stream bridged; transportation and communication slow and tedious.

Our people have established highways, convenient, accessible, all over the county; all streams are safely bridged, and people readily pass from place to place, quickly and in ease, comfort, if desired in luxury.

In the early days the isolation endured by many was distressing, almost intolerable to endure. When the telephone was discovered our people, living on farms, at once made use of it. On their own motion, by means of the labor of their own hands and the limited means at their disposal, there began the construction of farmers' telephone lines, and today the county is covered with a network of such farmer lines, and a telephone can be found in practically every

home in the county. The isolation of the farm home is gone, is a thing of the past, never to return. This achievement of our people is of great interest to students of history; its value and importance can hardly be estimated.

As the people of the county developed its resources there came a higher standard of living, a higher ideal in civilization. Public libraries have been established, higher grades established in our public schools, woman's clubs for the study of music, art, literature, household economics. The best of current literature is found in great abundance in the homes of all our people, and there is available much more of leisure for the enjoyment of life. The achievements of the people of Buffalo County since the year 1870 have been marvelous, and we as a people do not appreciate the manifold blessings we thus enjoy. It has been the steady purpose in compiling and editing this history to illustrate, record, magnify if you please, the achievements of the people of the county; not of individuals, but of us, the people. For there is not one who has been a resident of the county for a considerable number of years who has not contributed in some measure to the remarkable achievements which have here taken place.

In the compilation and preparation of the copy for this history the editor has received the most hearty encouragement and assistance on every hand, from friends it is not possible to here name or number, for all of which he hereby expresses appreciation and most hearty thanks. Where parties have kindly contributed special articles due credit is given, and hearty thanks and appreciation here expressed. There are some who have given in generous measure of their time and talent and to whom the editor here makes public acknowledgment of appreciation and thanks greater than mere words can express, to Mrs. George L. Prouty, Mrs. Max A. Hostetler, Joseph Owen, Shelton; C. B. Bass, C. A. Clark, Mrs. Herbert Smith, Ravenna; J. C. Mahoney, Poole; F. L. Grammer, Pleasanton; F. D. and Ross Brown, Miller; L. A. Wight, Gibbon; John N. Dryden, Mrs. C. V. D. Basten, Robert Haines, Prof. C. N. Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. George Bischel, Dr. M. A. Hoover, Mrs. F. G. Hamer, Mrs. E. R. Holmes, Mrs. C. O. Norton, Hon. J. E. Miller, F. J. Switz, J. H. Dean, county clerk. T. N. Hartzell, city clerk, of Kearney, and L. B. Cunningham, Glenwood, Iowa.

The compiling, the writing, the editing of this history has been a labor of love, made possible by reason of encouragement and kindly assistance of dearly loved friends dwelling in all portions of the county. May this, our united effort, as it goes forth into the world, prove of some use, some benefit to those who come after us.

S. C. BASSETT,
Editor.

Echo Farm, Gibbon, Neb., February 14, 1916.

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History of Buffalo County

CHAPTER I

BEFORE THE WHITE MAN CAME—NAMES OF INDIAN TRIBES INHABITING NEBRASKA TERRITORY—BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PAWNEE INDIANS—FAITHFUL TO THEIR TREATY OBLIGATIONS—REMOVAL TO INDIAN TERRITORY IN 1876—ASSIGNED LANDS IN SEVERALTY IN 1892—A PATHETIC INCIDENT—IN 1915 THE PAWNEE MAKING GOOD, BECOMING USEFUL CITIZENS.

BEFORE THE WHITE MAN CAME

Before the white man came this land we call "Nebraska" was claimed by several tribes of Indians. The boundaries of their lands were not defined by metes and bounds, clearly outlined and made matters of record, as are the counties of the state. In the eighteenth annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, for the years 1896-97, J. W. Powell, director, is given an outline map of Nebraska, giving the names of the principal tribes of Indians, the location of their lands in the state and the dates when each tribe ceded such lands to the general Government. Herewith is a brief summary from said report, giving the names of the tribes and the location of their lands. The State of Nebraska is approximately two hundred miles from north to south and four hundred from east to west. Speaking in a general way, not to be understood as being exact, let us draw a line across a map of Nebraska commencing at the mouth of the Niobrara River, thence south about sixty miles, thence southeast to a point east of the City of Columbus, thence south to the Kansas State line. East of this line to the Missouri River and north of the Platte River the lands thus embraced were those claimed by the Omaha Indians and tribes friendly to and living within the territory described. East of this line to the Missouri River and south of the Platte River, the lands thus embraced were those of the Oto and Missouri tribes.

Next let us draw a line north and south across the state, passing through the forks of the Platte River—North Platte. The territory thus embraced between these two lines, the central portion of the state, both north and south of the Platte River, were lands belonging to the confederated tribes of Pawnee Indians, viz.: Grand Pawnee, Pawnee Loup, Pawnee Republicans and Pawnee Tappaye.

West of the Pawnees and south of the Platte the lands were claimed by the Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes. West of the Pawnees and north of the Platte

were the lands of the Sioux, and in the northern part those of the Sioux, Northern Cheyennes and Arapaho.

It will be seen that Buffalo County is located in what was Pawnee territory, without question the greatest hunting ground on the American continent for wild game, such as buffalo, elk, deer and antelope. The Pawnee lands south of the Platte were ceded to the general Government October 9, 1833. The Fort Kearney Military Reservation, north of the Platte, was ceded to the general Government August 6, 1848, and the remaining lands of the Pawnees, north of the Platte, were ceded September 24, 1857.

How long the Pawnee Indians had inhabited the valleys of the Platte and Loup rivers in what we now call Nebraska is not definitely known, and doubtless never will be, but history seems to disclose that they were living here more than three centuries before the white man came to dispossess them, about the year 1860.

The following brief history of the Pawnee, whose lands we, the people of Buffalo County, Nebraska, now occupy and enjoy, is taken as an extract (kindly furnished by United States Senator George W. Norris) from the "Handbook of American Indians," Bulletin No. 30, Bureau of American Ethnology:

"Pawnee. A confederacy belonging to the Caddoan family. The name is probably derived from Pariki, a horn, a term used to designate the peculiar manner of dressing the scalp-lock, by which the hair was stiffened with paint and fat, and made to stand erect and curved like a horn. This marked feature of the Pawnee gave currency to the name and its application to cognate tribes. The people called themselves Chahiksichahiks, 'men of men.'

"In the general northeastwardly movement of the Caddoan tribes the Pawnee seem to have brought up the rear. Their migration was not in a compact body, but in groups, whose slow progress covered long periods of time. The Pawnee tribe finally established themselves in the Valley of the Platte River, Nebraska, which territory their traditions say was acquired by conquest, but the people who were driven out are not named. It is not improbable that in making their way northeast the Pawnee may have encountered one or more waves of the southward movements of Shoshonean and Athapascan tribes. When the Siouan tribes entered the Platte Valley they found the Pawnee there. The geographic arrangement always observed by the four leading Pawnee tribes may give a hint of the order of their northeastward movement, or of their grouping in their traditional southwestern home.

"The Skidi place was to the northwest, and they were spoken of as belonging to the upper villages. The Pitahauerat villages were always downstream; those of the Chaui, in the middle, or between the Pitahauerat and the Kitkehahki, the villages of the last named being always upstream. How long the Pawnee resided in the Platte Valley is unknown, but their stay was long enough to give new terms to 'west' and 'east,' that is, words equivalent to 'up' or 'down' that eastwardly flowing stream.

"The earliest mention of a Pawnee is that of the so-called 'Turk' (q. v.), who, by his tales concerning the riches of Quivira (q. v.), allured and finally led Coronado, in 1541, from New Mexico over the plains as far as Kansas, where some Pawnee (see Harahey) visited him. The permanent villages of the tribes

lay to the north of Quivira, a name given to the Wichita territory. It is doubtful if the Apané or the Quipana mentioned in the narrative of De Soto's expedition in 1541 were the Pawnee, as the latter dwelt to the northwest of the Spaniard's line of travel. Nor is it likely that the early French explorers visited the Pawnee villages, although they heard of them, and their locality was indicated by Tonti, La Harpe and others. French traders, however, were established among the tribes before the middle of the eighteenth century.

"How the term Pani (q. v.) or Pawnee, as applied to Indian slaves, came into use is not definitely known. It was a practice among the French and English in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to obtain from friendly tribes their captives taken in war and to sell them as slaves to white settlers. By ordinance of April 13, 1709, the enslavement of negroes and Pawnee was recognized in Canada (Shea's *Charlevoix*, v. 224, 1871). The Pawnee do not seem to have suffered especially from this traffic, which, though lucrative, had to be abandoned on account of animosities it engendered. The white settlers of New Mexico became familiar with the Pawnee early in the seventeenth century through the latter's raids for procuring horses, and for more than two centuries the Spanish authorities of that territory sought to bring about peaceful relations with them, with only partial success.

"As the Pawnee lay in a country remote from the region contested by the Spaniards and French in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these Indians escaped for a time the influences that proved so fatal to their congeners, but ever-increasing contact with the white race, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, introduced new diseases and brought great reduction in population, together with loss in tribal power. When the Pawnee territory, through the Louisiana Purchase, passed under the control of the United States, the Indians came in close touch with the trading center at St. Louis. At that time their territory lay between the Niobrara River on the north and Prairie Dog Creek on the south, and was bounded on the west by the country of the Cheyenne and Arapaho, and on the east by that of the Omaha, on the north of the Platte River, and on the south of the Platte by the lands of the Oto and Kansa tribes. The trail to the southwest, and later across the continent, ran partly through Pawnee land, and the increasing travel and the settlement of the country brought about many changes. Through all the vicissitudes of the nineteenth century the Pawnee never made war on the United States. On the contrary, they gave many evidences of forbearance under severe provocation by waiting, under their treaty agreement, for the Government to right their wrongs, while Pawnee scouts faithfully and courageously served in the United States army during Indian hostilities.

"The history of the Pawnee has been that common to reservation life—the gradual abandonment of ancient customs and the relinquishment of homes before the pressure of white immigration.

"* * * By treaty of Table Creek, Neb., September 24, 1857, all lands north of the Platte River were assigned to the Government except a strip on the Loup River, thirty miles east and west and fifteen miles north and south, where their reservation was established. This tract was ceded in 1876, when

the tribes were removed to Oklahoma, where they now live. In 1892 they took their lands in severalty and became citizens of the United States. * * *

"In 1702 the Pawnee were estimated by Iberville at two thousand families. In 1838 they numbered about ten thousand souls, according to an estimate of houses by Missionaries Dunbar and Allis, and the estimate is substantially confirmed by other authorities of the same period, one putting the number as high as twelve thousand five hundred. The opening of a principal emigrant trail directly through the country in the '40s introduced disease and dissipation, and left the people less able to defend themselves against the continuous attacks of their enemies, the Sioux.

"In 1848 they were officially reported to have lost one-fourth of their number by cholera, leaving only 4,500. In 1856 they had increased to 4,686, but five years later were reported at 3,416. They lost heavily by removal to Indian Territory in 1873-75, and in 1879 numbered only 1,140. They have continued to dwindle each year until there are now (1906) but 649 surviving."

What a sad history the foregoing is of a people who for centuries possessed and successfully defended this land in Central Nebraska which we now possess and enjoy! What a sad history of a people of whom it is written that they faithfully observed their treaty agreements with the United States and loyally and courageously fought in the armies of the United States against its enemies!

It is related that after the removal of the Pawnee to the Indian Territory in 1876 (much against their wish, many being brutally compelled to go by the soldiers assigned to their removal) that some of the number became so homesick that in the dead of winter they stole away from the reservation and journeyed back to Nebraska in order to once more visit the land of their fathers, to visit their former homes and the places where their dead were buried—and what did they find? Their former homes, the burial places of their dead, were plowed fields, the home of the white man. There was no place they could go and be welcome. They were, as it might be said, a stench in the nostrils of the white man, and the soldiers of our Government, armed with guns and bayonets, forced them to return to the reservation assigned them.

And thus it was that we, the white men, came and possessed this land.

In the year 1915, H. A. Lee, an early settler and long-time resident of Buffalo County, now residing in Oklahoma, writes that the Pawnee are making good; tilling their farms, establishing homes, making useful citizens.



GENERAL HENRY B. CARRINGTON
IN COMMAND AT FORT KEARNEY, 1865-66

The original location of the Union Pacific Railroad provided for the road to cross the Platte at Fort Kearney, thence west up the south side of the river. General Carrington, then in command at Fort Kearney, made a survey for a bridge across the Platte at that point, reported unfavorably, and the plan of building a bridge was abandoned.

CHAPTER II

FORT KEARNEY—DATE WHEN ESTABLISHED—BOUNDARIES OF MILITARY RESERVATION—BLEW THE BUGLE—REFERENCE—HISTORY OF FORT KEARNEY BY ALBERT WATKINS, HISTORIAN OF STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY—SERGEANT MICHAEL COADY—A SOLDIER OF THE MEXICAN AND CIVIL WARS—SERVED AS CLERK OF BUFFALO COUNTY—CHARTER MEMBER OF FIRST I. O. O. F. LODGE INSTITUTED IN THE COUNTY—CHARTER MEMBER OF FIRST MASONIC LODGE INSTITUTED IN THE COUNTY.

FORT KEARNEY

(Note—In Volume No. 16 of the published collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society, for the year 1911, may be found a very complete history of Fort Kearney compiled from public documents and written by Albert Watkins, historian of the State Historical Society.)

As a protection to the thousands of emigrants traveling the Oregon and Overland trails from the early '30s to the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1869, Fort Kearney was established in May, 1848, and garrisoned with United States troops until its abandonment in the year 1871. That portion of the military reservation on the north side of the Platte River and in part within the boundaries of Buffalo County was ceded to the general Government in 1848 and its boundaries described as follows:

"Commencing on the south side of the Platte River, five miles west of post 'Fort Childs' (later named Fort Kearney), thence due north to the crest of the bluffs north of said Platte River; thence east and along the crest of said bluffs to the termination of Grand Island, supposed to be about sixty miles distant; thence south to the southern shore of said Platte River; and thence west and along the southern shore of said Platte River to the place of beginning.

"A plat of this tract is inserted in the treaty."

The reservation on which the fort was located was ten miles square, lying on both sides of the Platte River, and over this reservation a strict military discipline was maintained. While emigrants were permitted to travel the trails crossing the reservation and to visit the fort, no one was permitted to make an overnight camp on this reservation. To this there was one exception—to encourage the raising of crops, more especially gardens, small tracts of land were leased to individuals who were permitted to reside upon such leased tracts. The tracts thus leased were located on islands of the Platte, principally an island known as Fort Farm Island. Also on this island some farming, such as growing corn, was done under the supervision of the military authorities at the fort. Also on

this island a considerable area was fenced for pasture for horses belonging to the garrison.

It is understood that the reason for including in the military reservation the tract above noted—some sixty miles in length and embracing, as it did, the Wood River Valley in Buffalo County—was that on this tract, which included the "thousand" islands of the Platte, there was much timber needed and used by the military authorities.

BLEW THE BUGLE

It is related that each day an officer and guard were detailed to visit the timber sections of the reservation and see if unauthorized persons were cutting Government timber. It is also related that on such duty, at intervals, the clear notes of a bugle rang out over the islands and the prairie, and hearing the bugle unauthorized wood choppers ceased from their labors while the inspection guard passed by. On return to the fort the officer reported that he saw no one engaged in cutting timber on the reservation, and yet as the years came and went, and before the fort was finally abandoned, the islands of the Platte and the banks of Wood River within the bounds of the reservation were entirely stripped of timber suitable for cordwood or a railroad tie.

It should also be mentioned that this timbered reservation furnished all timber needed for fuel and other purposes at the fort for some twenty-three years.

SERGT. MICHAEL COADY

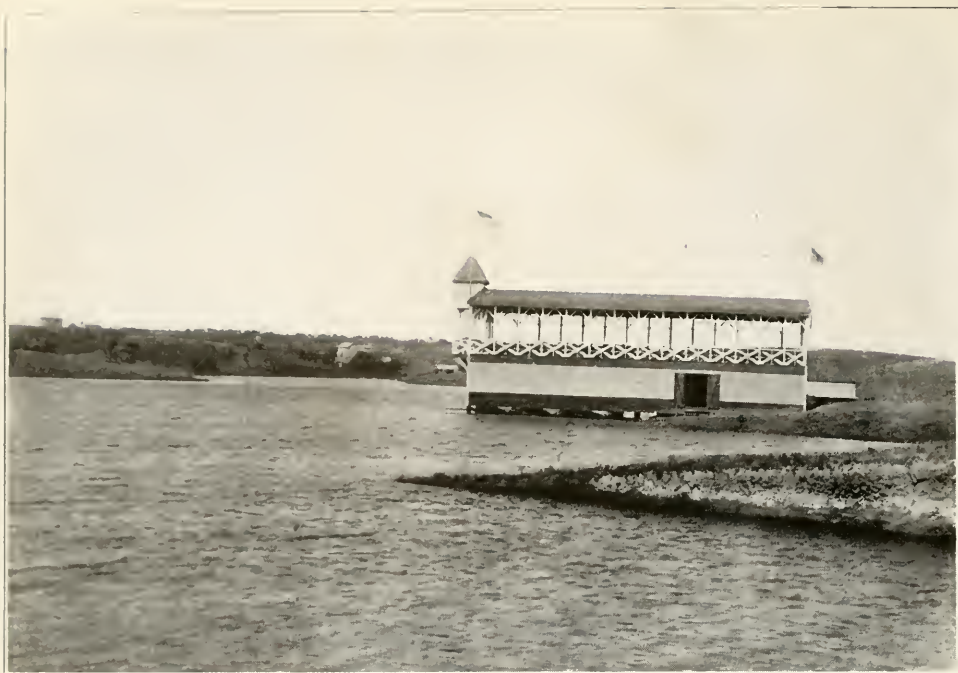
The name of Sergt. Michael Coady and mention of his deeds is well worthy a place and to be made of record in a history of Buffalo County, although in a legal sense it can hardly be said he was ever a resident of the county. Sergeant Coady was kind and helpful to early settlers in Central Nebraska when kindness on the part of those in authority was appreciated and help needed.

Early settlers could not tell the names of the commanding officers at Fort Kearney, but every man, woman and child knew of Sergeant Coady, that he seemed to exert much authority and that he was a friend to all pioneer settlers.

It will be noted in this history of Buffalo County that Sergeant Coady was active in the reorganization of the county in 1870, and that he was elected and served as county clerk. It is related that when the first elections were held in the reorganized county, the poll books were taken to Fort Kearney, and Sergeant Coady helped to make out the election returns, for the reason that Sergeant Coady was accustomed to making reports, the keeping of records, while the residents of the county were not. It will be noted, in this history, that Michael Coady was a charter member, helped to organize the first I. O. O. F. lodge instituted in the county in 1873. It will also be noted that he was a charter member, and helped to organize the first Masonic lodge in the county in 1873.

Sergeant Coady was of a sociable disposition, and enjoyed a wide acquaintance both in army circles and in the state.

While he was forceful, energetic, a born fighter, he was of a most kindly disposition. It is related that Sergeant Coady was offered a commission as officer



SCENE ON LAKE KEARNEY—SLEEPY HOLLOW IN THE DISTANCE



(Photo by S. D. Butcher.)

PICNIC SCENE AT OLD FORT KEARNEY IN 1906

The trees shown were planted when the fort was established in 1848. Beyond the log and counting from the left are: Mrs. Jane Gilmore, Mrs. S. C. Bassett, Mrs. Thomas Kirk. In the center, Moses Sydenham.



SERGEANT MICHAEL COADY

A soldier of the Mexican and Civil wars. Served at Fort Kearney. A charter member of the first Masonic and Independent Order of Foresters lodges instituted in Buffalo County. Served as clerk of Buffalo County, 1870-71.



OLD SOLDIERS AT PICNIC AT OLD FORT KEARNEY IN 1906

in the regular army of the United States and declined, giving as his reason that his early advantages and training were such that were he an officer, invited to social functions, his brother officers might feel humiliated, while if not invited he should feel offended.

"Leave me be a sergeant," he is reported to have said, "and I'll be satisfied," and a sergeant to the end of his army days he was.

When, as a military post Fort Kearney was abandoned in 1870, Sergeant Coady was left in command, in charge of the Government property until August, 1874, when he was ordered to take station at Fort Omaha, Neb., where, in addition to his duties as ordnance sergeant, he was postmaster of the fort. After his retirement from the army he remained postmaster at the post until it was abandoned in 1896, when he moved out of the post and settled down, living a quiet life until his death, September 10, 1900.

He was accorded a military funeral with full honors due a commissioned officer.

Michael Coady was born January 1, 1828, in Tipperary, Ireland, and when a small boy emigrated to America. He entered the United States army in 1846, serving through the Mexican war, Rebellion and numerous Indian campaigns.

In 1862 Sergeant Coady was appointed ordnance sergeant, which position he held until he was retired, June 16, 1885.

He was married in July, 1860, at Washington, D. C.

There were born to Mr. and Mrs. Coady five daughters, Julia, Mary, Margaret Elizabeth, Anna, and Catherine; three sons, John J., Edward V., and William F. In 1916 his widow and living children were residents of Omaha.

The following is a list of battles in which Sergeant Coady participated:

Palo Alto	1846
Rasaca de la Palma.....	1846
Monterey	1846
Vera Cruz	1846
Contreras and Cherubusco	1846
Molino del Rey.....	1846
City of Mexico.....	1846

Indian campaigns in New Mexico and Texas and the Overland boundary survey, from 1848 to 1860.

BATTLES OF THE REBELLION

First and Second Bull Run.....	1862
Savage Station	1862
Glen Dale	1862
White Oak Swamp.....	1862
Glen Mills	1862
Hanover Courthouse	1862
Malvern Hill	1862
Charles City Cross Roads.....	1862
Mechanicsville	1862

Discharges bear the following characters: "Excellent in every respect. Remarks: His performance of every duty marked by the same faithfulness and zeal which has always characterized him."

Discharges signed by the following officers: Gen. John Gibbon, Dangerfield Parker, John H. King, William P. Carlin, Edwin Pollock and others.

CHAPTER III

BUFFALO COUNTY; HALL COUNTY—IN TERRITORIAL DAYS HALL COUNTY OFFICIALS TRANSACT THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF BUFFALO COUNTY—EQUALIZE ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY; LEVY TAXES; COLLECT TAXES; AUDIT AND PAY CLAIMS AGAINST BUFFALO COUNTY—COPIES OF DUPLICATE TAX RECEIPTS—LIST OF TAX PAYERS IN BUFFALO COUNTY WHO PAID THEIR TAXES TO THE TREASURER OF HALL COUNTY.

BUFFALO COUNTY; HALL COUNTY

While there are records and publications (election returns in the office of the secretary of state, special legislation relating to Buffalo County, a proclamation in the office of the governor, copies of the Huntsman's Echo in the library of the state historical society) which seem to disclose that there was a county organization in Buffalo County, dating possibly from the year 1855, quite certainly from the year 1858, and that a complete list of county officials were elected in and for Buffalo County, and while these officers doubtless did on occasions act in an official capacity, yet there are no county records of Buffalo County of an earlier date than the year 1870, and so far as the writer has knowledge, the only records relating to the conduct of county business in Buffalo County previous to 1870 are the county records of Hall County. The county records of Hall County date from 1858, the year the county was organized, and these records seem to disclose that while the political existence of Buffalo County was recognized, that the county business of and for Buffalo County was transacted by the officials of Hall County. It appears that the county commissioners of Hall County audited and allowed the claim of the assessor of property in Buffalo County and ordered the same paid out of the general fund of Buffalo County. It appears that the commissioners of Hall County equalized the assessment of property in Buffalo County at the same meeting as was equalized the assessment of property of Hall County, and then proceeded to make the levy of taxes in and for Buffalo County. It appears from records in the treasurer's office of Hall County that taxpayers in Buffalo County paid their taxes to the treasurer of Hall County, who issued receipts therefor, the duplicate tax receipt showing it was for taxes due Buffalo County.

The proceedings of the county commissioners of Hall County disclose that when a term of court was held at Grand Island, the expense of said term of court was paid out of the general fund of both Hall and Buffalo counties. In considering this matter it should be kept in mind that in territorial days in Nebraska, there were but few people residing in either Buffalo or Hall County;

that there was but little county business to transact; that lands were not taxable and that the value of the personal property to be taxed was small. In Buffalo County it appears that the value of all property for taxation purposes in the year 1867, was \$22,520, on which the commissioners of Hall County levied a tax of six (6) mills on the dollar, the total county tax amounting to \$135.12. In the year 1868 it appears that the value of all property in Buffalo County for purposes of taxation was \$12,448, on which the commissioners of Hall County levied a tax of six (6) mills on the dollar for county general fund and three (3) mills for county sinking fund; from this levy the total tax paid into the county general fund would be \$74.69, and into the sinking fund \$37.34. It appears that all the tax levied was for the county general fund, no levy being made for school, road, bridge or poor fund purposes.

From the proceedings of the county commissioners of Hall County are copied the following items as relating to the county business of Buffalo County:

"Date, July 1, 1867.

"Total valuation of property in Buffalo County, \$22,520.

"Voted to levy a tax of six (6) mills on the dollar."

"Date, January 6, 1868.

"Claim of Wm. Eldridge for services as assessor in Buffalo County, \$9 (three days at \$3 per day) allowed and ordered paid out of general fund of Buffalo County."

"Date, April 20, 1868.

"Commissioners' proceedings show one precinct in Buffalo County."

"Date July 6, 1868.

"Total valuation of Buffalo County, \$12,448.

"Voted to levy six (6) mills on the dollar for county general fund.

"Voted to levy three (3) mills on the dollar for county sinking fund."

"Date December 8, 1868.

"Buffalo County and Hall County to pay from the general fund of each county, to pay in proportion:

Rent holding district court.....	\$100.00
Boarding jurors	24.00
Advertising in Fremont Tribune.....	4.00
Sheriff fees	31.00
John Jones, services as bailiff.....	6.00

Total for term.....\$165.00"

A duplicate tax receipt in the office of the treasurer of Hall County shows that James E. Boyd, of Buffalo County, paid of taxes for the year 1868:

State general fund	\$ 1.60
State sinking fund .....	.80
State school fund	1.20
County general fund	4.80
County sinking fund	2.40

Total\$10.80

A duplicate tax receipt in the office of the treasurer of Hall County shows that Thomas K. Wood, of Buffalo County, paid of taxes for the year 1869:

State general fund	\$0.32
State sinking fund .....	.19
State school fund .....	.29
State university .....	.19
County general fund	1.11
County sinking fund .....	.18
Dog	2.00
Total	\$4.28

A duplicate tax receipt shows that Wesley Folsom, of Buffalo County, paid of taxes for the year 1868, \$21.08.

John O'Connell, 1868, \$5.95.

The following communication from W. G. Partridge, deputy county treasurer of Hall County, gives a list of taxpayers in Buffalo County for the year 1867, the assessed value of their property and the amount of tax paid by each; it will be noted the rate of taxation was approximately ten mills on the dollar valuation (.0105).

"Grand Island, Nebr., November 22, 1915.

"S. C. Bassett, Gibbon, Nebr.

"Dear sir: After you were here a few days ago, I hunted through our vault and found the Tax List for 1867 for Buffalo County, and am giving you below, the names—valuation—taxes—date paid.

	Value	Amount	Paid
Beach, D. W.....	\$1,080.00	\$11.34	March 17, 1868
Britt, Jno.....	150.00		Gone
Boyd, Jas. E.....	6,830.00	71.72	May 7, 1868
Boyd, Jos.	600.00	6.30	May 7, 1868
Champlain, D. R.....	750.00	7.88	March 21, 1868
Dugdale, Hy (Henry).....	940.00	9.87	March 21, 1868
Eddy, C.	715.00	7.52	Gone
Estey, Wm.	1,140.00	11.97	May 9, 1868
Gardner, G. G.....	650.00	6.83	June 24, 1868
Johnson, C. S.....	475.00	5.00	March 21, 1868
Myers, A.....	425.00	4.47	April 20, 1868
Oliver, Ed.	335.00	3.52	Paid
Oliver, Sarah	540.00	5.67	March 21, 1868
Statts & Wilson.....	3,760.00	39.48	May 14, 1868
Thomas, Wm. D.....	2,800.00	29.40	May 18, 1868
Tague, Thos.	355.00	3.74	May 1, 1868
Teats, J. H.....	650.00	6.82	Gone
Williams, A. J.....	825.00	8.67	February 24, 1868

"The above is a correct list of the taxes for Buffalo County according to the assessors return, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

"FRED EVANS, County Clerk.

"WM. H. PLATT, Deputy.

"If you wish the next year or two following this, I think I can find it for you.

"Yours truly,

"W. G. PARTRIDGE,

"Deputy County Treasurer."

Map showing boundaries of Buffalo County as defined when the county was created by act of Territorial Legislature, approved March 14, 1855. At that date no other county in the territory bordered on Buffalo County.

Those interested in the early history of Buffalo County will find the following references of much value.

(Note—The accompanying map and references are kindly contributed by Mr. E. L. Sayre, Sr., Stapleton, Nebr.)

References: Session laws of Nebraska Territory for 1859.

Page 193—Ferry across Platte River at Kearney City to Alonzo D. Luce and Theodore H. Dodd.

Page 141—Creation of Kearney County.

Page 142—Creation of Dawson County.

Page 203—Mill dam across Wood River in Hall County.

Page 166—To incorporate Kearney City in Kearney County.

Pages 207-8 and 218—Relative to Pawnee Indian depredations.

Page 219—Relative to navigation of Platte River to New Fort Kearney.

Session laws of Nebraska Territory for 1861:

Page 107—Election district in Hall, Buffalo, Kearney and Lincoln counties.

Session laws of 1865:

Page 69—Election of assessor in Buffalo and other counties.

Statutes of Nebraska, 1867, compiled by E. Estabrook:

Page 710—To continue organization in Buffalo County.

MAP OF BUFFALO COUNTY

Courtesy of H. A. Webbert, Kearney

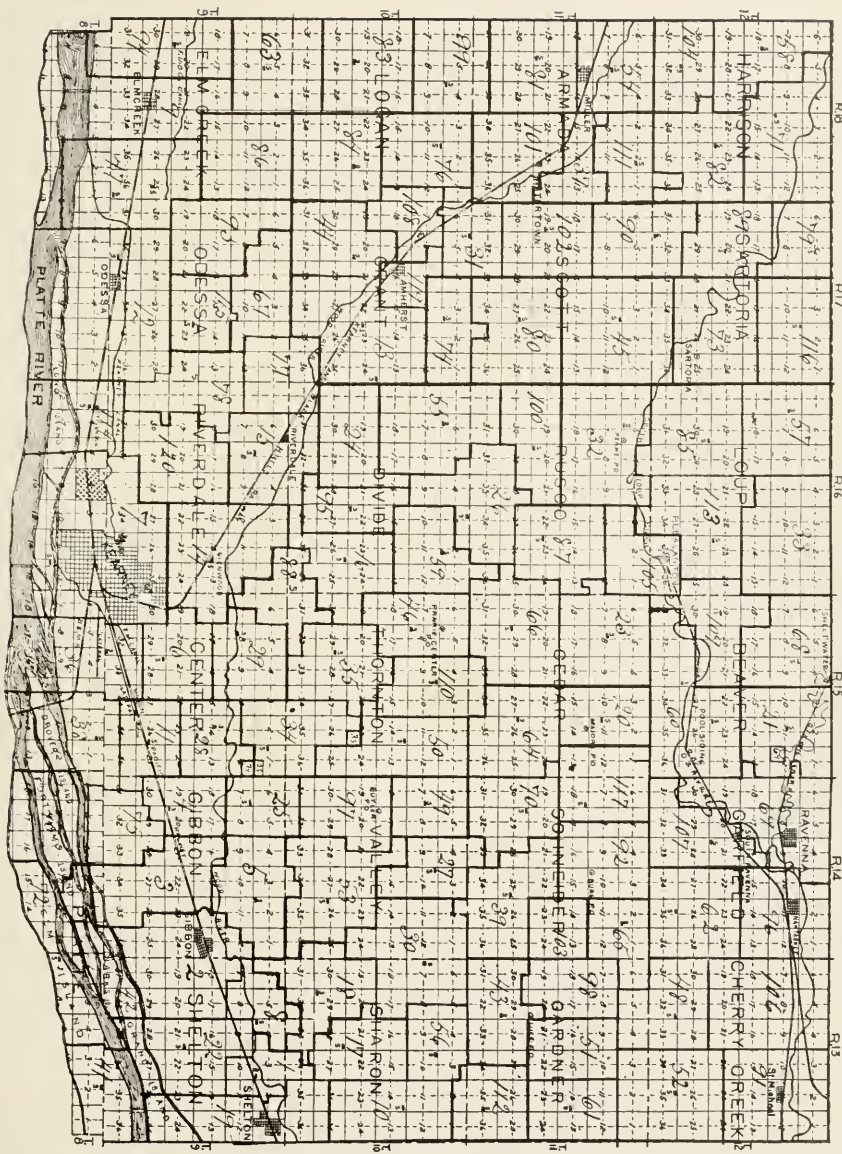
Map showing townships, ranges, names of townships, names of towns, location of rivers, location of railroads, number, and location of school districts in Buffalo County.

Issued from the office of County Superintendent J. S. Elliott for the school year 1914-1915.

NEW CHANGES OF BOUNDARY NOT SHOWN ON MAP

SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 34-11-18 from District No. 101 to 76. E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$ 21-11-14 from District 39 to 92. All of District No. 37 attached to District No. 101. E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ and NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$ 21-11-15 from District No. 66 to 23. SW $\frac{1}{4}$ 15-12-13 from District No. 91 to 106.

BUFFALO COUNTY, NEBRASKA.



(See opposite page for description)

CHAPTER IV

BOUNDARIES OF BUFFALO COUNTY, ACT OF THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE—
NEBRASKA CENTRE THE SEAT OF JUSTICE (COUNTY SEAT)—ORIGINAL SURVEY OF
THE COUNTY—NEBRASKA CENTRE ITS EXACT LOCATION—CENTRALIA AND
NEBRASKA CENTRE PRECINCTS—TERRITORIAL ELECTION HELD IN 1859—POLLS
BOOKS AND ELECTION RETURNS—THE EARLY SETTLEMENT IN THE PLATTE
VALLEY—DOBYTOWN AND THE FAMOUS TOM KEELER RANCH—DAVID ANDERSON
SPENDS THREE DAYS AT THE BOYD RANCH—TELLS OF AN ELECTION HELD THERE
IN FALL OF 1859—WITNESSES TESTIFY AT CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION AS TO
LOCATION OF NEBRASKA CENTRE—LETTER FROM JOSEPH OWEN.

BOUNDARIES OF BUFFALO COUNTY

The County of Buffalo, one of the first eight counties named and boundaries established, was named and its boundaries first defined at the second session of the Territorial Legislature of Nebraska which convened at Omaha, Tuesday, December 18, 1855, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon. Hon. Mark W. Izzard was territorial governor, Benjamine R. Folsom was president of the council and Erastus G. McNeely, chief clerk. The speaker of the House was William Larimer, Jr., and Joseph W. Paddock, chief clerk.

The act of the Territorial Legislature providing for the organization of Buffalo County follows:

AN ACT To Organize Buffalo County.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Nebraska, That all that portion of Territory included in the following limits, is hereby declared organized into a county to be called Buffalo, commencing at a point in the centre of the Platte River, ten miles east from the mouth of Wood River, running thence westward up the southern channel of the Platte, to the mouth of Buffalo Creek, thence north thirty miles—thence east to a point directly north of the place of beginning, thence south to the place of beginning. The seat of justice is hereby located at Nebraska Centre.

Sec. 2. This act to take effect from and after its passage. Approved March 14, 1855.

In a general way it can be said the east line of the county thus established began at a point approximately south of the present City of Grand Island, and the western line of the county was near the present Village of Overton in Dawson County. Later, 1858-1871, the boundaries were changed to conform to the present boundaries.

On the establishment of Fort Kearney in 1848, the war department ordered a military reservation of ten miles square surrounding the fort to be surveyed and established. Accordingly the Fort Kearney military reservation was surveyed in 1848, (Morton history), this being the first survey of record in the county, and it appears that the lines thus established were recognized in all future surveys in both Buffalo and Kearney counties. In 1866 the second and third standard township lines in the county were surveyed and established by H. C. F. Hackbusch, the third standard being the present north line of the county and the second standard the line between townships eight (8) and nine (9). In 1866 range lines 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 were run by George F. McClure. In the same year, 1866, the township and section lines in ranges 13, 14, 15 and 16 were run by Edwin R. Farnsworth and H. C. F. Hackbusch and in 1868 the township and section lines in ranges 17 and 18 were run by W. J. Allason. This completed the original survey of the county.

It will be noted that in the act organizing the county Nebraska Centre is named as the "Seat of Justice," the county seat; a history of Nebraska Centre somewhat in detail and as near as can be determined its exact location is herewith given:

NEBRASKA CENTRE

In the first published account of Buffalo County, Territory of Nebraska, mention is made of Nebraska Centre, and in the maps of Central Nebraska and Buffalo County of that date a rather indefinite location is given of Nebraska Centre, which is not to be wondered at, as there had been no official survey made of this portion of the territory, but few people (squatters) resided here and of necessity the hamlet named "Nebraska Centre" could have consisted of only a few log habitations.

It has been generally understood, and the editor of this history has so understood and written, that the place known as Nebraska Centre from 1855 to 1860 was from 1860 to 1873 known as Wood River Centre, and from 1873 to date (1916) as Shelton. But such seems not to have been the case. History seems to disclose that Nebraska Centre was located at that point known since about 1860 as "Boyd's Ranch," which, when the lands in the county were surveyed in 1868, can best be described as the southwest one-quarter, section No. 14, town No. 9, range No. 14, now Gibbon Township, Buffalo County. Possibly a description, somewhat in detail, of settlements in Buffalo County previous to 1868, when the lands were surveyed and thrown open to settlement, may be of interest to a student of a history of our county. It appears that all travel in the Platte River Valley over the Overland-California-Mormon trail through what is now Buffalo County was south of Wood River. Until the building of the Union Pacific Railroad through the county in 1867 all settlements in the county were south of Wood River and adjacent to the above mentioned trail, and in the eastern portion of the county.

Fort Kearney was established in 1848. It was located on a military reservation ten miles square lying on both sides of the Platte River. The northeast

corner of the reservation was on section No. 26, town No. 9, range No. 14, and the northwest corner of the reservation was on section No. 29, town No. 9, range No. 15. The military regulations in force at Fort Kearney did not permit any civilian to live upon the reservation—the ten miles square; in fact, no civilian was permitted to so camp over night. Reference to a map will disclose that the north line of the Fort Kearney Military Reservation was south of the Boyd ranch and less than two miles distant, and hence it was that all travel over the Overland-California-Mormon trail up and down the Platte Valley passed through what might be termed the “door yard” of the Boyd ranch. West of the Boyd ranch Wood River bears towards the north and west, while the above mentioned trail bore towards the south and west. Also about a mile west of the Boyd ranch, and south of Wood River, begins a low bluff, extending westward between the trail and Wood River, which is doubtless the reason there were few, if any, settlers in the early days along Wood River west of the Boyd ranch, as such settlers would have been distant from and out of sight of the trail traveled by emigrants.

Going west the trail divided at the Boyd ranch, or Nebraska Centre, one trail continuing up the Platte Valley, passing through where is now the City of Kearney, the villages of Odessa and Elm Creek. The other trail was to Fort Kearney, some eleven miles distant, being eight miles west and six miles south of the Boyd ranch, and on the south bank of the Platte. Quite naturally there would have been a “ranch,” a “center,” at the crossing of the Platte opposite Fort Kearney, but as the crossing point was on the military reservation, there could be no “ranch,” no “hamlet,” at that point.

History seems to disclose that previous to 1860 Nebraska Centre was located at the point later known as Boyd ranch; that it was the county seat of Buffalo County dating from the year 1855, when the county was named and bounded; that all the travel over the trail, on the north side of the Platte River, passed this point; that there was here a ranch and store where grain and provisions could be purchased, a saloon, and a “townhouse,” where elections were held.

It appears that beginning with the year 1860 Wood River Centre became a center of recognized importance in Buffalo County, and Nebraska Centre ceased to be known to have a name in Central Nebraska and along the Overland trail. In the year 1858 Joseph E. Johnson located at a point on Wood River named Wood River Centre. In April, 1860, he established a newspaper called the Huntsman's Echo. He established a store, a tintype gallery, a blacksmith shop, a wagon repair shop, and most important of all, in the same year, a postoffice named Wood River Centre, himself as postmaster.

About that time the Western Stage Company extended its stage line from Iowa points through Omaha, up the north valley of the Platte to Fort Kearney, making their first stage station out of Fort Kearney at Wood River Centre on the farm now owned by Joseph Owen, and the station in charge of August Meyer, now (1916) living in Shelton.

It appears that beginning with the year 1860 Nebraska Centre ceased to have a legal existence, its name but a memory, and its exact location not with certainty determined by those of us residing in Buffalo County in the year 1916.

In the year 1859 an election for territorial officers was held in Buffalo County,

and to Albert Watkins, historian for the State Historical Society, we are indebted for the returns of said election, including the names of the voters as copied from the poll books. These returns are as follows:

"At an election held in the townhouse of Nebraska Centre, in the Precinct of Nebraska Centre, County of Buffalo, and Territory of Nebraska, on Tuesday, the 11th day of October, 1859, the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names for the following described offices:

"Experience Estabrook had thirty-eight votes for member of Congress.

"William C. Wyman had thirty-eight votes for territorial treasurer.

"Robert C. Jordan had thirty-eight votes for auditor.

"Alonzo D. Luce had thirty-eight votes for librarian.

"William C. Harvy had thirty-eight votes for commissioner of common schools.

"James G. Chapman had thirty-seven votes for district attorney for First Judicial District.

"Richard C. Barnard had thirty-eight votes for member of the Legislature.

"JOHN HAMILTON,

"MORRISON M. MILLER,

"CONSTAN B. REYNOLDS,

"Judges of Election.

"ROBERT J. JOHNSON,

"SAMUEL HOOD,

"Clerks of Election.

"I do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the poll books for the Precinct of Nebraska Centre, in Buffalo County.

"GEORGE MILLER,

"County Clerk for Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory."

NAMES OF VOTERS IN POLL BOOK

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Smith Kinsey | 20. James Tierney |
| 2. P. S. Gibbs | 21. Carby Gooderman |
| 3. Harvy Estere | 22. James Mername |
| 4. J. J. Lester | 23. Alexander Givyneny |
| 5. James E. Boyd | 24. John W. Britt |
| 6. Charles Wilson | 25. Peter Kinney |
| 7. John H. Young | 26. Milo Tourend |
| 8. George Miller | 27. David Narcy |
| 9. C. H. Swits | 28. Jeremiah Cox |
| 10. M. Tory | 29. J. C. Dorman |
| 11. William Mixlow | 30. John Lux |
| 12. John Hamilton | 31. T. Brown |
| 13. R. S. Johnson | 32. B. Norman |
| 14. Morrison McMillen | 33. Gustavus Stout |
| 15. Samuel Hood | 34. W. L. Brinton |
| 16. S. R. Brown | 35. T. J. Dorlan |
| 17. Anan Henry | 36. David Anderson |
| 18. Henry Wilson | 37. John Davis |
| 19. John Hamphill | 38. B. F. Brown |

"At an election held at the house of J. H. Johnson, in the Precinct of Centralia, and County of Buffalo, and Territory of Nebraska, on Tuesday, October 11, A. D. 1859, the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names for the following described offices:

"Experience Estabrook, sixteen votes for member of Congress.

"William W. Wyman, sixteen votes for territorial treasurer.

"Robert C. Jordan, sixteen votes for auditor.

"Alonzo D. Luce, sixteen votes for librarian.

"William E. Harvy, sixteen votes for commissioner of common schools.

"James G. Chapman, sixteen votes for district attorney for First Judicial District.

"Richard C. Barnard, sixteen votes for member of Legislature.

"JOEL W. JOHNSON,

"THOMAS PAGE,

"JOHN EAMES,

"Judges of Election.

"J. W. WILSON,

"JOHN THORP,

"Clerks of Election."

NAMES OF VOTERS ON POLL BOOK

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Henry Peck | 9. John B. McCallister |
| 2. Thomas Page | 10. James McCallister |
| 3. John Eames | 11. George Gurney |
| 4. J. H. Johnson | 12. John Cramer |
| 5. J. B. Lewis | 13. Andrew Berry |
| 6. John Thorp | 14. Oliver M. Anderson |
| 7. J. W. Wilson | 15. Joseph Houff |
| 8. Henry Sharp | 16. Patrick Carroll |

"I do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the poll books for the Precinct of Centralia, in Buffalo County.

"GEORGE MILLER,

"County Clerk for Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory."

As bearing upon the question of the exact location of Nebraska Centre, we copy from "Collections, Volume 16," of the State Historical Society, page 193, as follows:

"THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE PLATTE VALLEY

"By David Anderson

"(Paper read before the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January 18, 1910)

"In the fall of 1859, after spending an exciting and adventurous summer in the newborn City of Denver, and the Rocky Mountains, in company with some old Pennsylvania friends with whom I had crossed the plains from Leavenworth City over the Smoky Hill route in the early spring, our party started from Denver with a mule team bound for Omaha.

"We followed the Pike's Peak trail, south of the south fork of the Platte River, to Julesburgh, thence down the old California trail to Fort Kearney. Great herds of buffalo, deer, elk and antelope were constantly in view. The Cheyenne Indians, who roamed over the plains between Fort Kearney and Denver, were furiously engaged in attacking emigrant trains, burning ranches and murdering the occupants. We had several skirmishes with the red devils who followed our trail many days.

"Ten miles west of Dobytown was the famous Keeler ranch. Here we met the notorious Tom Keeler, the terror of the plains and especially of the Cheyenne Indians. With all his native rudeness and roughness, however, Mr. Keeler was one of the most hospitable and generous men that I ever met. His buildings were all of sod, and the dwelling house was tidy and inviting. Mr. Keeler was loyally and lovingly attached to his wife and children.

"One day during the war period a cavalcade of rebels who were fleeing from the draft in Missouri stopped at his wells to obtain water for themselves and animals. Their mules were decorated with flags of the Confederacy, and the men were lustily hurrahing for Jeff Davis. This exhibition aroused Tom Keeler's Union feelings so intensely that he stood before the well with a gun in each hand, demanding that the rebel bunting be removed before any Union Nebraska water should be drawn. His wife stood at the door, armed with a double-barreled shotgun. After very acrimonious discussion the demand was complied with and the boisterous fugitives congratulated Keeler and his wife upon their courage and loyalty.

"A few weeks after we passed this ranch Mr. Keeler's stables, containing forty head of horses, together with 200 tons of hay, were wantonly set on fire by the Cheyenne Indians and totally destroyed. In later years Mr. Keeler removed to Eastern Nebraska and settled on the Elkhorn River, near Elkhorn City. In 1878 he met his death in a shotgun duel with Daniel Parmalee, a prominent citizen of Omaha.

"Dobytown, two miles west of Fort Kearney, contained about three hundred people. The houses were built of adobe or sod, one story high. It was on the extreme western verge of civilization and was a great rendezvous for outlaws and gamblers, who practiced their nefarious arts on the unsophisticated pilgrims.

"At a point opposite the fort the Platte River was three miles wide, containing numerous small islands and many deep and treacherous channels; yet this was the only real safe fording place between Julesburgh and the Missouri River.

"On arrival at the Boyd ranch, eleven miles east of the fort, our team was so fatigued that we were compelled to rest for three days. Here James E. Boyd operated a small trading post and ranch, carrying on a large traffic with the officers and soldiers of the fort, making profitable contracts for supplying wood from the margin of the river and from islands which had been reserved by the Government for military purposes; also for hay that grew abundantly on the Platte bottoms. While we tarried here the territorial election was held for choosing a delegate to Congress. This was the only polling place between Grand Island and Fort Kearney, a distance of thirty miles. The democratic candidate was Experience Estabrook of Omaha, and the republican candidate was Samuel

G. Daily. There were twenty-two votes cast at the Boyd ranch, eleven of them by officers and soldiers from the fort. Great interest was manifested in the contest. I speak with emphasis and pleasure of the strenuous and useful career of Mr. Boyd. He assisted in the construction of the Union Pacific roadbed, projected the first railway north from Omaha, established the first large pork packing plant at Omaha and erected the first large theater in the city.

"The Wood River plain, which we followed a distance of twenty miles, presented a magnificent view; but there were only half a dozen settlers in that long stretch. At Wood River Crossing 'Pap' Lamb, well known along the Platte Valley, was operating a ranch and stage station. About this time the Western Stage Company, which was operating lines in Iowa, Wisconsin and other border states, established a route between Omaha and Pike's Peak—the name by which the Denver region was generally known—and stations were established from ten to fifteen miles apart. 'Mr. Lambs' ranch was one of them, and he drove to the next station west."

In a footnote to Mr. Anderson's paper (in part here quoted), Albert Watkins, historian for the State Historical Society, writes as follows:

"John K. Lamb, writing from Fort Kearney, April 11, 1860, to the Omaha Republican of April 18, 1860, remarked that Kearney City 'is better known as Adobe Town.' And he observed that Doctor Henry was doing a large business there. (Dr. Charles A. Henry was the father of Mrs. James E. Boyd.) Testimony taken by Samuel G. Daily in his contest against Experience Estabrook for a seat in Congress tended to show that at the time of the election of October 11, 1859, there were at Kearney City not over eight houses, not over fifteen residents, and not one acre of cultivated land or a farmhouse in the neighborhood of Kearney City. It also showed that at Nebraska Centre, the place named as the county seat (of Buffalo County), there was but one dwelling house, one storehouse and one warehouse. (Statement of Representative Campbell of Pennsylvania on behalf of Daily. Congressional Globe, first session, Thirty-sixth Congress, part 3, page 2180.) The returns of the election show that 238 of the 292 votes of Buffalo County were cast at Kearney City. These were rejected because Kearney City, being situated south of the Platte River, was not within Buffalo County."

Albert Watkins, historian of the State Historical Society, writing in reference to the location of both "Centralia" and "Nebraska Centre" says:

"Relevant to the footnote on page 196, 'Collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society,' Volume XVI: Stephen H. Wattles, a witness for Daily, testified that 'There is no such town as Centralia, but [it] is the name given to a precinct. The election purports to have been held at the house of Mr. Johnson, on Wood River.'

"The witness testified also, of Nebraska Centre, that 'It has one dwelling house, one storehouse, one barn or stable and one warehouse.' He said that he was at Nebraska Centre about eighteen hours and saw only three persons there who appeared to be residents. He testified further that Nebraska Centre and Centralia 'are on the direct line of thoroughfare from the Missouri River to the mines.' At Centralia he saw only four, five or six houses. He saw none anywhere except on Wood River."

The question of the definite location of Nebraska Centre was referred to Joseph Owen of Shelton. In explanation let it be said Mr. Owen came to Buffalo County in 1863 and has since resided here. Mr. Owen has served as treasurer of School District No. 1 since its organization in 1870 to date (1916). He has also served as a member and as chairman of the county board of supervisors. His wife, whose maiden name was Sarah Ann Oliver, is a sister of Ed Oliver. Ed Oliver, also mentioned, came to Buffalo County in 1860. He worked for Joseph E. Johnson at Wood River Centre in 1860-61. He has served as county treasurer in 1871-72 and as a member of the board of county commissioners.

Mr. Joseph Owen, under date of January 28, 1916, writes, in substance, as follows: "I have always known that the J. E. Boyd place, when I came here in 1863, was known as Nebraska Centre, and Mr. Ed Oliver, who worked for J. E. Johnson (at Wood River Centre), never heard of Centralia Precinct. My wife (maiden name, Sarah Ann Oliver) was acquainted with the Wilsons (Charles and Henry) and Boyd, as she worked for Mrs. Boyd when a girl. Henry Wilson lived on the Kelsey place (this the northeast one-quarter section No. 13, town No. 9, range No. 14, in Gibbon Township). His father was drowned in the Platte River and his body never recovered, before I came here. John Britt and George Burke bought out Henry Peck in 1863. This land is now a part of the Village of Shelton. All the other people named as voting at the Boyd place (Nebraska Centre) are entirely unknown to the Olivers, and we are at a loss to know where they all lived. They certainly did not live along Wood River.

"Mrs. Owen says she was acquainted with Henry Peck, Thomas Page, John Eames, J. E. Johnson, Henry Sharp, John B. and James McCallister, Joseph Houff and Patrick Carroll. They all lived at Wood River Centre."

The Boyd ranch has a definite location. It was the first land filed upon in Buffalo County by Joseph Boyd in 1868. There seems no question but what the Boyd ranch was at Nebraska Centre.

CHAPTER V

HUNTSMAN'S ECHO, FIRST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN BUFFALO COUNTY—COPIES ON FILE IN LIBRARY OF STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY—SKETCH OF JOSEPH E. JOHNSON, NEBRASKA'S FIRST EDITOR—ACCOMPANIES EXPLORERS WHO LOCATE LINE OF UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD—BUFFALO DESTROY MR. JOHNSON'S GARDEN AND CROPS—GRASSHOPPERS DESTROY CROPS IN BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1860—BUILDING OF TELEGRAPH LINE TO FORT KEARNEY IN 1860—STAGE LINE MAKES A RECORD TRIP, FORT KEARNEY TO OMAHA, 33 HOURS—MR. JOHNSON VISITS PAWNEE INDIANS WINTER 1860-61—A SAW MILL IN OPERATION AT WOOD RIVER CENTRE—A ONE-HORSE GRIST MILL IN OPERATION—GRAIN AND VEGETABLES GROW TO PERFECTION—FIRST POSTOFFICE IN BUFFALO COUNTY.

JOSEPH E. JOHNSON

The first postmaster in Buffalo County and editor of the first paper published in Buffalo County and in the territory of Nebraska west of Omaha.

THE FIRST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN BUFFALO COUNTY

The first newspaper published in the territory now embraced in Buffalo County was *The Huntsman's Echo* at Wood River Center (now Shelton) from April, 1860, to August 1, 1861. The editor was Joseph E. Johnson, who also appears to have been one of Nebraska's first editors.

Several copies of *The Huntsman's Echo* are on file in the library of the State Historical Society and in consulting this file one learns much of the history of the county and its people in territorial days. *The Huntsman's Echo* carried a quite full line of advertising, discussed men and measures of public importance in the free and breezy western style but of necessity had little of local news. The editor was a most pronounced democrat, a warm friend of J. Sterling Morton, who seems to have been a standing candidate for office and from the columns of *The Huntsman's Echo* we learn that Mr. Morton, in the interests of his candidacy for office, visited Buffalo County and spoke on the streets of Wood River Center, and, at the June election in the year 1866, received thirty-two of the forty-two votes cast in the county for governor and in the October election in the same year, Mr. Morton being a candidate for Congress, received seventeen of the twenty-nine votes cast in the county.

There seems no question that Mr. Johnson was a man of much more than ordinary abilities and the writer has been inclined to question just why a man of his attainments should have located and engaged in the publication of a newspaper at a point where in those days there was no local patronage for its support.

Mr. Johnson had been a strong advocate of the building of the Union Pacific Railroad and of its location on the north side of the Platte River and as the location had been determined previous to his arrival at Wood River Center, possibly he had in mind that in the near future a city might be established, when the road was built, at the point where he had located. There is every reason to believe that had he remained at Wood River Center during the building of the road, that with the influence exerted by an ably edited newspaper, the division station of the Union Pacific, now at Grand Island, might have been located at Wood River Center instead; possibly the state capital, who can tell? While Mr. Johnson was editing a newspaper at Council Bluffs and Omaha, there had been established by the general government, a military road described as follows: "From Florence, (about five miles north of the present City of Omaha) via Elkhorn City, Fremont, North Bend, Emerson, Buchanan, Columbus and Nebraska Center to New Fort Kearney." Also at the same date, June 14, 1858, there was established a military road from Bellevue, via Hazelton connecting with the first mentioned at Elkhorn City. As Mr. Johnson had traveled the Platte River trail to Utah and return in 1850 there seems little question that he foresaw that when the Union Pacific was constructed it must pass in the immediate vicinity of Wood River Center and that possibly an important city might be established at that point. Mr. Johnson was a Mormon, having two wives and numerous children on his arrival at Wood River Center in 1859. In 1860, it is related, another woman came from an Iowa point to whom later, in Utah, he was married, and possibly the increasing prejudice against the Mormons and especially polygamy caused Mr. Johnson to abandon this suggested financial venture and remove to Utah, there to dwell among a people more in sympathy with his beliefs and practices.

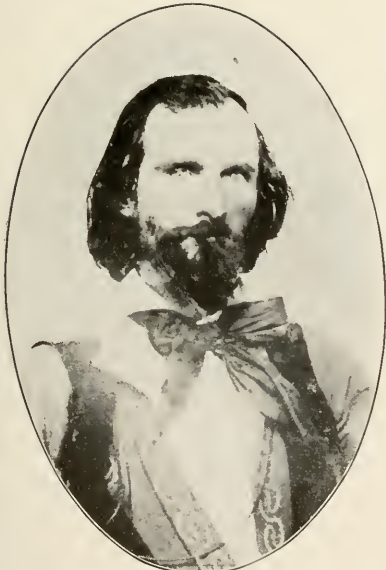
By permission we copy from the Morton History the following brief sketch of Joseph E. Johnson, Nebraska's first editor, as prepared by his son, C. E. Johnson, a resident of Salt Lake City: "Joseph Ellis Johnson was born April 28, 1817, at Pomfret, New York, being one of a family of sixteen children. At the age of sixteen, he moved with his parents, who had been converted to the faith of the Latter Day Saints, to Kirtland, Ohio. After this he followed the fate of the Saints through their various persecutions till he got as far west as Council Bluffs, Iowa. At Nauvoo, Illinois, he was married to Harriet Snyder, the ceremony being performed by the Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith. At the time he went to Council Bluffs in 1848 it was known as 'Miller's Hollow,' afterwards 'Kanesville.'

"Here he built the first house in Pottawattamie County, was postmaster for five years and obtained the change of name from 'Kanesville' to 'Council Bluffs.' Here he was a member of the first city council for many years. He established and published the Council Bluffs Bugle in 1852. The Bugle had much to do with getting the capital of Nebraska Territory established at Omaha. Here he opened the first store on the site of Omaha, and from here sent the first train (ox team) load of goods to the Denver, Colorado, (then known as Cherry Creek) mines. In 1854 he published the Omaha Arrow, the first paper published on Nebraska soil. In the same year he accompanied the first party of explorers for a railroad crossing on the Missouri River and the Loup Fork of the



RICE H. EATON

Editor of the Central Nebraska Press,
established at Kearney in 1873



(By courtesy of C. S. Paice, Lincoln)

JOSEPH E. JOHNSON

First postmaster in Buffalo County at
Wood River Center, 1860. Editor of the
Huntsman's Echo, 1860-61, first news-
paper published in Nebraska Territory
west of Omaha.



LYMAN B. CUNNINGHAM

Pioneer settler of Buffalo County.
Editor of the first newspaper published
in Kearney—Kearney Junction Times.
One of the founders of Kearney who, at
a public meeting held in a coal and lum-
ber office, helped give the future city its
name.

Platte River. He wrote the first article published favoring the North Platte route for the Pacific Railroad and contended for the same until so located. He crossed the plains in 1850 and went to Utah, in order to see the country, returning shortly with intention of soon removing to Utah. In 1857 he published the Crescent City (Iowa) Oracle, and laid out the town of that name. In 1858 he published the Council Bluffs Press. In 1859 he moved to Wood River (Center), Nebraska, and for three years published the Huntsman's Echo. At this point he had a large outfitting store for the accommodation of the many who were rushing to the gold fields of California. He had also a printing office, bakery, hotel, daguerreotype studio, etc. In 1861 moved to Utah, bringing a long train of teams loaded with all manner of goods and chattels. * * * On November 6, 1882, he was taken sick with pneumonia, from which he died December 17, 1882. He had three wives, all of whom survived him and were present at his deathbed. He had twenty-seven children and many grand children."—(C. E. Johnson, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 16, 1905.) To be historically correct and give due justice it is perhaps best to state that the Omaha Arrow was doubtless the first newspaper published for, but not in, Nebraska Territory, as the Arrow appears to have been printed at Council Bluffs, the first issue bearing date of July 28, 1854. The first paper printed in the territory appears to have been the Nebraska Palladium, at Bellevue, and the first issue on November 14, 1854. On the last page of this issue appeared the following: "This is the first column of reading matter set in the Territory of Nebraska. This was put in type on the 14th day of November, 1854, by Thomas Morton."

Early settlers in the county state that the store of Mr. Johnson was not extensive in character and that in connection with the store and newspaper he also conducted a blacksmith shop and repair shop for wagons and that the repair shops were much the more profitable as a business. In one of his newspapers Mr. Johnson advertises himself as follows: "General outfitting commission merchant, keeper of Council Bluffs Mansion; as carrying on wagonmaking and blacksmithing and keeper of a bakery and eating saloon." The following, some wholly, some in substance, are taken from the Huntsman's Echo, July 26, 1860: "A few miles above on the Platte and Wood rivers, there are numerous herds of buffalo. Across the river it is said, they are coming over from the Republican in innumerable multitudes, and many, famishing for food or water—whilst making for the Platte for a drink, are frightened back by emigrants and travelers, yet make immediate efforts to gain the water, but are again driven back by the report of fire arms, and, we are told, many thus perish before they reach the water." * * * On September 6, 1860: "Buffalo are continually coming about our farm, ranch and office, bothering us by eating our vegetables, cropping the grass, bellowing and kicking up a dust generally; and not being able to stand it longer we sent the boys and Doctor (Doctor Farner of Council Bluffs, Iowa, who was en route for Denver with a stock of drugs) out to drive them away. This resulted in prostrating the carcasses of two, and as dogs and wolves are scarce we had to breakfast, dine and sup from their flesh since. We shan't try to stand it, and give timely notice that the echo of fire arms will be a common thing in this neck of the woods, unless these fearfully, frightful looking creatures desist from peeking into our office, and dis-composing our printer. At (Fort) Kearney, it

seems, they almost came into town. The driver of the express from Denver, was compelled to bring his team to a walking pace near (Fort) Kearney because of the buffalo thronging the road."

September 6, 1860, "The Huntsman's Echo regrets to learn that clouds of grasshoppers migrating south have for several days been doing considerable damage at some of the ranches above."

September, 1860, "It is reported that a band of thirty Cheyennes (Sioux) had recently made a descent on the Pawnee camps, but were routed with the loss of much of their own equipage."

September 6, 1860, describing a trip along Wood River it is said, "there was found rich, brown clusters of grapes—large, juicy and sweet, though in a state of nature. Of plums we never saw as large, or quality better, growing wild; we enjoyed them to a fullness. Trees cut by beaver and numerous paths, slides and dams are found along Wood River. The editor has received a present of the largest and finest watermelon of the season from J. E. Boyd, who has a most delightful and eligible farm seven miles above—comfortable buildings, several hundred acres fenced and near two hundred acres in crops, a pleasant and agreeable lady and a pretty baby."

On September 13 the editor again notes that buffalo are destroying his garden and says, "we could not stand it longer, but started Sam, who intercepted his progress before he had done much damage to our garden, and banging away—

" 'The well-aimed lead pursues the certain sight,
And death in thunder overtook his flight.'

"The flesh being secured our t'other half, self and the balance, have been regaling on roast, broil, fry and stew, ever since."

On November 2d: "Last week on two occasions, from our office, we witnessed the playful pranks of several antelope, and again a sprightly red fox came up near the enclosure, but cut and run when Towser came in sight. A nice race they had but Reynard made the best time. A week ago three large white wolves hove in sight, and played around on the prairie at a safe distance—the same chaps, probably, that made a tender meal from a good-sized calf of ours that had been running out. The buffalo have taken our caution and for two weeks have not troubled us or annoyed our printer." On this date the editor also says: "Yesterday Messrs. Kountze and Porter called on us whilst on their trip providing for the distribution of the balance of the telegraph poles along the route. Come on with your forked lightning! Strike for the great western ocean, the land of gold and glittering stones and ore." Reference is here had to the telegraph line being constructed from Omaha to Fort Kearney and which was completed to Wood River Center November 2d and to Fort Kearney November 4, 1860.

September 13, 1860: "The people of the Pike's Peak mining district, together with all concerned, will be pleased to learn that after being swindled, gouged, imposed upon, and literally robbed in the matter of mail facilities and service, by that arch-monopoly, Jones, Russell & Co., for nearly two years they are now provided by the department, at American rates, a mail from Omaha, by this place

and Fort Kearney, once a week and back. The Western Stage Company, the most punctual, accommodating and reliable in mail service, has the contract and have already sent out one mail." This is believed to have been the first mail route established by the general Government, passing through Buffalo County. On August 11th it is related this stage company made a record trip from Fort Kearney to Omaha in thirty-three hours carrying six passengers.

In the winter of 1860-61 the editor of the Huntsman's Echo visited the Pawnee Indians on their reservation at Genoa in Nance County and in the February 21st issue gives the following interesting account of this visit: "The Pawnees number at present about four thousand souls and a fraction over, and when 'at home' live in a cluster of huts built with crotches and poles, covered, top and sides, with willows, then with grass and dirt, giving the appearance at a little distance of an immense collection of 'potato hills,' all of a circular shape and oval. The entrance is through a passage walled with earth, the hole in the center at the top serving both for window and chimney, the fire being built in the center. Along the sides little apartments are divided off the main room by partitions of willow, rush or flag, some of them being neatly and tidily constructed, and altogether these lodges are quite roomy and comfortable, and each is frequently the abode of two or more families. In these villages there is no regularity of streets, walks or alleys, but each builds in a rather promiscuous manner, having no other care than to taste and convenience. The tribe is divided into five bands, each being under a special chief or leader, and the whole confederation being under one principal chief. Each band has its habitation separate and distinct from the other, three bands living in villages adjoining and all composing one village, the other two villages some little distance. There is frequently some considerable rivalry between the several bands in fighting, hunting and other sports, and not infrequently one band commits thefts upon the effects of another."

In the issue of April 25, 1861, speaking of the agricultural prospects of the Wood River Valley the editor says: "Corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley, potatoes, and all sorts of vegetables and roots grow to perfection. For melons and other vines the fruit is almost spontaneous. The timber consists of cottonwood, elm, ash, hackberry, box elder and oak. Eighteen miles below there is a sawmill, lumber \$30 per thousand. There was a one-horse grist mill at Wood River Center. The vast emigration going up the valley at that time demanded far more of the products of the region than the supply. Corn brought from \$1.25 to \$2.50 per bushel, flour \$5 to \$7 per 100 lbs., butter 25 cents per pound, eggs 25 cents per dozen, and potatoes \$2 per bushel. We have growing apples, peaches, English gooseberries, currants, raspberries, and strawberries, set last year. All stood the winter fine and look well." It is related that in the two summers' life of the Huntsman's Echo the far-seeing editor prophesied as to the future greatness of the Wood River Valley. In the last issue, August 1, 1861, appears the following:

"ADIEU

"Friends and patrons—adieu. We have 'secessed,' and tomorrow shall start westward and shall probably become a citizen of Utah, and perhaps—soon our

Echo may be re-Echoed from the tops of the mountains. We go from turmoil, strife and bloodshed, to seek quiet in the happy, peaceful vales of Utah. This republican reign of terror, blood, tyranny and oppression is too much for our democratic style of free thought, free speech and freedom, when men who may chance to differ in opinion with wild, blood-thirsty fanatics, are threatened and sometimes despoiled or murdered. * * * Should our life and abilities be spared, our friends may find our foot-marks through the boundless West, and again hear the shrill, oracular notes of the old bugler, re-echoed from the vales of the mountains. Again, adieu."

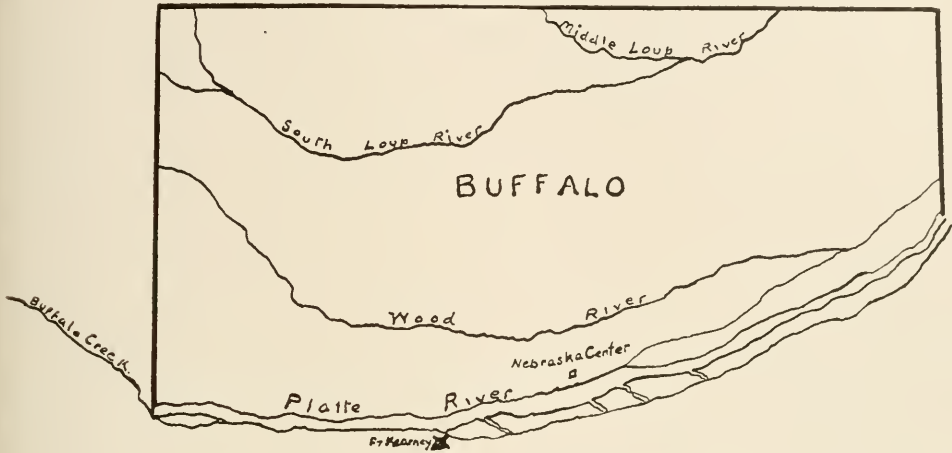
Mr. E. Oliver, now a resident of Shelton, and who was employed by Mr. Johnson to work in his garden, states that Mr. Johnson took great pride and pleasure in tilling the soil, not only raising quantities of vegetables, but was also a lover of flowers and small fruits to which he gave much attention. The store and printing office was in a building fourteen feet square, built of hewn logs, and was located on the bank of Wood River, east of the main street. In front of this store was the Overland Trail; across the trail, to the south, was the house in which Mr. Johnson lived, and his garden extended to the south as far as the present railroad tracks. This garden was enclosed with a fence built of poles. After the removal of Mr. Johnson to Utah, the store building was used as a residence by the families of E. Oliver and A. Meyer.

As the Huntsman's Echo mentions migrating grasshoppers as destroying crops in 1860 it might be of interest to mention that a rainfall record had been kept at Fort Kearney from 1850 to and including 1861, and that the rainfall for the years 1859-60-61 was the least for any years during that period, being 16.10 inches in 1859, 16.85 inches in 1860, and 19.34 inches in 1861. This is the least rainfall, for a period of three years, as appears in the rainfall record kept at Fort Kearney and Ravenna between the years 1850 and 1914. The least rainfall record in any one year in this time, 1850 to 1914, being 15.67 inches in 1894.

THE FIRST POSTOFFICE

The first postoffice established in Buffalo County was at Wood River Center in 1860. The first contract to carry mail was let by the general Government in 1850. This was a monthly mail between Independence, Mo., and Salt Lake City, Utah. This mail was carried over the Oregon Trail, through Nebraska Territory south of the Platte River and via Fort Kearney to Utah. This contract was let to Samuel H. Woodson of Independence, Mo. In 1859 this contract was transferred to Russell, Majors and Waddell, and the initial or starting point was made Nebraska City. The celebrated Pony Express was put in operation in 1860 between St. Joseph and Sacramento, passing south of the Platte via Fort Kearney. Previous to the breaking out of the Civil war Missouri was a hotbed of secession and the home of border ruffians and more and more emigration to the Pacific Coast followed the trail north of the Platte River. In the latter '50s the Western Stage Company of Iowa extended its route to Fort Kearney, following the military road established by the general Government in 1858, from Bellevue and Florence via Fremont, Columbus, Nebraska Center to Fort Kearney. In August, 1860, the Western Stage Company were awarded a contract by the general

Government to carry mail over this route as far west as Fort Kearney. Previous to this date it seems that the mail between Omaha and Fort Kearney up the valley of the Platte was carried and charged for the same as freight or express, the rates of course being high. These extortionate rates for carrying mail doubtless account for the rather violent language used towards Jones, Russell & Co. in the Huntsman's Echo of September 13, 1860.



Through the kindness of Senator Norris Brown it is learned that the records of the Postoffice Department show that the postoffice at Wood River Center was established August 20, 1860, and discontinued May 28, 1864. The postmasters at Wood River Center were as follows: Joseph E. Johnson, August 20, 1860, to September 30, 1862; Henry Peck, September 30, 1862, to July 18, 1863; Edward Huff, July 18, 1863, to May 28, 1864. Thus it seems that Joseph E. Johnson was the first editor of a newspaper for Nebraska Territory, the Omaha Arrow, July 28, 1854; the editor and publisher of the first paper printed in Buffalo County, and the first postmaster in Buffalo County.

CHAPTER VI

ORGANIZATION OF BUFFALO COUNTY—RETURNS OF AN ELECTION IN BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1858—NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF AN ELECTION OF COUNTY OFFICERS IN 1860—BUFFALO COUNTY ORDERED TO ENLIST SOLDIERS IN 1862—AN ACT OF THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE TO CONTINUE THE ORGANIZATION OF BUFFALO COUNTY, 1866—COUNTY CLERK OF BUFFALO COUNTY, NEBRASKA TERRITORY, USES A COUNTY SEAL.

ORGANIZATION OF BUFFALO COUNTY

It has generally been understood and accepted that the first organization of Buffalo County was in the year 1870, the appointments to office in the county being made by Governor David Butler on petition of Patrick Walsh, Martin Slattery and Sergeant Michael Coady, the tradition being that Governor Butler named Patrick Walsh as probate judge with power to appoint temporary county officers and that Probate Judge Walsh did so name and appoint the first county officers and yet, there are official records which disclose that there was a county organization in Buffalo County in territorial days, possibly dating from the year 1855 when the county was first named and its boundaries established. These records seem to disclose that the said county was divided into one or more precincts and that there was elected county officials. In the office of the secretary of state there is an election return from Buffalo County for the year 1859 as follows:

"This is to certify that at a general election held in the several precincts of and for the County of Buffalo and Territory of Nebraska on Tuesday, October 11, A. D. 1859, the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names for the following described offices:

"Estabrook had 292 votes for member of Congress.

"William W. Wyman had 292 votes for territorial treasurer.

"Robert C. Jordan had 292 votes for territorial auditor.

"Alonzo D. Luce had 292 votes for territorial librarian.

"William E. Harvey had 292 votes for territorial commissioner of schools.

"James G. Chapman had 292 votes for district attorney, First Judicial District.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto attached my name for official purposes this 12th day of October, A. D. 1859.

"(Signed) GEO. MILLER,

"County Clerk of Buffalo County, N. T."

It is understood that in the canvass of the returns for member of Congress and for territorial officers the votes from Buffalo County, as above certified to,

were thrown out (not counted), on the ground that Buffalo County was unorganized.

COUNTY OFFICERS ELECTED IN BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1860

The Huntsman's Echo was published at Wood River Centre (now Shelton) in 1860-61. The following account of an election of county officers, taken from the Huntsman's Echo of November 2, 1860, makes certain that there was a county organization in Buffalo County in territorial days and previous to the year 1870. Files of the Huntsman's Echo are in possession of the State Historical Society and from which the following account of the election is taken:

HUNTSMAN'S ECHO, NOVEMBER 8, 1860.

"The election on Tuesday last (November 6th) in our county went off as quietly and pleasantly as we ever witnessed. Forty-two votes were cast, thirty-nine of which Mr. Morton (J. Sterling Morton) received and the three others were given to J. P. Daily. Our humble self (Joseph E. Johnson, editor of the Huntsman's Echo) received the largest number of votes for representative of the Hall County district. Henry Peck was elected probate judge; J. H. Wagner, Joseph Huff and Thomas Page, county commissioners; P. H. Gunn, sheriff; L. Vanalstyne, coroner; J. E. Boyd and J. H. Wagner, justices of the peace; J. E. Boyd, treasurer and register; Edward Huff, county clerk; P. H. Gunn and John Evans, constables; and our learned self (Joseph E. Johnson) superintendent of schools.

"We did not see one drunken or boisterous man through the day and we enjoyed the fulness of democratic harmony and union. So much for Buffalo County and her industrious, peaceful and democratic law-and-union-loving citizens."

BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1862

The records in the office of the governor disclose that "On September 16, 1862, Buffalo County was ordered to enlist its quota of men to fill the ranks of the First Nebraska Regiment."

If Buffalo County was unorganized to whom was this order issued? In the muster roll of the First Nebraska Regiment, found in the office of the adjutant general, Department of Nebraska, Grand Army of the Republic, are the names of men who enlisted in the First Nebraska whose address are given as Fort Kearney. Among the names is that of John Oliver, who it is known was a resident of Buffalo County and later, in 1870, served as sheriff of the county, and it is believed that of the enlistments in the First Nebraska Regiment at Fort Kearney at that date, a portion, at least, of the number were credited to Buffalo County, the office or place for enlistment being Fort Kearney.

BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1866

That there was a county organization in Buffalo County previous to the year 1870, attention is invited to a special act of the Territorial Legislature passed and approved February 12, 1866.

It will be noted that while this act is "to continue the organization of the County of Buffalo, Nebraska Territory," it has especial reference to the office of probate judge in said Buffalo County. Attention is invited to the fact that this is a special act of the Legislature applicable to Buffalo County only.

At the session of the Legislature this act was passed, Isaac Alberton represented the counties of Platte, Merrick, Hall, Buffalo, Kearney and Lincoln in the Territorial Council and John Walliohs the counties of Platte, Hall, Buffalo and Merrick in the House.

This act may be found in the "Statutes of Nebraska—1867," compiled by E. Estabrook, and in part is as follows:

"An Act to continue the organization of the County of Buffalo, Nebraska Territory.

"Section 1. Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Nebraska: That the probate judge of the County of Buffalo, Territory of Nebraska, is hereby authorized and required to appoint all officers in said county necessary to complete county and precinct organizations; said persons so appointed to qualify before and file their bonds with said probate judge, the same to be approved by him and to be of the same amount and tenor as now provided by law, and to hold their offices respectively until the next general election succeeding their appointment and until their successors are elected and qualified.

"Section 2. Said probate judge is further authorized and required to demand and receive all records, books and papers belonging to said county, and safely keep the same until the proper officer in whose custody they may severally belong, shall have been appointed and qualified as provided in the foregoing section of this act.

"Section 3. * * *.

"Section 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

"Approved February 12, 1866."

COUNTY CLERK USES A SEAL OF THE COUNTY

In this chapter covering the organization of Buffalo County it has been shown that in the year 1859, in the County of Buffalo, Territory of Nebraska, an election was held, in which 292 votes were cast and the election returns certified to the secretary of state for the territory by George Miller, county clerk of Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory. It is further proposed to show by official records in the office of the secretary of state that in the year 1866 elections were held in Buffalo County, Territory of Nebraska, certified to by a county clerk who used an official seal of the county.

The first election returns in the office of the secretary of state in which it appears that a seal was used by the county clerk of Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory, is as follows:

"This is to certify that at an election held in the several precincts of Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory, on Saturday, the 2d day of June, A. D. 1866, the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names for the following described offices, to-wit:

"Governor—J. Sterling Morton, 32; David Butler, 10. Secretary of State—Chas. W. Sturgis, 32; T. P. Kennard, 10. State Auditor—Guy C. Barnum, 31; John Gillispie, 10. State Treasurer—St. John Goodrich, 33; Augustus Kountze, 9. Chief Justice—Wm. A. Little, 35; O. P. Mason, 7. Associate Justice—E. W. Thomas, 33; B. E. B. Kennedy, 33. Associate Justice—L. Crounse, 9; George B. Lake, 9. Representative in Congress—John R. Brooks, 32; T. M. Marquette, 9. For the constitution, 1 vote. Against the constitution, 41 votes.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto attached my name and the seal of said county this 4th day of June, A. D. 1866.

Seal of
Buffalo County,
Nebraska Territory.

(Signed) JOSEPH BOYD,
County Clerk."

On the same date as the foregoing is the following:

"This is to certify that at an election held in the several precincts of Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory, on Saturday, the 2d day of June, A. D. 1866, that the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names for the following described offices, to-wit:

"U. Kummer received 34 votes for state senator, Fifth Council District. James E. Boyd received 42 votes for state representative for joint district of Platte, Merrick, Hall and Buffalo counties.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto attached my name and the seal of said county this 4th day of June, A. D. 1866.

Seal of
Buffalo County,
Nebraska Territory.

(Signed) JOSEPH BOYD,
County Clerk."

At this election James E. Boyd was elected as representative in the Territorial Legislature. Joseph Boyd, who certified to the election returns as "county clerk," was a brother of James E. Boyd.

It will be noted that James E. Boyd was elected a justice of the peace and also county treasurer of Buffalo County at the November election in the year 1860.

In the office of the secretary of state may be found the returns of an election held in Buffalo County in October, 1866, as follows:

"This is to certify that at a general election held in the several precincts of Buffalo County, Nebraska Territory, on Tuesday, the 9th day of October, A. D. 1866, the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names for the following offices, to-wit:

"Delegate to Congress—J. Sterling Morton, 17; T. M. Marquette, 12. Territorial Auditor—Frank Murphy, 18; John Gillispie, 12. Territorial Treasurer—John S. Seaton, 18; Augustus Kountze, 12. Territorial Librarian—Robert D. Jordan, 16; R. S. Knox, 12. Member of Congress—Algeron S. Paddock, 16; John Taffe, 11.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto attached my name and affixed the seal of said county this 13th day of October, A. D. 1866.

Seal of
Buffalo County,
Nebraska Territory.

(Signed) AMBROSE STOWELL,
County Clerk of Buffalo County."

CHAPTER VII

BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1870—RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNTY—TRADITION RELATING THERETO—PROCLAMATION OF GOVERNOR DAVID BUTLER—RETURNS OF SPECIAL ELECTION JANUARY 20, 1870—FIRST REGULAR ELECTION OCTOBER 11, 1870.

BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1870

We now come to the history of the organization, or more appropriately, the reorganization, of Buffalo County in the year 1870.

On May 30, 1854, President Franklin Pierce signed the Nebraska-Kansas bill by which act Nebraska became a territory.

On March 4, 1867, on proclamation of President Andrew Johnson, Nebraska became a state. As before noted, at the second session of the Territorial Legislature which convened December 18, 1855, Buffalo County was named and its boundaries defined. Of the other counties in the territory named and their boundaries defined, not one adjoined Buffalo County. In fact until the year 1858 there was not a county adjoining Buffalo County. The establishment of Fort Kearney in 1848, the fertility of the Wood River Valley, the enormous emigration over the trail north of the Platte River, doubtless led many people to make temporary settlement along the trail and within the limits of Buffalo County as first named and bounded. When the county was named and its boundaries defined in 1855, Nebraska Center was named as its county seat. In the year 1860 the county seat was known as Wood River Center and now known as Shelton. It was at Wood River Center that the election of county officers was held in the year 1860 as reported by the Huntsman's Echo. From the earliest history which we have of the county there was a "center," a village as it were, at that point.

It is not difficult to understand why county organization in Buffalo County became disorganized under the territorial form of government and other conditions which existed at that date, when we consider that all lands comprised in said county (except the Fort Kearney Military Reservation) were Pawnee Indian lands until ceded to the general Government in the year 1857. That these lands were not surveyed and opened to settlement until the year 1867. That in the year 1871 Indians were still hunting wild game over the prairies of the county. That the first piece of land owned by an individual in the county was the "Boyd Ranch," purchased from the Government by Joseph Boyd in the year 1867, and that when the county government was reorganized in the year 1870, there was not a land owner by purchase, by deed, by pre-emption or by homestead claim



PATRICK WALSH

Pioneer settler of Buffalo County in 1865. Served as county judge, deputy county clerk, deputy county treasurer, deputy superintendent of schools and county commissioner.

in the county except James E. Boyd, owner of the Boyd Ranch, who was then living in Omaha. In territorial days and previous to 1870, settlers in the county were not land owners, were not home builders; with a few exceptions such as the Walshs, the Olivers, the Dugdales, the Owens, the Slatterys, the Nutters, August Meyer, and a few others, they were a migratory class and if one held a county office he, seemingly, did not deem it important to keep an official record of his administration of the office and when he "moved on," as most of them seem to have done, he took with him whatever of official record of his office he possessed.

RE-ORGANIZATION OF BUFFALO COUNTY

The tradition as it relates to the re-organization of Buffalo County is substantially as follows: In the year 1869 Patrick Walsh, Martin Slattery, together with Sergt. Michael Coady, who was stationed at Fort Kearney in Kearney County, and others, sent a signed petition to Governor David Butler asking that an election be called in the county preliminary to the organization (or reorganization) of the county. In response to this petition Governor Butler issued a proclamation, of which the following is a copy as found in the official records of the executive office of the state:

"State of Nebraska—Executive Department

"Whereas: The county of Buffalo in this state became dis-organized in the year 1867 by the removal of the county officers to the territory of Wyoming, and

"Whereas, A large number of the citizens of the said un-organized county of Buffalo have united in a petition asking that an election be called for the purpose of choosing county officers preliminary to the organization of said county,

"Therefore, I, David Butler, Governor of the State of Nebraska, by virtue of the authority in me vested, do hereby order that an election be held in the school house in precinct No. 1, of said Buffalo county, from 9 o'clock a. m. to 6 o'clock p. m. on Thursday the 20th day of January, 1870, for the purpose of choosing three county commissioners, one county clerk, one county treasurer, one sheriff, one probate judge, one county surveyor, one county superintendent of schools, one coroner, three judges and two clerks of election, and, I hereby designate and appoint Edward Oliver, Patrick Walsh and William C. Booth as judges, and C. S. Johnson and William Nutter as clerks to conduct said election in accordance with the 'Act for the organization of counties' approved June 24, 1867, and the election laws of the state.

SEAL
OF
NEBRASKA

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Nebraska.

"Done at Lincoln this 1st day of December in the year of our Lord, One thousand, eight hundred and sixty-nine.

"(Signed) DAVID BUTLER,

"By the Governor.

"(Signed) THOMAS P. KENNARD,

"Secretary of State."

SPECIAL ELECTION, JANUARY 20, 1870

The special election for the reorganization of the County of Buffalo was held at the schoolhouse in Precinct No. 1, on Thursday, January 20, 1870. The

returns of this election in the office of the secretary of state disclose the result as follows: Probate judge, Patrick Walsh; county clerk, Martin Slattery; county treasurer, Henry Dugdale; county sheriff, Roger Hayes; road supervisor, Augustus Meyer; coroner, J. T. Walker; county surveyor, Geo. P. Russell; county commissioners, A. C. McLane, Thomas Wood, Edward Oliver.

Judges of Election—Edward Oliver, Patrick Walsh, Wm. C. Booth.

Clerks of Election—C. S. Johnson, William Nutter.

FIRST REGULAR ELECTION

The first regular election in the county was held October 11, 1870.

The officers chosen at this election to serve until their successors were elected at the October election in 1871.

All voters were required to register in advance of an election; there were thirty-five registered voters in the county, and thirty-eight tax payers.

The result of the election, so far as given was as follows: Probate judge, Patrick Walsh; county clerk, Michael Coady; county treasurer, Henry Dugdale; county sheriff, John Oliver; county commissioners, Charles Davis, Wm. C. Booth, Edward Oliver.

Thomas K. Wood was chosen superintendent, but it is not known whether he qualified or not. At a meeting of the county commissioners, November 1, 1870, the following resolution was adopted: "On motion, P. Walsh was appointed superintendent of schools in Buffalo County in case Thomas K. Wood, elect, doesn't qualify." Sergt. Michael Coady was not a resident of the county, being stationed at Fort Kearney, but he accepted the office of county clerk and furnished the new-born county an iron-bound box, secured at Fort Kearney, for the safe keeping of the records. All the records of the county were in the keeping of Patrick Walsh, who, in addition to his duties as county judge, was also deputy county clerk, deputy treasurer and deputy superintendent, but it appears that Sergeant Coady was present at all meetings of the commissioners and that his advice was sought and followed in all county affairs. It appears that Sergeant Coady was a friend in need and a friend indeed to all early settlers.

CHAPTER VIII

PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST MEETING OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS—DIVIDE COUNTY INTO THREE ELECTION PRECINCTS—SALOON LICENSE FIXED AT \$25—JOHN OLIVER APPOINTED SHERIFF—FIRST SCHOOL TAX LEVIED—W. H. PLATT EMPLOYED AS COUNTY ATTORNEY—W. H. PLATT EMPLOYED TO COLLECT DELINQUENT TAXES; FEE ONE-HALF OF AMOUNT COLLECTED; PLATT'S CLAIM, \$2,148—O. A. ABBOTT EMPLOYED TO PROSECUTE W. H. PLATT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

In recording the proceedings of the first meeting of the board of county commissioners one would naturally expect to find entered of record the proclamation of Governor Butler calling the special election held on January 20, 1870, together with the result of the election and at least giving the names of the officers-elect, but nothing of this character appears in the minutes of this first meeting and while the returns of this election, as now on file in the office of the secretary of state, disclose that A. C. McLane, Thomas Wood and Edward Oliver were elected county commissioners, the minutes of this first meeting, now on file in the office of the county clerk, disclose that County Commissioner-elect A. C. McLane was not in attendance and that Samuel Boyd (a younger brother of James E. and Joseph Boyd) served as one of the commissioners.

Herewith is copied the minutes of this meeting:

1385505

"The first meeting after the organization of the county.

"At a special meeting of the board of county commissioners of Buffalo County, held pursuant to public notice, at Nebraska Center on the 26th day of February, 1870. Present, Thomas K. Wood, Edward Oliver, Samuel Boyd, commissioners. Resolved, that the County of Buffalo, in the State of Nebraska, be divided into three precincts, Nos. 1, 2 and 3, the first precinct to be bounded on the east line of Hall and Buffalo counties and on the west by the west end of section 31, Union Pacific Railroad (the section referred to is now embraced in the corporate limits of the City of Kearney); and Precinct No. 2 to be bounded on the east by the west end of section 31, Union Pacific Railroad, and on the west by Stevenson Siding, Union Pacific Railroad; and Precinct No. 3 to be bounded on the east by Stevenson Siding, Union Pacific Railroad, and on the west by western line of the county. (The Stevenson Siding referred to is, as recalled, now known as Odessa.)

"Resolved, that all county business hereafter, until next election, be transacted in Schoolhouse District No. 1 in said county.

"Resolved, that all horney cattle be valued at the following rates as taxable

property: From one year old to two years old, \$10 per head; and from two years old upward, to be valued at \$30 per head.

"Resolved, that all whisky saloonkeepers shall pay \$25 per annum and \$25 per annum for each billiard table; also John Oliver was appointed sheriff and assessor for Buffalo County. On motion the meeting adjourned.

"MARTIN SLATTERY,

"County Clerk.

"By Patrick Walsh, his deputy."

While from the above minutes it appears that John Oliver was appointed assessor for the county, it appears that later James Oliver was appointed and served as assessor, thus being the first assessor in the county.

On July 5, 1870, at a regular meeting of the county commissioners taxes were levied as follows:

General fund	6 mills
Sinking fund	2 mills
School fund	2 mills
Poor fund	1 mill

Total 11 mills

The total valuation of the county for taxable purposes in 1870 was \$788,988; 97 per cent of this amount (\$769,998) was the value of railroad and telegraph property and only 3 per cent that of personal property of settlers, there being only one quarter section of deeded real estate in the county, that, the "Boyd Ranch." As will be noted the levy for county purposes was 11 mills, which included 2 mills for schools; deducting the school tax we have 9 mills levied for county purposes in 1870.

It may be of interest to compare valuations and tax levies as between 1870 and 1908. The total value of all property in the county for taxation purposes in 1908 was \$35,276,110; of this amount \$1,468,945.35 was for railroad, telegraph and telephones, or about 4 per cent of the total compared with 97 per cent of the total in 1870. The levy for county purposes in 1908 was 8 mills as compared with a 9-mill levy in 1870. In 1870 there was raised \$7,100 for county purposes; in 1908, \$56,441, an increase of 800 per cent. This statement includes only county expenses and does not include state, school or village taxes.

Herewith is copied the record of the county commissioners wherein was allowed the first claims against the county. These claims were allowed at a meeting held January 3, 1871, and the record is as follows:

"The following bills were presented and by careful examination were ordered:

Patrick Walsh's bill as follows,

Furnishing county with stationery one year	\$150.00
Issuing 11 warrants	11.00
For O'Niel's trial	5.85
Services as probate judge, one year, Patrick Walsh.....	100.00
County seal and express on treasurer's books.....	7.75
As superintendent of schools, year.....	8.00

Salary to P. Walsh as deputy county clerk one year, \$150, and to M.

Coady, county clerk, \$175	300.00
Issuing certificate of election, \$2, going to Grand Island.....	8.00
Assistant register (of voters)	15.75

Total due Walsh and Coady to January 3, 1871.....\$606.30'

It is interesting to note that Mr. Walsh served and drew salary as county judge, superintendent of schools and deputy county clerk, also that the county paid \$1 each for warrants issued. At a meeting of the county commissioners held in 1870, W. H. Platt of Grand Island was employed as county attorney at a salary of \$150 per year and traveling expenses. At a meeting of the county commissioners held July 5, 1871, the following was adopted: "Resolved by the board that W. H. Platt be and is hereby authorized to collect the Union Pacific Railroad taxes for the years A. D. 1868 and 1869 for payment of which he is to receive the one-half of all he collects, otherwise no pay." On August 15, 1871, in the commissioners' record appears the following: "On motion the county treasurer is hereby authorized and allowed to settle with the Union Pacific Railroad Company, and to receive from said company the sum of \$4,297, taxes for the years 1868 and 1869 and the sum of \$10,703 taxes for the year 1870 and that he be empowered to receipt in full for the taxes due from said company for the above years mentioned." "On motion it was ordered that a warrant be struck to W. H. Platt as attorney for the collection of taxes of 1868 and 1869 for \$2,148.50, being one-half of the taxes collected for said years and the same to be paid from the taxes collected from said years, a proportionate part to be taken from each fund."

From the records it appears that P. Walsh was at this date, July 5, 1871, serving as county judge and also as county treasurer, while Sergt. Michael Coady was serving as county clerk, with F. S. Trew as deputy clerk. It is recalled that when it became known that W. H. Platt had received over two thousand dollars for collecting county taxes, and which, it appears, he had only to ask for in order to have paid, there was a great outcry raised and it was openly charged that all the county officers were engaged in the steal. At the October meeting of the commissioners it is recorded that "The Hon. W. H. Platt generously returned county warrant No. 52 with \$826.35 due thereof for cancellation, being the one issued at last meeting of county commissioners for collection of delinquent railroad taxes for years 1868 and 1869." In the records of the county commissioners it later appears that O. A. Abbott of Grand Island was employed by the commissioners to prosecute W. H. Platt in the endeavor to secure a return of the money paid him for collection of delinquent taxes, and while it appears that the county paid \$45.35 as costs in such a suit there is no record, so far as can be learned, that any further portion of the money thus paid Mr. Platt was refunded.

CHAPTER IX

CHARACTER OF EARLY SETTLERS—VOTERS VOUCHED FOR—TOOK THE SHERIFF ALONG

CHARACTER OF THE EARLY SETTLERS

The early settlements in this county were not of a permanent character nor were there many in number. In 1867 there were eighteen tax payers, and the total levied was \$241.98, no part of this school tax. The names of these tax payers and the value of their property for taxation purposes was as follows: D. W. Beach, \$1,080; John Britt, \$150; J. E. Boyd, \$6,830; Joseph Boyd, \$600; D. R. Champlin, \$750; H. Dugdale, \$940; C. Eddy, \$715; W. Esty, \$1,140; G. Garduer, \$650; C. S. Johnson, \$475; A. Meyer, \$425; Ed Oliver, \$335; Sarah Oliver, \$540; Staats & Wilson, \$3,760; W. D. Thomas, \$2,800; Thomas Tague, \$355; G. H. Hats, \$650; A. J. Williams, \$825. Total valuation of property in the county for 1867, \$23,020.

In 1868 there were twenty-one tax payers in the county; in 1869, twenty, and in 1870, thirty-eight, notwithstanding the Union Pacific Railroad had been completed and running regular trains as far as Kearney (now Buda), in August, 1866, and the railroad property had been listed for taxation in 1868.

The first school tax levied was in 1870 and amounted to about sixteen hundred dollars. The early settlers who were, it appears, of influence in the settlement and who took a more or less active part in matters of public interest were composed in great part of two classes or nationalities, English and Irish. The English were in the majority and were largely Mormon emigrants, some of whom had journeyed to Utah, becoming dissatisfied and returned to this locality, the others proceeding no further than Wood River Center settlement. The Irish were not Mormon emigrants nor does it appear that they were in any manner in sympathy with that form of religion. As a rule these early settlers came direct from their native land to the Territory of Nebraska and were therefore unacquainted with our form of government or the methods in common use in the states in conducting elections or of those relating to school, county and governmental affairs. All these things must be taken into consideration in passing judgment on the methods and manner in which some of the public business was conducted in the early history of the county.

That no school tax was levied until 1870 would seem to indicate that the earlier settlers did not deem education of such immediate and pressing importance as those who came in 1871 and later. While the English were in the majority among the early settlers the Irish seem to have been more active in public affairs. Possibly this is accounted for from the fact that Sergt. Michael Coady, at Fort

Kearney, was of great use and influence among the early settlers and doubtless was inclined to favor his own people. James Jackson, a register of voters, relates that on his refusing to register certain Irishmen who under the law were not eligible to vote, complaint was made to Sergeant Coady that Mr. Jackson—who, by the way, is of English descent—was discriminating against the Irish in this respect, and that when he (Jackson) convinced Sergeant Coady that he was following the letter of the law, there was no further complaint. That the early settlers were a peaceful, law abiding people is evidenced by the fact that while the county was unorganized until 1870 there is related practically nothing of lawlessness or crime on the part of the settlers. Something in the nature of tradition as to the manner in which public affairs were conducted is herewith given as illustrating the character of the early settlers.

VOTERS VOUCHED FOR

Previous to 1873 voters were required to register in advance of an election. At an election held in 1870 there were thirty-five registered voters in the county. It is related that on election day as the hour for closing the polls drew near it appeared that fifteen registered voters had failed to cast their votes, whereupon a judge of the election arose and said: "I am well acquainted with these men who have not voted; they are all good and true men, and I will vouch for them." He then placed fifteen ballots in the ballot box, which were later counted with those regularly cast. If this be true it is believed it was not done to further any partisan end or purpose but as a neighborly act, it not being convenient for the voter to attend in person, a neighbor kindly performs the necessary duty instead.

TOOK THE SHERIFF ALONG

While the county records show that on February 26, 1870, the county commissioners appointed John Oliver both sheriff and assessor, there is good reason to believe that later James Oliver was appointed assessor and served as the first assessor in the county. It is related that in the western part of the county there were a few settlers who boasted that they had never been assessed and would not be and they would make it warm for anyone who attempted to assess their property. On this official trip the assessor was accompanied by his brother, John, the sheriff. When they arrived the few settlers at Elmcreek began making threats and firing their guns, but the Oliver brothers were not easily bluffed and replied that they had guns and could shoot if necessary, but that the assessment must be made and there was no use making a fuss about it. After a long parley the assessor was permitted to perform his official duty.

CHAPTER X

REV. DAVID MARQUETTE—FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES HELD IN BUFFALO COUNTY—
JAMES JACKSON—"PAP" LAMB—GEORGE STEARLEY—CHURCH AND SUNDAY
SCHOOL ORGANIZED.

FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES HELD

The first preaching services held in the county appears to have been in the winter of 1869-70. These services, a series of meetings, were held in "the first schoolhouse," elsewhere described, and were conducted by Rev. D. Marquette, a Methodist missionary, who is still living (1908) and now resides at University Place, Neb. As related, a pleasing and interesting feature of these meetings was the sweet singing by the Owen family, Mrs. David Owen, her two daughters and son, Joseph. As singers the Owen family seems to have been gifted, as it is related that two other daughters of this family, who resided in Utah, were members of the choir and sang regularly in the great Mormon Tabernacle at Salt Lake City, Utah. The writer is greatly indebted to Reverend Marquette for the following account of this series of meetings and of his labors in Buffalo and adjoining counties:

"University Place, Neb., Oct. 28, 1908.

"Replying to your inquiry concerning my work as missionary in the bounds of Buffalo County, I take pleasure in stating the following facts: In the spring of 1869 I was appointed pastor of Wood River Mission, a 'circuit' which consisted of a straight line from Silver Creek Station just west of Columbus, to Gibbon Siding, ten or twelve miles east of Fort Kearney, embracing all intermediate points where there were people enough, including Grand Island where wife and I lived. I visited and held services at three places west of Grand Island—'Pap' Lamb's ranch ten miles west but on Wood River, and at Wood River Station, holding the services at the station or at Jackson's store, about a mile northwest of the station. I am not sure whether Wood River railroad station and Jackson's store on the old freight road (overland trail) keeping close to the stream of Wood River, were either or both in Buffalo County. You will probably know more about the county lines than I do, these cutting no figure in my work in those days, my circuit embracing part of Platte and all of the inhabited portions of Merrick, Hall and Buffalo counties. At Wood River there was no class organized, and it is certain, from a study of the annual conference minutes, that no one had gone, as pastor, any farther west than 'Pap' Lamb's, where there was an organization; however, I went as far west as 'Gibbon Siding,' which I suppose is identical with the present Village of Gibbon. During the winter of 1869-70 I held a series of meetings which resulted in a gracious revival and in the conversion of about twenty and in the organization of the first class in the bounds of Buffalo County, and for that matter the first Methodist organization in all the territory now embraced in the West Nebraska Conference. I cannot



REV. DAVID MARQUETTE

Methodist missionary who held a series of religious meetings at Wood River Center (Shelton) in the winter of 1870-71.

now, after the lapse of thirty-eight years, recall the names of any who formed that historic first class. The meetings were held in an old board house which was open in many places, and the weather being cold, the people who crowded the house laid down buffalo robes on the floor and hung shawls up at the sides of the house to keep out the cutting winter wind and make the room endurable. We recall a sturdy and very pious German by the name of George Stearley, who with his excellent wife, lived on Wood River some two or three miles east of Gibbon Siding. He was not, at that time, preaching and could not have preached in English. He was the only one in that country who could lead in public prayer; when called upon to do so, he would usually, in deference to his English speaking brethren, begin his prayer in English, but would soon cut loose and pass over into German and make an excellent impression by his manifest earnestness and sincerity, though we could not understand a word he said. This couple by their royal hospitality, entertaining in their home the missionary and his wife, and the pleasant hours we spent there are among our precious memories of those times. But a royal hospitality was characteristic of nearly all of those early settlers and thereby greatly added to our comfort in sharing their humble dwellings and scanty fare with the preacher and his wife. Hoping this brief statement will assist you and expressing my appreciation of your effort to write a history of your county, I am,

“Respectfully yours,
“D. MARQUETTE.”

Both prayer meetings and a Sunday school were held in this old schoolhouse but the church organization mentioned by Rev. Mr. Marquette seems to have fallen through, as it has not been learned that the organization existed at the time or after the arrival of the colony in 1871. The “Pap” Lamb referred to was a stage driver for the Western Stage Company and is highly spoken of by those now living who knew him. The Mr. Jackson mentioned is James Jackson, now a merchant of Wood River. Mr. Jackson is of English descent and with his young wife came to what is now Hall County in 1860. In 1864 he engaged in the mercantile business at a point some miles west of the present Village of Wood River and has continued this business to the present time. Religious (preaching) services were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, and their home was popularly known as the “Preacher’s Roost.” Mr. Jackson attended the series of meetings held by Rev. Mr. Marquette in the old schoolhouse and states that there was great interest and the attendance taxed to the utmost the capacity of the house in which the meetings were held.

The George Stearley mentioned will be readily recalled by early settlers in the county. After the arrival of the colony he took a homestead on section 22 in Shelton Township. On this homestead Mr. Stearley planted several acres of timber which he took much pride in cultivating and caring for and in time his homestead came to be one of the choice farms in the township. Mr. Stearley was licensed as a local preacher in the United Brethren Church, and took an active part in the affairs of the church. The United Brethren organization in the immediate vicinity of where he resided was one of the strongest in the state. Mr. Stearley resided on his homestead until his death, which occurred August 27, 1897.

CHAPTER XI

THE BOYD RANCH, JAMES E. BOYD, OWNER; LATER GOVERNOR OF NEBRASKA—RAISED CORN—TRAFFICKED IN OXEN—BREWED BEER—WHISKY \$20 A GALLON—THE BOYD RANCH FIRST CLAIM TAKEN IN BUFFALO COUNTY—FIRST PIECE OF DEEDED LAND IN NEBRASKA, WEST OF HALL COUNTY—PAID FOR IN LAND SCRIPT ISSUED TO A SOLDIER OF THE WAR OF 1812.

THE BOYD RANCH

The place known as the "Boyd Ranch" was one of the first landmarks west of the Missouri River on the Utah-California-Oregon Trail, having its initial or starting points at Florence, Omaha and Bellevue on the Missouri River. This ranch was located on what is now the southwest quarter of section 14, township 9, range 14 west, in Buffalo County. As a business point for traffic with emigrants enroute over the trail it was an ideal location. It was located on Wood River at a point where that river approaches nearest to the Platte, less than three miles distant, thus causing the entire travel over the trail to pass close to the ranch. About twelve miles to the south and west and across the Platte River was Fort Kearney, near enough to afford some protection to the ranch but not so near as to cause Dobytown, the business point near the fort, to compete for the trade over the trail.

In describing the business of a ranch in those early days and of the store sometimes connected therewith, some writers seem to have exaggerated ideas and quite often draw on their imagination in their written description. One writer in describing a ranch and store at Wood River Center, about ten miles east of the Boyd Ranch, says: "At this point he had a large outfitting store for the accommodation of the many who were rushing to the gold fields of California." As a matter of fact, early settlers still living in Buffalo County state that the principal business of this storekeeper at Wood River Center was as a blacksmith and wagonmaker in repairing wagons passing over the trail and that the stock of goods carried by him would not make a wheelbarrow load on a smooth road. Emigrants purchased their outfits, including provisions, before starting on the long journey over the plains and mountains.

Just when a ranch was first established at this point is not known so far as can be learned. Riley Wescoatt states that in the spring of 1853 himself and brother Jonas, with their wives and three children, passed over this trail and camped just beyond what was later known as the Boyd Ranch. The Wescoatt brothers had a herd of 400 heifers which they were driving to California and had with them thirty-five men enroute for California and who assisted in driving

the cattle as compensation for board and transportation. In company with the Wescoatt brothers was Capt. John Fuller, who was in command of 100 men whom he had engaged to furnish board and transportation for to California in consideration of \$100 each, \$10,000 in all, each man to do his share of guard duty while enroute. These two commands made the entire journey together, and all being fully armed had no fear of successful attack from Indians. Mr. Wescoatt states that the principal business conducted at the ranch was trading in oxen and horses and selling whisky. In the journey over the trail both oxen and horses often became footsore, but after a few days' rest the hoofs would grow out and the lameness disappear. Ranchmen traded for these footsore animals and after they had rested and recovered from their lameness were again in shape for another like trade. Mr. Wescoatt states that the Wescoatt brothers and the Fuller command each purchased at the ranch twenty gallons of whiskey, paying therefor \$20 a gallon, \$800 in all; that the wives of the Wescoatt brothers carried the money of the firm and they had quite a time to convince the women that the whisky was a necessary purchase; but the men in their employ thought they ought to have the whisky on the long journey and as it could not be secured elsewhere the purchase was made. James E. Boyd, governor of Nebraska in 1901-2, after whom the "Boyd Ranch" was named, came to Buffalo County in December, 1858—Morton History, Vol. I, page 594. Mr. Boyd had been married in August of that year to Miss Ann H. Henry and the family made their home on the ranch. Doctor Henry, father of Mrs. Boyd, made his home with the Boyds and spent some of his time, at least, in hunting and trapping along Wood River. Mr. Boyd says Eleanor, their eldest child, was the first white child born in Buffalo County, Nebraska. Mr. Boyd seems to have begun his ranch business in a very modest manner, as early settlers state that he assisted in breaking the prairie on his ranch and in 1860 was often seen plowing in his cornfields. From the first he engaged in the sale of liquor and in the early '60s had begun to raise barley and established a small brewery on the bank of Wood River where he brewed about ten kegs of beer at a time and which he sold at the fort and at Dobytown for from six to eight dollars a keg. In connection with the brewery he had an icehouse which he filled from Wood River. This small brewery was on the bank of Wood River, east of the ranch house, and the cellar and part of the building was to be seen when the colony came in 1871. The hole in the ground where the cellar was is still to be seen on the bank of Wood River close beside the public highway. In the early '60s Mr. Boyd had more than one hundred acres under cultivation, on which he raised principally corn and barley, corn bringing a good price from travelers over the trail. Mr. Boyd also trafficked in horses and oxen and had at that date about one hundred head of native cattle.

Until about the year 1864 the buildings at the Boyd Ranch were of logs with dirt roof. Soon after the stampede in 1864, it is related, Mr. Boyd went to Missouri and purchased twenty-four mule teams, all young mules; he also bought new harness and new wagons with the intention of engaging in the freighting business. Among the first freight brought out from the Missouri River by Mr. Boyd's teams was lumber with which a frame house was erected on the Boyd Ranch. This would not be considered a very pretentious structure

in these days, but it was something entirely out of the ordinary in those days, being the first frame house in the county.

On December 2, 1863, ground was first broken, near Omaha, for the building of the Union Pacific Railroad, but it was not until 1865 that much progress had been made in the grading and construction of this road. In 1865-66 Mr. Boyd secured a large contract for grading on the railroad in which work he found profitable use for the mule teams he had purchased in Missouri. At the close of the first year's work of grading Mr. Boyd informed one of his neighbors that he had cleared \$20,000 on his contract that season. This neighbor states that Mr. Boyd cleared at least one hundred thousand dollars on his contracts for grading on the Union Pacific Railroad. The land comprising the Boyd Ranch was first purchased from the United States by Joseph Boyd, his deed from the United States bearing date of December 10, 1867, and is signed by Andrew Johnson, President. Joseph Boyd paid for this land in "land script," issued to Private Thomas Davis in Captain Henry's company, Georgia Militia, War of 1812. This land script was first assigned to William Henly and by him to Joseph Boyd. Land script, as here mentioned, was issued by the general Government to soldiers of both the Revolutionary war and War of 1812 for services in those wars. This script was negotiable and could be used in securing title to Government lands. Joseph Boyd deeded this land to James E. Boyd for a consideration of \$500, the deed bearing date of April 5, 1867. On April 8, 1874, James E. Boyd deeded the Boyd Ranch to Asahel Eddy for a consideration of \$2,500. From the first establishment of this ranch, at least as early as 1853, continuously until its sale to Mr. A. Eddy in 1874, it is believed the sale of intoxicating liquors formed a regular part of the business of the ranch. After the arrival of the colony at Gibbon in 1871 there was a saloon located close beside the old brewery cellar on this ranch.

Few people realize the immense number of emigrants that have passed over the California-Oregon-Utah Trail across what is now the State of Nebraska. A very large per cent of these emigrants traveled the trail north of the Platte River and thus passing the Boyd Ranch, though it was probably not known by that name until about the year 1858 when the Boyds first came to Buffalo County. In order to give at least some idea of the emigrant travel over this trail we quote a few illustrations from Morton History, Vol. II: "In 1845 Col. S. W. Kearny estimated that 850 men, 475 women, 1,000 children, with 460 wagons, 7,000 cattle and 400 horses had emigrated by the Oregon Trail that year. Major Cross, in the report of the march of the regiment of mounted riflemen to Oregon in 1849, estimates that from 8,000 to 10,000 wagons passed over the trail that season, with an average of 4 people and seldom less than 10 oxen to each wagon, nearly all bound for California. In 1852 an agent of the Indian Department reported passing at least 500 wagons on the trail each day. In 1859 the secretary of the Columbus Ferry Company at Loup Fork (this ferry was over the Loup River near the present City of Columbus) reported that up to June 25th of that year 1,987 wagons, 20 hand carts, 5,401 men, 424 women, 480 children, 1,610 horses, 406 mules, 6,010 oxen and 6,000 sheep had crossed at that point. This statement included no portion of the Mormon emigration, but merely California, Oregon and Pike's Peak emigrants. It was thought that not less than



JAMES E. BOYD

Governor of Nebraska, 1891-92. Proprietor of Boyd's Ranch one mile east of Gibbon. This ranch was established about 1846

4,000 wagons had passed over the trail north of the Platte from March 29th to June 25th."

In 1860 a stage line—Western Stage Company—was established from Iowa to Fort Kearney, via Omaha. The Boyd Ranch was a stage station on this route. In 1866 came the Union Pacific Railroad, following the identical trail past the Boyd Ranch first followed by emigrants as early as 1845, so that it will be seen that for more than sixty years there has been a daily stream of travel over this trail and passing a point locally known as the "Boyd Ranch." The early emigrant, with his ox teams and prairie schooner was satisfied if he accomplished fifteen miles a day on his journey. He cooked his meals beside the trail, sometimes his fire was of wood, at other times of "buffalo chips," but no matter how cooked, he relished and enjoyed his food, for he was blessed with a good appetite. At night he slept in his wagon or on the ground and complained not that he "could not sleep," or that he "did not rest well."

CHAPTER XII

ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 1853—WESCOATT BROTHERS TAKE 400 HEAD OF COWS TO CALIFORNIA—CAPT. JOHN FULLER WITH HIS COMMAND JOIN THEIR PARTY—INDIANS MASSACRE EMIGRANTS ON BANKS OF PLATTE RIVER—JOHN HODGES ESCAPES AND SWIMS THE PLATTE—PURSUIT OF INDIANS AND THIRTY-SEVEN KILLED—BURIAL OF MASSACRED EMIGRANTS—THE BOYD RANCH—TWENTY DOLLARS FOR A GALLON OF WHISKY—THE BOY, JOHN HODGES, FINDS HIS UNCLE IN CALIFORNIA—SIXTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS PROFIT ON THE HERD OF COWS—WESCOATT BROTHERS RETURN TO IOWA.

ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 1853

Capt. Riley Wescoatt, an early settler in Central Nebraska, relates his experience in crossing the plains in 1853.

In the spring of 1853 Riley and Jonas Wescoatt of Albia, Ia., arranged to take a herd of 400 young cows across the plains to California. Jonas Wescoatt had made the trip to California and back the year previous with the view to the present enterprise. Their cows cost them about four thousand dollars, and in addition the expense of the necessary outfit, comprising saddle horses, wagons and twenty yoke of oxen, provisions, bedding, ammunition and other necessities for so extended a journey along the route of which nothing could be purchased. The Wescoatt brothers were both married and their wives and three children accompanied them. Their wagons were covered and the wagon boxes extended over the wheels so as to provide comfortable sleeping quarters and as they carried feather beds and plenty of bedding they made the journey with comparative comfort. The saddle horses were for use in driving the cattle, the Wescoatt brothers furnishing board and transportation for thirty-five men who wished to go to California and who assisted in driving and caring for the cattle and doing each his share of guard duty as compensation for board and transportation. The Wescoatt family had moved from the Tippecanoe battle ground in Indiana to Monroe County, Ia., in 1831, and the thirty-five men who accompanied them on this journey were neighbors with whom they were well acquainted, as it was a somewhat hazardous undertaking and only men of character and courage were wanted.

They crossed the Missouri River on April 28th at Bellevue, then a trading point, and Mr. Riley Wescoatt states that they saw no house or habitation after leaving the Missouri River until their arrival in California, except the ranch later known as "Boyd's Ranch" on Wood River, about ten miles northeast of Fort Kearney, the location of this ranch being about a mile west of the present Village of Gibbon in Buffalo County.

It was an unusually early spring and even at that early date the emigrant travel was so great that six steamboats had come up the Missouri River from below and were used for ferrying purposes at the Bellevue crossing. At the crossing of the Missouri the Wescoatt brothers met a party of 100 well armed men enroute for California and under command of Capt. John Fuller. Captain Fuller had made the journey to California the previous year and had arranged to furnish board and transportation for these 100 men, they to pay him \$100 each, \$10,000 in all, and each man to do his full share of guard duty. The Wescoatt brothers and Captain Fuller arranged to make the journey together and did so, not camping more than a mile apart during the entire journey. The party traveled the trail north of the Platte and because of the heavy emigration over the trail found the pasture very short. Because of the scantiness of the pasture they were compelled to range their cattle, at times some distance from the regular trail and so for the first month their rate of travel was very slow. On May 28th, about one hour before sundown, when the party was about four miles south of the present Village of Wood River, in Hall County, Nebraska, and was preparing to camp for the night, it was noticed that there was a commotion on the south side of the Platte River and the firing of guns was heard. By means of field glasses which both commands carried, it was seen that a large party of Indians had attacked an emigrant camp on the south bank of the Platte and were scalping women in the camp. The fight appeared to last but a short time, ten minutes, Mr. Wescoatt says, and while there was some talk of crossing the river it was finally decided not to do so. In explanation of this decision Mr. Wescoatt says: "The Platte was very high, and also our own commands were in danger of attack, as there appeared to be a large party of the Indians, and it was thought best not to divide our own forces." As a matter of general information in connection with this tragedy it might be well to state that the Platte River at this point is more than a mile wide from its north to its south bank. There is one large and several small islands in the river and three main channels. The largest or north channel is about 1,400 feet in width, the middle one about 1,000 feet and the south channel about 350 feet, in all the water channels are nearly 3,000 feet in width. High water occurs in the Platte from May 15th to June 15th, varying with the earliness of the season when the melted snow from the mountains comes rushing down on its way to the ocean. The fall in the Platte River is 3,400 feet in the 400 miles across the State of Nebraska, being an average fall of about eight feet to the mile. When we compare this fall with that of the Mississippi River, averaging less than one foot fall to three miles between its mouth and St. Paul, Minn., it will be seen that the fall in the Platte is nearly twenty-five times as great as in the Mississippi. The Platte has a sandy bottom and in high water numerous quicksand holes, also in high water there is somewhere between its banks what is termed a "main channel," here today, elsewhere tomorrow, continually changing, in which the water is much deeper and runs with a stronger current than the remainder of the stream, making it an extremely dangerous river to cross when the water is an average of three feet in depth and much deeper in the "main channel" referred to. These explanations are deemed necessary because the casual reader, not understanding the surrounding conditions, might be led to think the Wescoatt and Fuller com-

mands were heartless and lacking in courage in not at once going to the rescue of attacked emigrants. Also the reader will in some measure be the better able to realize what a small boy braved and endured in his escape on this occasion.

The Wescoatt and Fuller commands camped at this point for the night. About 2 o'clock the next morning the camp guard brought a small boy to Mr. Riley Wescoatt. The boy's clothing, consisting of shirt and trousers, was wet and the child, while greatly excited, seemed able to control his feelings. He said he belonged to an emigrant party going to California and camped on the other side of the river; that last evening they were attacked by a large party of Indians and he was afraid all but himself were killed; that he hid in the brush on the bank of the river and when it became dark he saw a camp fire on the other side of the river and knowing how to swim had crossed over; that he was carried down the river a long ways, five miles he told Mr. Wescoatt, and when he got across he had followed the river until he reached the camp. The boy said his name was John Hodges and that there were five in the family, his father, mother and three children. John was at once taken to Captain Fuller. Messengers were sent to camps below on the trail, requesting as many men as could be spared to come, armed and mounted, ready to cross the river at daylight. Mr. Wescoatt states that guns carried on this journey were flint-lock muskets, although some of the party had revolvers with percussion caps. Little John was given a revolver and a horse and took an active part in the fight with the Indians later in the day. Mr. Wescoatt states that John was about thirteen years old and a boy of more than ordinary intelligence, energy and courage. At daylight a party of 185 men, armed and mounted, crossed the Platte, going direct to the place of the massacre. They found the emigrant party consisted of fifteen men, nine women and four children, all killed except the boy, John Hodges. The women had been scalped, but not the men. The wagon train, consisting of seven wagons and the necessary oxen, had been destroyed, the Indians burning most of the wagons and contents. It appeared that the Indians were armed with bows and flint pointed arrows, though little John thought some of the Indians had guns. If the emigrants had killed any of the Indians the dead bodies could not be found.

Captain Fuller was in command and his party took the trail of the Indians and it was soon learned that the Indians had already broken camp and were going south towards the Republican River some fifty miles distant. The Indians were surprised and attacked some miles south of the Platte River on the divide where it was broken by ravines and draws. The Indians were mostly mounted on ponies and it was a running fight, lasting two hours or more. At the close thirty-seven dead Indians were counted. It was estimated that the Indians numbered one hundred and fifty. They were Sioux, all warriors, and undoubtedly a war party as they were in Pawnee territory and the Sioux and Pawnees were traditional enemies.

The Fuller command returned to the place of massacre about 2 o'clock in the afternoon and planned for the burial of the murdered people. Graves were dug on a rise of ground near the emigrant camp and members of families, as identified by little John, buried side by side. There was nothing of which coffins could be made and the dead were wrapped in their clothing and committed to the



CAPTAIN RILEY WESCOATT

A soldier of the Mexican and Civil wars and a pioneer settler in Central Nebraska.



JUDGE JONAS WESCOATT

In company with his brother, Capt. Riley Wescott, he took a herd of cattle across the plains in 1853.

care of Mother Earth who is ever kind. The Wescoatt and Fuller commands remained in camp two days before the burial of the emigrants was completed. Their next camp was near a place known later as "Boyd's Ranch," before mentioned in this paper, the Wescoatt party camping on what is now section 21 and the Fuller command on the hill or bluff on what is now known as section 16, both in Gibbon Township, Buffalo County.

It was somehow understood that a war party of Sioux, 400 strong, were preparing to attack these two commands in revenge for the Indians killed in the fight south of the Platte and an anxious night was passed, but the commands were not molested. The Indians had been troublesome all along the trail that spring and word was sent to the officers at Fort Kearney in regard to the massacre of emigrants less than twenty-five miles east of that fort, but the officers of that garrison made no response and Mr. Wescoatt spoke of the officers of the fort at that date in terms not at all complimentary. The buildings of the ranch mentioned were of sod with dirt roofs and the owner had a large corral in the bend of the river west of the house. He trafficked in oxen and horses, trading for such animals as had become lame on the trail. He had a considerable number of men about the place, frontiersmen, some half-breeds, most of whom could speak the Indian language. He seemed to be on good terms with the Indians and did not seem to fear an attack. The ranchmen kept liquor for sale, freighting, as he said, alcohol from the Missouri River and making out of one barrels of alcohol twenty barrels of whisky, selling his whisky for \$20 a gallon. Both the Wescoatt and Fuller commands bought each twenty gallons of whisky, paying \$800 in all. The wives of the Wescoatt brothers carried the money and the men had quite a time to convince their wives that it was advisable to purchase the liquor, but the men in their employ insisted that liquor was needed on so long a journey and as it could not be secured elsewhere it was purchased.

The boy, John Hodges, was made one of the family by Mr. and Mrs. Riley Wescoatt, Mrs. Wescoatt coming to love and care for him as one of her own family, and he accompanied them to California, where the two commands arrived on August 17, 1853. The boy made his home with the Wescoatts for more than two years, when he one day accompanied, as usual, Mr. Wescoatt to Sacramento, some five miles distant from their ranch. On the street John saw and recognized an uncle who had gone to California some years before and who had not before learned of the massacre of his relatives. This uncle was a rich ranchman and accompanied Mr. Wescoatt home and remained several days, finally inducing his nephew to make his home with him.

The Wescoatt brothers realized a profit of more than sixteen thousand dollars for their cattle, some of the choicest cows bringing \$150 each and the heavier oxen \$300 a pair. Jonas Wescoatt and wife soon returned to Iowa where Mr. Wescoatt served for many years as a judge in that state. After the death of his wife he returned to California, living in a hotel in San Francisco, where he lost his life in the destruction of that city by earthquake a few years ago.

Riley Wescoatt and wife returned to their Iowa home about the year 1856, coming via Panama, crossing the isthmus soon after the completion of the railroad at that place. Mr. Riley Wescoatt was a soldier in the Mexican war, serv-

ing under General Taylor. He was wounded soon after reaching Mexican soil and returned home. On the breaking out of the Civil war he raised in his own county Company H, First Iowa Cavalry, being commissioned captain of that company and promising the members of the company that he would remain with them during their term of service. He remained with the company as captain and was mustered out with his regiment April 16, 1864. In 1875 Mr. and Mrs. Wescoatt came to Nebraska, taking a homestead on Elm Island, in Hall County, less than two miles distant from where the massacre of the emigrants occurred in 1853, and repeatedly visited the place where they were buried. Mrs. Riley Wescoatt died July 15, 1905. The death of Mr. Wescoatt occurred on March 6, 1909. He was buried beside his brave and courageous wife in Riverside Cemetery, near Gibbon.

CHAPTER XIII

A PIONEER FAMILY, A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ONE OF THE FIRST FAMILIES TO MAKE SETTLEMENT IN BUFFALO COUNTY—CONVERTS TO THE MORMON FAITH—LEAVE ENGLAND IN 1855—FIVE WEEKS TO MAKE OCEAN JOURNEY—FIND EMPLOYMENT IN PHILADELPHIA—LEAVE PHILADELPHIA IN 1859 FOR UTAH—JOURNEY FROM FLORENCE TO UTAH ACROSS THE PLAINS WITH AN OX TEAM—DEATH AND BURIAL BESIDE THE TRAIL OF AN EMIGRANT'S CHILD—THE ARRIVAL IN UTAH—DISGUSTED WITH THE MORMON RELIGION—THE RETURN FROM UTAH ACCOMPANIED BY MRS. ALLEN—STORY OF MRS. ALLEN, A DESERTED MORMON WIFE—FORDING THE PLATTE IN HIGH WATER TIME—LOCATE ON A "SQUATTER'S" CLAIM ON WOOD RIVER—RAISE AND SELL 600 BUSHEL OF CORN FOR \$600—STAMPEDE OF 1864—BABY HELEN LEFT BEHIND—THE FLIGHT TO IOWA, ACROSS TO QUEBEC AND ON TO ENGLAND—THE RETURN TO NEBRASKA—TAKES A PRE-EMPTION CLAIM—PLANTS AN ORCHARD OF 2,000 TREES—BUILDS A HOUSE WITH ALL MODERN CONVENIENCES.

A PIONEER FAMILY, A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ONE OF THE FIRST FAMILIES TO MAKE SETTLEMENT IN BUFFALO COUNTY

William Nutter, aged twenty-five years, and Dinah Hingham, aged eighteen years, were married in Lancastershire, England, in 1853. In the family of William Nutter there were nineteen children, all from the same parents, and Mr. Nutter recalls seeing fifteen of these children seated together at his father's table. In Mrs. Nutter's family there were seven children. Mr. Nutter from his earliest youth was taught the spinner's trade and worked at his trade until he rose to the position of foreman of the card room before leaving England. Mrs. Nutter, as a small child, wound bobbins for weavers and when older worked in cotton and woolen mills. About this date there were many Mormon elders in both England and Wales and large numbers of the people in these parts of England were converted to the Mormon faith and emigrated to Utah. At first polygamy was not preached as a part of the Mormon faith or practice, but about this date (1852-54), its preachers becoming more bold, announced that Mormons of deep piety and who gave liberally to the church were permitted more than one wife. Mr. Nutter was converted to the Mormon faith and earnestly advocated its cause, though it seems that he gave little thought to its polygamous feature as it did not appeal to his nature or mode of life. Mr. Nutter was so imbued with the truth of the Mormon faith that he attempted to convert his mother, who had already borne nineteen children, from her own faith to that of the Mormons, but without success. Two children, the eldest a daughter named Olive, and the second a son

named Moroni, after one of the most prominent characters in the Mormon Bible, had been born to Mr. and Mrs. Nutter when in the spring of 1855, in company with 700 other Mormon emigrants, they took passage on a sailing vessel named the Juventa, their destination, Salt Lake City, Utah. This vessel, the Juventa, had been condemned as unseaworthy by the British government, but the condemnation seems not to have prevented the use of the vessel to transport Mormon emigrants. The passage cost about thirty dollars for each person and included board. Five weeks were required for the trip and they landed at Philadelphia, Pa. Mr. and Mrs. Nutter were without means when they landed, but had been led to believe that plenty of work at good wages could be had on arrival and that they could earn enough to enable them to pursue their journey to Utah. As both had worked all their lives in cotton and woolen factories, they fully expected to find like employment on arrival, but were disappointed. Mr. Nutter finally secured work in a truck garden at \$3 a week, working from daylight till dark. Work was so scarce at the time that many worked for their board and it is related that an aged man, toothless, who worked for his board, was found fault with because he took so much time at his meals. About this time the eldest child, Olive, died of summer complaint and was buried in Philadelphia. After a few weeks Mr. Nutter found employment in a cotton factory but was taken sick and being without any means, was compelled to ask for and received a ticket of admission to an almshouse, but could not get admission for his wife and child. The family went together to the almshouse, arriving in the evening. The superintendent, on coming to the door, demanded in a loud, coarse voice, "What in h—l did you come at this time of night for?" This brutal reception so angered Mr. Nutter that he left the building, and passing down the street, it being a warm evening and the people sitting on their porches, inquired where he might find lodging until he was able to find work. He was taken to a building called "House of Industry," established by the Quakers for those out of work and without means, where the family were provided with clean beds and good food until employment could be found. When able to seek work Mr. Nutter found a man who promised work on a railroad in the State of Delaware and who furnished transportation on a sailing vessel but furnished nothing to eat and the family became very hungry when a negro cook took pity and gave them a meal. Here Mr. Nutter worked two weeks and then found work for himself and wife with a farmer but neglected to fix a price and when they came to leave had little coming—just enough to pay their passage back to Philadelphia. They started on Saturday and at midnight the vessel cast anchor until Monday morning and the family became very hungry. On arriving at Philadelphia, an Englishman, whom they met, gave them some money and referred them to a friend in Gloster, N. J., where they found employment in print works, and where they remained for two years. At this place the second child, Moroni, died and was buried in Gloster, also John N., the second son was born in 1855. In the fall of 1857 the family returned to Philadelphia and Mr. Nutter found work at his trade at \$1 a day wages, but soon came the panic of 1857, and all manufacturing ceased. In the spring of 1858 Mr. Nutter found employment at his trade, as foreman of the card room at \$40 a month wages. In the year 1857, twin boys were born, Wil-



MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM NUTTER
Pioneer settlers in Buffalo County

liam H. and W. Hingham. The one named W. Hingham died in early infancy and was buried beside his sister Olive in Philadelphia.

The family remained in Philadelphia until enough had been earned to enable them to reach Utah. They left Philadelphia in the spring of 1859 and going to some point on the Ohio River traveled down that stream and up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers to Florence, near Omaha, which was an outfitting and starting point for Mormon emigrants. Mrs. Nutter recalls that they were three days making the distance from St. Joseph to Florence occasioned by their boat repeatedly getting aground on sand bars. On this trip the family were accompanied by Samuel Stamworth, wife and child, Mrs. Stamworth being a sister of Mr. Nutter. At Florence Mr. Nutter purchased a yoke of oxen, a new wagon, a cow and food sufficient for the entire journey. Another family furnished a yoke of oxen and shared the wagon with Mr. Nutter's family during the journey. The train consisted of seventy-five wagons, mostly drawn by two yoke of oxen. A daughter of Hiram Smith, later president of the Mormon Church, and her husband and children accompanied the train, the captain of the train being John F. Smith, a son of Hiram Smith. All emigrants were supposed to carry sufficient provisions to last the entire journey but many were wasteful and were entirely out before the end of the journey. Mrs. Nutter says she feared more than wild Indians these half famished emigrants when they came demanding food.

A few days before the Smith train left Florence, a hand cart train (that is a party carrying all their belongings in hand carts which they pushed or pulled) started out ahead of the Smith train and reached Salt Lake City some two weeks in advance of the Smith train. Owing to the crowded condition of their wagon, Mrs. Nutter walked the entire distance, riding less than twenty-five miles. Rice was the principal food of the family, this with milk from their cow furnishing a most satisfactory meal. The captain of the train, John Smith, had frequently traveled the trail. He was a very profane man and a drunkard. When drunk he would not allow the train to break camp, and they were much delayed on this account. On one occasion he did not break camp until after noon and then announced that they would travel in the night to make up lost time. For fear that William H., the baby, might fall out the wagon in the dark and be injured, Mrs. Nutter tied him with a rope to the wagon bows. While driving in the night, on this occasion, a teamster in lighting his pipe, frightened his oxen and this in turn caused a stampede of other ox teams and loose stock, cows and other cattle. Mrs. Nutter had milked their cow previous to starting and was carrying the milk in a pail in order to have it for their supper when they camped. In the stampede she was knocked down and the milk spilled but she was not injured. One child was seriously injured and wagons broken so that it was necessary to make camp in order to make repairs. Late in the night the captain of the train came back cursing and swearing because they had not continued the day's drive until the camp was reached.

Mrs. Nutter relates that on the ship Juventa, at Florence and on the trail occasional religious services were held and related an incident connected with one of such services held on the trail by the captain of their train who was also an ordained elder or preacher. Captain Smith had issued an order for religious services to be held at camp headquarters in the evening and commanding every

one to be present. This service Captain Smith conducted in person during which he stated that in being ordained an elder he was also given the power to pronounce curse on anyone, and the party so cursed could not remove same. He then said he had lost a valuable knife costing \$5, and he knew someone with the train had it, that if the knife was not returned he would pronounce a curse on the one having it. At this point a Welshman jumped up and said he had the knife.

During this journey twelve children died of whooping cough, one of the number, the daughter of Mr. Nutter's sister, Mrs. Stamworth. John N. Nutter recalls being awakened before daylight to take a last look at his little cousin, who lay dead in a cracker box, much too short for a comfortable bed, and who was buried in a grave beside the trail early in the day so as to not delay the journey of the train. Accompanying this train was a family, husband, wife and three children; they were possessed of considerable means, had three good horse teams, a good wagon, and abundant outfit for the journey. The three children sickened and died and were buried beside the trail. The drunken captain of the train neglected to caution the emigrants not to allow their animals to drink of the alkali water and as a result this family lost some of their most valuable horses and finally the husband of the family buried his wife beside the trail, without a coffin, on the high divide, where it is reported that the waters from one spring flow one part towards the distant Pacific and the other part towards the distant Atlantic.

The greatest suffering on the part of the emigrants on this journey was for want of water while crossing the alkali plains and in the mountains; much of this suffering would have been avoided but for the drunken captain who sometimes failed to advise where water could have been found and thus save long drives between camps; also had the emigrants known the distance to the next water camp they might have carried water at times to help relieve the great thirst often endured. This journey, begun in early summer, was completed after the harvest of small grain in the settlement in Utah, but in time to find work in the harvest of potatoes and other vegetables. There was no welcome on the part of the Mormon Church or those in authority, to these emigrant members of the Mormon Church, who, leaving kindred and friends, the land of their birth, the homes of their ancestors for many generations, and who had, amid poverty, toil and undreamed of privations, at last reached the so-called "promised land," the dwelling place of the "Latter Day Saints of God."

There was no preparation in advance for their coming; no provision for their comfort or necessities. Did one complain to an elder of the church that he had only a dry crust to eat and no means to buy more, he was told to soak his bread in water, and if he lacked for vegetables was informed that potato tops were said to be better than nothing. Ox teams and good new wagons were valuable property in Utah, and, at much less than their real value, Mr. Nutter traded his oxen and wagon for ten acres of sandy land some miles from the City of Salt Lake, and also included in the trade was a lot and a house built of "dobe" or sun-dried brick. Timber for fuel could be had in the mountains some five miles or more distant. Work could be had but the pay consisted of produce, not cash. Everything not raised in Utah commanded extravagant prices. The English are great lovers of tea. To purchase one pound of tea it is related one Englishman drove to the mountains, cut and hauled a load of wood to the city, a trip, coming

and going, of thirty miles. Mr. and Mrs. Nutter soon learned that polygamy, as preached in England and practiced in Utah, were quite different propositions. In Utah, any man could have all the so-called wives he could manage to get possession of and incoming trains were watched for, and young women made plural wives of, in many cases over the objections and protests of their parents. Girls only thirteen or fourteen years of age thus became mothers of children by becoming plural wives of Mormon officials as well as of men who held no official connection with the Mormon Church, simply were members of the church. The Nutter family soon became greatly dissatisfied with the so-called Mormon religion and Mr. Nutter, from a firm believer in the Mormon religion, came to be a non-believer in any form of religious belief, and so continued to the end of his life.

The breaking out of the Civil war greatly pleased the Mormon leaders who claimed the war had been prophesied by Brigham Young as punishment for the persecution of Mormons by Gentiles, and that the Gentiles in the eastern states would destroy each other and that the Indian tribes in the West would assist in the destruction. All this was believed by the Mormon people and discouraged any who thought of leaving. Helen, the second daughter, was born in Utah in 1860; in 1862 the family arranged to leave Utah. They traded their real estate property for two yoke of oxen and a wagon, and provided food for the journey but had no cow. Mrs. Nutter had taken with her to Utah a loom, thinking she might get work at her trade. This loom she traded for a gold watch. They left Utah in the month of June, accompanied by two other families, one by the name of Morgan. On the first day's journey, when some ten miles east of Salt Lake City, they were overtaken by Mrs. Allen, with whom they were acquainted. She was barefoot, and had nothing except the clothing she wore. She begged to be allowed to accompany them on their journey. Mr. and Mrs. Allen were quite well educated people and had arrived in Utah with considerable property. Since their arrival Mr. Allen had taken younger wives and practically deserted his first wife, leaving her destitute. When he saw that his wife was determined to leave Mr. Allen had agreed that Mrs. Allen might have a yoke of steers with which to make the journey, but neither Mr. Nutter nor Mrs. Allen dared to return for the steers for fear they might not be permitted to again continue their journey. The Allens had in store some flour at a Mormon station east of Salt Lake City and of this flour Mrs. Allen secured two sacks which were added to the food supply of the party. A few miles west of Fort Laramie the Nutter family met a westbound emigrant train engaged in burying three of their number who had been killed by Indians. These three persons—two men and one woman—driving a good team of horses and a fine saddle horse hitched to the wagon, had tarried at a trading post near the fort in order to make a few purchases. Some Indians were at the trading post and tried to trade for the saddle horse but without success. It is supposed the Indians followed the party and attacked and killed them. The members of the train with which the three persons were traveling, becoming uneasy that they did not rejoin the train, halted and sent back a party which had just found them dead and their horses gone. At Fort Laramie Mrs. Allen traded a ring which she wore for a pair of coarse shoes, she having come barefoot thus far on the journey. The Nutter family had planned to cross the Platte

River at Julesburg, coming down on the north side of that river. At this point they met some Indians who threatened to kill them if they crossed the river, so they followed the trail on the south side until they reached Fort Kearney, crossing the Platte at that point. When Mrs. Nutter was asked if they had any trouble in crossing the Platte she answered "Not at all." When asked to describe just how they crossed, she said: "Mr. Nutter walked on the near side, driving the oxen; Mrs. Allen and myself waded in the river on the off side and with whips kept the oxen from turning back. The water was not deep except in the main channel where it came nearly up to the wagon box."

The Platte River at this crossing is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the north to the south bank; there are numerous small islands or toe-heads as they are called locally, so that the total width of all the channels is about four thousand feet. The crossing was about three miles in length, extending from a point half a mile west of the fort on the south side to a point some two miles west of the fort on the north bank. The Platte was a treacherous stream to cross, having numerous quicksand holes and a fall of about eight feet to the mile. In time of high water in the main channel the water often came up to the wagon box and with the tremendous fall ran at a furious rate. With a strong wind, in time of high water, the waters were forced into one channel, washing out holes ten or more feet in depth. The writer forded the Platte at this crossing in 1871 and saw a dozen or more large, strong army wagons, sunken in quicksand holes and abandoned in mid-stream, when doubtless attached to each one of these wagons were four or more pair of strong, government mules driven by experienced drivers, while the brave, sturdy pioneers, men and women, who by toil and privation demonstrated for the benefit of future generations, the possibilities of the then Nebraska Territory as a place for comfortable homes and happy families, thought it "no trouble at all" to wade waist deep in the swift running waters of this broad and treacherous stream and by means of whips and shouting encourage their half frightened oxen to drag across its sandy bottom a heavily loaded wagon containing the small children of their families and all their earthly belongings. The objective point of the Nutter family on leaving Utah, had been the Wood River Valley, near what is now the Village of Shelton in Buffalo County, some fifteen miles east of Fort Kearney, as they had been most favorably impressed with this locality on their overland journey to Utah. When they were near this point they overtook a freighting outfit en route to the Missouri River. Mrs. Allen was extremely anxious to continue her journey eastward and so Mr. Nutter arranged with the freight "boss" to convey Mrs. Allen to Omaha. There were no women with the freighting outfit but the "boss" agreed to protect Mrs. Allen during the journey. The Nutter family never again heard in any manner from Mrs. Allen—one among many thousands of other victims, deceived, wronged, outraged, robbed, many murdered, by that foul blot on civilization, and more so on the American nation, the Mormon Church.

The Nutter family purchased a "squatter's right" to a claim on Wood River about two miles east of the present Village of Shelton, trading therefor one of the two yoke of oxen. Mrs. Nutter traded her gold watch for a cow and here began anew the struggle for a living and a home. During the fall Mr. Nutter found work putting up hay for use at Fort Kearney and in the winter in cutting

and hauling wood to the fort. Mr. Nutter had never worked at farming, except while in Utah, and had never raised any corn. In the spring of 1863, they planted a small acreage of potatoes and other vegetables and managed to break and plant eighteen acres of corn. In planting this corn a hole was cut in the sod with an ax and the kernels of corn dropped in the hole. No weeds grew, in those days, on newly broken sod and this corn was not cultivated in any manner. Mrs. Nutter assisted in the out-door work. From these eighteen acres they harvested and sold 600 bushels of corn selling at \$1 per bushel—\$600 in all. This corn was purchased by the Holiday stage line operating on the south side of the river.

This was more money than the Nutter family had ever had at one time before and Mrs. Nutter relates that the first article that she ordered when they received the money for this corn was a pair of men's boots, No. 5, for which they paid \$5. There being no store nearer than Omaha an order was made for the things needed and sent by a freighting outfit which in time delivered the goods. In the spring of 1864 the family planted a considerable acreage of corn and vegetables, planting their corn quite early and thereby secured the promise of a bountiful crop, while those of their neighbors who planted late had their crop destroyed by grasshoppers which appeared in considerable numbers destroying the unripened corn.

In August, 1864, occurred the "stampede," memorable in the history of Nebraska Territory for the horrible atrocities committed by the cruel Cheyenne Indians. Space does not permit only a mere mention of the stampede; suffice to say practically all settlers in the Territory of Nebraska, except in the near vicinity of the Missouri River, deserted their homes and traveled with all possible speed towards the eastern border of the territory. Awakened in the dead of night and notified that the dreaded Indians were on the war path, the Nutter family hastily placed their household effects and children in their wagon, hitching thereto their two ox teams and took the trail for the Missouri River, every moment in dread of attack by the savage Indians. Is it any wonder that in the hurry incident to this sudden leaving of their home that baby Helen should have been overlooked and been left asleep in a drygoods box used as a cradle? Some considerable distance had been thus traveled before Helen was missed and the team halted while the anxious father returned for her. During the time the family had been living on the Wood River claim, two daughters, Onie and Leonie, had been born, so that the mother's arms were full even without the baby daughter Helen. The great fright which Mr. Nutter received on this occasion seems not to have left him until he reached England. He had heard of the horrors of the Civil war then raging in "the states," of the massacre of settlers by Indians in Minnesota, knew of the degradation and misery of Mormonism from which he had lately escaped and his one desire seems to have been to once again reach "Old England." At Omaha the family disposed of all of their belongings, at what then seemed fairly good prices. Their first objective point was Quebec, Canada, as Mr. Nutter greatly feared that he might be compelled to take part in the Civil war. Of the journey from Omaha to Quebec, Mrs. Nutter can recall nothing as to route or mode of travel. One thing she recalls with much vividness; it is the great astonishment she felt when crossing

"the states," probably Iowa, Illinois and Michigan, that the people on the farms were busily at work in the fields or in building houses or barns, and in the cities larger buildings were being erected, while she had thought that in "the states" everybody was fighting and being killed.

At Quebec they engaged passage on a vessel for Liverpool, England. The passage was paid in English money, or at the rate of \$3 of United States money for \$1 of English money. The passage took two weeks and when the family reached Liverpool they had not a cent to pay fare to their former home. Mr. Nutter pawned his watch for that purpose. Here the baby Helen was again forgotten, she being asleep in the station with the rest of the family on the train ready to start. Mr. Nutter at once secured work at his trade of spinner, but in less than two weeks was longing to be again on his claim in Nebraska Territory. He wrote to his former employer in Philadelphia for work and back came a letter with passage money, and Mr. Nutter leaving his family in England returned to Philadelphia and began work in the factory as foreman of the card room. On this trip Mr. Nutter was a passenger on the City of Boston, a magnificent steamship, which on its return voyage disappeared and was never heard from. Mrs. Nutter remained in England six months before joining Mr. Nutter in Philadelphia. While in England the twin daughter, Leonie, died and was buried in England, and a daughter, named Elizabeth, was born. Mr. Nutter remained in Philadelphia until the spring of 1869, when he came to Nebraska and purchased a "squatters right" to the southeast quarter of section 8, town 9, range 13 west, in Buffalo County, paying therefor, with the improvements—a log house, log barn and corral—about three hundred dollars.

He secured work as a section hand on the Union Pacific Railroad and in July Mrs. Nutter and the children arrived. In the spring of 1870, not being able to purchase a team, they hired some land plowed, and this they planted to potatoes and other vegetables and corn, from which he raised good crops. His corn he sold for 50 cents per bushel and the potatoes were placed in a cave until spring and sold for excellent prices to members of the Soldiers' Free Homestead colony, some seventy-five families, which made settlement near that point in April, 1871. The crop of 1870 enabled the family to purchase a yoke of oxen and a cow and through the kindness of Sergt. Michael Coady of Fort Kearney he secured an old Government wagon. At the time of the stampede, before referred to, he had nearly ready for the harvest a considerable crop of both corn and vegetables, and which crop was harvested and sold by returning settlers after the stampede scare was over. Returning settlers state that this crop sold for about one thousand dollars, but it is more than probable that this amount is greatly in excess of the amount actually received. For the crop raised in 1864 Mr. Nutter received from one of the settlers who returned after the stampede one cow.

With the coming of the colony referred to schools were at once established, and the children of the family were prompt to take advantage of this opportunity to acquire an education. Also the older children were of an age where they were helpful in opening up the new farm and tilling the same. The home of this family soon became one of the best improved farms in the county. In the '80s there was on this farm a bearing orchard of 2,000 trees. When this orchard



SOD HOUSE OF ERASTUS SMITH AND FAMILY
First settlers in Garfield Township, March, 1874



ONE OF THE FIRST HABITATIONS IN BUFFALO COUNTY

Built about 1860. Photo taken in 1906. In the foreground are Mr. and Mrs. William Nutter, their children and grandchildren. At left of the photo is Walter Scott. Mr. Nutter lived here until 1886.

came into bearing there was great loss by reason of wormy apples. Mr. Nutter finding little of value in recognized authorities in regard to this pest of his orchard, set apart a room in his house and made a scientific study of the pest, pursuing his investigations with all the zeal and close attention to details that would be expected from a graduate of a scientific department of the State University with the initials of a degree attached to his name. The results of Mr. Nutter's study and investigations in this connection were deemed so important that the professor of horticulture of the State University visited Mr. Nutter and secured the results of his investigations and embodied them in a bulletin issued by the station and from these and like investigations came the present method of spraying fruit trees for the destruction of many kinds of fruit pests. In 1886 Mr. Nutter erected, at that date, one of the finest farm houses in the country. The house is octagon in form, 16 feet on a side and 18 feet in height. It has what are termed modern conveniences, such as hot and cold water, toilet and bath room, furnace, etc. The rooms are spacious and well furnished. It has abundant porch room and a well kept lawn with ornamental trees and shrubs. He also erected at the same date a convenient barn. After the return of the family to Nebraska in 1870 there were born the following children: Hingham, Alice, Jane, Frank, Louisa and Mirabeau D., in all fifteen children, ten of whom are living and of legal age. All these children were given the benefit of a common school education and some of them have been for years teachers in the public schools.

Mr. Nutter took but little interest in state and national affairs. He was for many years a subscriber to such magazines as Popular Science Monthly and North American Review, and in his library was a quite complete set of Spencer's works, also the published works of Darwin, Tito Vignoli, Stallo and others. He was a strong believer in free trade from an English standpoint. He was at all times industrious and performed an incredible amount of labor and yet he was, by many, regarded as a "dreamer" because, while his hands were employed about the labors of the farm, his thoughts were almost wholly given to the contemplation of some profound subject.

All the property accumulated by Mr. and Mrs. Nutter has been by industry and economy, as Mr. Nutter never speculated, nor, so far as known, had any source of income other than his farm. Mr. Nutter was born in 1828 and died at his home on May 13, 1908. He was buried in Riverside Cemetery, near Gibbon. No historical account of this family is at all complete that does not include some further mention of the mother of this family; she enjoyed little in the way of educational advantages and at the age when she should have been playing with her dolls was helping to earn the family living by winding bobbins for the weaver's shuttle. She it was who loyally, patiently, uncomplainingly followed the varying fortunes of the family, seemingly never discouraged, always hopeful, doing her full share of work most laborious, enduring her full share of all privations, bearing fifteen children, two pair twins, five of the children dying in early youth or infancy and being buried in widely separated graves, one in England, one in New Jersey, two in Pennsylvania and one in Nebraska. As the years came and went she came to be the financier of the family. She it was who saw that the children had food in plenty and of good quality, that they were com-

fortably clothed, and while to her the profound theories of Huxley and Darwin and Spencer and the fine spun theories of free trade and protection were as mysterious as the letters of the Greek alphabet, yet she it was who saw that the children were regular in attendance at school and attended to the cares and duties assigned them. In furnishing, from memory only, on request, something of the history of her family, its travels, its privations, its toils and struggles at times for the barest necessities of life, its times of great peril and sore affliction, she was much more likely to recall some humorous feature or incident than one of peril or great privation and seemed not to realize that people who thus meet and overcome such almost insurmountable obstacles, and at last secure by industry, economy and integrity a comfortable home for themselves and their immediate family are true heroes and heroines of real life. Notwithstanding all the toils and privations incident to her life and travels, Mrs. Nutter in the seventy-third year of her age pursues her daily task with a vigor of step and a sprightliness of movement to be envied by many a person still on the sunny side of life.

CHAPTER XIV

THE INDIAN STAMPEDE OF 1864—NARRATION OF EVENTS BY JAMES JACKSON, "TED" OLIVER AND LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR HOPEWELL—ACCOUNT OF ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY INDIANS AS RELATED BY CAPT. H. E. PALMER—MRS. EWBANK AND MISS LAURA BOYER RANSOMED—SETTLERS IN BUFFALO COUNTY ASSEMBLE AT WOOD RIVER CENTER—AUGUST MEYER CHOSEN CAPTAIN—NAMES OF SETTLERS IN COUNTY AT THAT DATE—THE FLIGHT TO OMAHA AND IOWA—AUGUST MEYER AND "TED" OLIVER, GEORGE BURKE AND JOHN BRITT REMAIN.

THE STAMPEDE IN AUGUST, 1864

The stampede that occurred in August, 1864, marks an event of great importance in the early settlement of the county and state. With no knowledge of the actual conditions and circumstances existing at the time of this stampede, it has been difficult to understand why all the settlers in the vicinity of Wood River Center (now Shelton) should have deserted their homes, when it appears that not a hostile Indian was seen at that time by these settlers; also that no hostile Indians were seen on the north side of the Platte River, at least not within 100 miles to the west of Wood River Center settlement. These settlers had been living for years in daily dread of attack by Indians, had been continually on the lookout for them, and Indians had frequently attacked one or two white men settlers when found alone and the Indians could surprise them. James Jackson states that two were killed by Sioux Indians in 1863, a few miles west of Wood River Center. "Ted" Oliver relates that he spent many long hours on the roof of their loghouse watching for Indians for some years preceding this stampede. For these and other reasons it has been thought best to determine as far as possible the reasons for the stampede of these early settlers, and after giving the subject much study and consideration, the writer offers the following suggestions or reasons for this fright and stampede. From the date, 1847, when the Mormons first made settlement in Utah until the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1869, Mormon sentiment dominated the trail between Florence on the Missouri River and Salt Lake City, Utah. Thousands of Mormon emigrants passed each year over this trail in charge of Mormon elders who regularly made the journey back and forth. Along the trail from Florence as far west as Fort Kearney were settlers, largely Mormon emigrants, some of whom tarried a brief time and then journeyed on to Utah; others remained and made permanent homes, as did the Olivers, Owens, Nutters and others of the early settlers in Buffalo County. Commencing in 1860 a great and terrible Civil war was raging in the "states," the real cause of which Mormon emigrants had little knowledge. The

Mormon leaders preached that this war was sent as punishment on the Gentiles for their persecution of the Mormons, and that while the war raged the Indians of the Northwest would raid the settlements along the border and murder the settlers. A year or more previous to the stampede Sioux Indians had raided the settlements in Minnesota and massacred a thousand or more of the settlers. All these things naturally kept the settlers in Buffalo and Hall counties in a state of apprehension of Indian attack.

A narration of some events which did occur in this connection will show that the apprehension on the part of the settlers was well founded. In conversation with Lieutenant Governor Hopewell, in November, 1908, he stated that in July, 1864, he was a "bullwhacker" on a Government freight train loaded with supplies and journeying from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Fort Laramie, some three hundred miles west of Fort Kearney. There were twenty-five wagons in the train, each wagon drawn by from six to eight yoke of oxen, and they averaged about fifteen miles a day. The conditions were so peaceful along the trail that the men were not generally armed, although most of them carried revolvers. Indians visited their camp daily, probably Pawnees, as this was Pawnee territory—begging for food or anything which pleased an Indian's fancy. On July 4th the train reached Fort Kearney, making a brief stop and continuing the journey on the trail south of the Platte. On July 6th, when opposite the mouth of Plum Creek (near the present Village of Lexington), they saw where Indians had committed depredations on an emigrant train. The train crossed the Platte near Julesburg, two days being required to make the crossing, it being necessary to unload some of the freight and to double teams on each wagon. At Fort Laramie the men with the wagon train were issued guns and ammunition, and on the return journey there were seventy-five wagons in the train and about one hundred armed men. Near O'Fallon's Bluffs the train passed through a large camp of Cheyenne Indians (old men and squaws), and a day or two days' journey farther east saw at a distance a large body of Indian warriors. From this band a small number, mounted, detached themselves, taking a course as if to intercept the wagon train. The train boss ordered the train into camp, and when the small party of Indians rode up "how-howing," the men had their guns handy. These Indians remained but a short time, when as if by signal they rode off at full speed. The train was not molested, but when it reached the mouth of Plum Creek they found where a train of eleven wagons had been destroyed and there were a large number of fresh graves beside the trail. Farther east they saw additional evidences of Indian depredations.

Capt. H. E. Palmer, in his "History of the Powder River Expedition of 1865" (Nebraska State Historical Society, Vol. II), relates many incidents of this raid by the Cheyenne Sioux. From his account the following is quoted: "In August, 1864, I was ordered to report to General Curtis, who commanded the Department of Kansas, at Fort Leavenworth, and was by him instructed to take command of a detachment of the Eleventh Ohio Volunteer Corps, sixty men, every one of them lately Confederate soldiers with John Morgan in his raid into Ohio, captured there and confined at Columbus. They had enlisted in the Federal service under the pledge that they were to fight Indians and not rebels. I was to conduct those men to Fort Kearney, and there turn them over

to Captain Humphreyville of the Eleventh Ohio. On my way out, near Big Sandy, now Alexandria, in Thayer County, Nebraska, I met a party of freighters and stage coach passengers on horseback, and some few ranchmen, fleeing from the Little Blue Valley. They told me a terrible story, that the Indians were just in their rear and how they had massacred the people just west of them, none knew how many. All knew that the Cheyennes had made a raid into the Little Blue Valley, striking down all before them. After camping for dinner at this place, and seeing the last citizen disappear towards the states, I pushed on toward the Little Blue, camping in the valley, and saw two Indians about five miles away on a hill as I went into camp. The next day passed Ewbank's ranch, and found there little children from three to seven years old, who had been taken by the heels and swung around against the log cabin, beating their heads into a jelly. The hired girl was found some fifteen rods from the ranch, staked out on the prairie, tied by her hands and feet, naked, and her body full of arrows and horribly mangled. Not far from this was the body of Ewbank, whiskers cut off, body most fearfully mutilated. The buildings had been burned and the ruins still smoking. Nearly the same scene of desolation and murder was witnessed at Spring ranch. Camped that night at Liberty farm. Next day passed trains, in one place seventy wagons loaded with merchandise, en route for Denver. The teamsters had mounted their mules and made their escape. The Indians had opened boxes containing dry goods, taking great bolts of calicoes and other cloths, carried off all they wanted, and scattered the balance, all they could, around over the prairie. * * * These Indians had attacked the troops at Pawnee ranch under command of Capt. E. B. Murphy of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry, and had driven them into Fort Kearney, although he had with him about one hundred and fifty men and two pieces of artillery. By this time the main body of the Indians was far away in the Republican Valley, en route for the Solomon River. I followed their rear guard to a point near where the Town of Franklin, in Franklin County, on the Republican, now stands. Camped there one night and then marched north to Fort Kearney. On that day's march we saw millions of buffalo."

This raid on the Little Blue was made by the Cheyennes under the command of Black Kettle, One-Eyed George Bent, Two Faces and others. Mrs. Ewbank and Miss Laura Boyer were carried away captives. We ransomed them from the Indians, who brought them to Fort Laramie in January, 1865. Just prior to this outbreak on the Little Blue a number of the same Indians had attacked a train near Plum Creek, thirty-one miles west of Fort Kearney, on the south side of the Platte, and killed several men. From Plum Creek they moved down the Little Blue, passing south of Fort Kearney.

This band of Indians, says Captain Palmer, was attacked by Colorado troops under command of Col. J. M. Chivington, on November 29, 1864, in their camp on Sand Creek, about one hundred and ten miles southeast of Denver. The Indians were surprised, and according to the very best estimate five hundred or six hundred were killed—men, women and children.

The story of this memorable stampede, as relates to settlers in what is now Buffalo County, as told by some who took part, is in substance as follows: It had been a quiet, peaceful summer in the Wood River Valley in 1864. The set-

tlers had been busy with their farming operations and there was promise of a good crop of corn, and the vegetables, potatoes, beans, etc., were already being gathered and sold at Fort Kearney. On August 9th, James Oliver and Thomas Morgan, settlers living on Wood River, about midway between the present villages of Gibbon and Shelton, had gone to Fort Kearney with a load of vegetables, leaving their wives and children to keep company together at the home of Mr. Morgan. News of the outbreak reached the officers at the fort while Oliver and Morgan were there, and they were not allowed to return home to their families, but were pressed into service to defend the fort. Another settler by the name of Cook was also at the fort and he was sent to warn the settlers and to advise them to gather at Wood River Center prepared to defend themselves.

The homes of these early settlers, some built of logs, some of sod, some dug-outs (holes in the ground), were all on the south side of Wood River, close to that stream, and the one farthest west was that of J. E. Boyd, the Boyd ranch, about one mile west of the present Village of Gibbon. Thus it was, in the dead of night, that Messenger Cook called these settlers from their sleep, informed them that the Indians were coming in great force, advising not to strike a light, as it might attract the attention of the Indians, but to go as quickly as possible to Wood River Center. Before daylight all the settlers within miles of this common center had been warned and had assembled, many with little more clothing than when awakened from their sleep. August Meyer, now (1908) living at Shelton, a German, who had served five years in the regular service, was chosen captain and at once organized his force as best he could, establishing a line of pickets. At this center there was being built a log stable, yet without a roof. Into this stable the women and children were placed, while all awaited the coming of the Indians. When morning came one settler mounted his horse and started towards his home. He soon returned in great haste, saying he saw a band of Indians on the north side of Wood River in the rear of his home. After a long, anxious time of waiting, four men, mounted, were sent to see what had become of the Indians the settler reported to have seen. When this party returned they reported that in the rear of the ranch, and across Wood River, was a bunch of buffalo feeding, and doubtless in his fright the settler mistook these buffalo for Indians. So far as can be recalled, the following are the names of persons and families residing at that date in what is now Buffalo County and most of whom gathered at Wood River Center on the occasion of this stampede; J. E. Boyd and family, John Britt, George Burke, Crane brothers, Cook and family, H. Dugdale and family, Mrs. Francis and children, Huff and family, French George, Augustus Meyer and wife, Edward (Ted) Oliver and wife, James Oliver and family, Mrs. Sarah Oliver and her children, Robert, John, Sarah Ann, Jane and Eliza, Mrs. David Owen and son, Joseph Owen, Thomas Morgan and family, Payne and family, Thomas Peck and family, Jack Staats and family, Story and family, Tague and family, Mrs. Wilson and children, William Nutter and family.

During the day James Oliver and Thomas Morgan returned from Fort Kearney, bringing further news of the murders and horrible atrocities perpetrated by the Indians. The settlers remained at Wood River Center during the day and succeeding night, when it was agreed best for all to leave and each



AUGUST MEYER

Soldier of the Civil war. Chosen captain
by settlers in the memorable Indian stampede of 1864.

family returned to their home, placed in wagons their household belongings, hitched to the wagons their ox teams and driving their few head of cows and other cattle, took the trail for Missouri River. In the haste of this leaving of home under such conditions, it is small wonder that one child was left asleep in the cradle and not missed until the parents were some distance on the trail, when it was discovered that baby Helen had been left behind and the wagon was halted while the anxious father hurried back for the little one. In the arms of mother were twin daughters only a few months of age. Except at Grand Island, where some of the settlers had thrown up breastworks and prepared to defend themselves, the entire country as far as the Missouri River was with a few exceptions deserted. When the fleeing settlers reached Omaha they found the stores closed, every able-bodied man pressed into service and armed, and mounted men patrolling the country for miles outside the Village of Omaha. Omaha, at that date (1864), was a straggling village with a population about the same as the present Village of Shelton. At an election held in 1864 (Morton History, Vol. 1, page 495) Douglas County had cast 971 votes for delegate to Congress out of a total of 5,885 cast in the Territory of Nebraska. This would give Douglas County a population of approximately four thousand, with a population in the City or Village of Omaha of approximately one thousand. Most of the fleeing settlers from the Wood River Center settlement pursued their journey into Iowa. William Nutter and family continued on to England, going by way of Quebec. The female members of the Oliver and Owen families remained in Iowa for a year before returning to their Wood River homes. James Oliver, Thomas Morgan and others returned in time to gather the crops on their claims. Augustus Meyer, Edward (Ted) Oliver, George Burke and John Britt did not leave during the stampede, but remained to care for their property. They were not molested and saw no hostile Indians.

Mr. Meyer was in the employ of the Western Stage Company, in charge of their stage station near Wood River Center, where was kept a relay of horses, and Mr. Meyer states that his sense of duty to his employers would not permit of his leaving the stage property at such a time, and further, he had seen no Indians and did not greatly fear an attack. Mr. Meyer, a German, had served five years in the regular United States service, a portion of the time at Fort Kearney, and had been discharged from the service at Fort Kearney in 1861, since which time he had been in the employ of the Western Stage Company, first at Boyd's ranch, and later at their station near Wood River Center.

The press of that date, 1864, in the Territory of Nebraska, roundly denounced the general Government for its failure to protect emigrants on the trail and settlers on the plains from attack by hostile Indians, and it seems that such denunciation was in a measure deserved, for it appears that no effort whatever was made by those in command at Fort Kearney to protect or come to the relief of settlers during this raid; in fact, two of the settlers, James Oliver and Thomas Morgan, were pressed into service to defend the fort, while their wives and children were left to the mercy of savage and barbarous Indians. When the settlers returned to their homes after the stampede they found small details of soldiers from the fort stationed at the Boyd ranch, Wood River Center and at settlements farther east toward Grand Island, in order to protect both the settlers

and also the emigrants traveling the California and Oregon trail. It should not be forgotten that this memorable raid occurred in the closing year of the great Civil war when every soldier was needed in the stupendous struggle for the preservation of the Union, and it also appears that the garrisons in the western forts and the troops employed to fight the Indians were largely captured Confederate soldiers who preferred service in fighting Indians (not rebels) rather than to remain prisoners of war, confined in armed camps.

CHAPTER XV

ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 1860—A MILLION OF BUFFALO, HORACE GREELEY DELAYED AT FORT KEARNEY FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS BY BUFFALO—25 CENTS TO CARRY A LETTER—MINING FOR GOLD IN COLORADO—CORN \$7 A BUSHEL—CORN 10 CENTS A BUSHEL—TEN DOLLARS TO WATER GOVERNMENT TEAMS—THE TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE OF FORAGE DELIVERED AT FORT KEARNEY AND FORT LARAMIE—TEN CENTS A GALLON FOR WATER IN 1874.

ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 1860

J. E. Miller, a soldier of the Civil war, came to Buffalo County, from Iowa in the year 1873, taking a homestead claim in Cedar Township. Mr. Miller served as justice of the peace in his township and two terms as state senator. He introduced in the Senate and secured its passage, a bill providing for the teaching of agriculture in our public schools,—this the beginning of the teaching of the principles of agriculture in the public schools of our state and nation. In the year 1860 Mr. Miller made a journey across the plains and in the year 1915 gives the following interesting description of the journey:

I passed up the south side and down, from Fort Kearney, the north side of the Platte River in 1860, fifty-five years ago this summer. Our company consisted of seven ox teams (two and three yoke to a wagon) and nineteen men. We left Davenport, Iowa, early in April, crossed the Missouri at Nebraska City, May 1st, loaded up and started for the Platte route, which we struck 115 miles below Fort Kearney (this would be about opposite Columbus). Only a few miles from Nebraska City we lost sight of settlers and traveled through an unbroken prairie till we reached Salt Creek (this Lincoln) where there were a few straggling houses. I now believe it was near the junction of the little creek coming down from the asylum as we found the water too salt for our use, and by crossing over to another stream we found the water all right. Soon after reaching the Platte we came in contact with others on the same errand—"Pike's Peak or bust." By the time we reached Fort Kearney the road was full of freighters and gold seekers.

A MILLION OF BUFFALO

A large herd of buffalo had about finished crossing the Platte River going north; it had taken them two days and nights to cross; the east edge of the herd was at Doby Town (this two miles west of Fort Kearney) and reached west thirty-five miles. The buffalo were in a solid mass so that all teams were delayed.

HORACE GREELEY DELAYED TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

Horace Greeley, who was a passenger on the overland stage, was detained twenty-four hours. He wrote to the New York Tribune, of which he was editor, "I know a million is a great many but I am sure I saw more than a million buffalo yesterday. Some estimate there are more buffalo on the plains than domestic cattle in the United States. I can't say as to that, but I feel sure there are more in weight as the buffalo weigh more." From Fort Kearney to Denver the road was filled with teams. By standing on the front of the wagon one could see every turn of the road for many miles by the line of covered wagons. I noticed the peculiar fact that there was not a stream, little or big, which entered the Platte from the south, from where we struck the valley (at Columbus) to Denver. The mail was carried from the Missouri River by Hinkley's express; we had to pay 25 cents for each letter besides the 3 cents stamp.

DENVER WAS IN KANSAS

Kansas and Nebraska at that time extended to the summit of the mountains and joined Utah. Denver was in Kansas. We crossed the range and mined 2½ months near where Leadville now is. We had to saw our lumber with a whip saw. We averaged to earn about ten dollars per day to the man. Snow began to cover the range September 14, and we, being short of provisions, pulled out. Reached Denver, 115 miles, in a week.

CORN \$7 A BUSHEL

Bought corn at Denver at 12½ cents per pound to feed my team—I had bought horses. It was a long, dreary road to Fort Kearney, where we forded the Platte; we found some settlers along Wood River of whom we bought corn for \$2 a bushel. Crossed the Missouri at Omaha where we sold our gold for \$18 an ounce. Of course this lightened our load somewhat. The year 1860 saw the great drouth in Kansas. Nebraska was not farming much then or she would have suffered. The drouth extended into Western Iowa and we paid 60 cents a bushel for corn. It was cheaper as we traveled east until I bought the last bushel fifteen miles north of Davenport for 10 cents. That was the biggest fall in the price of corn I ever knew it to take inside of fifty days. I reached home November 5th and the next day cast my first vote for President, thereby electing Abraham Lincoln. While going up the Platte I would take to the sand hills on the south side and chase antelope. My opinion of this country as an agricultural paradise you can guess.

I would not have given a dime for all of Nebraska west of Fort Kearney.

I had intended to go back to the mines in 1861, and perhaps would, had it not been there was a rebellion to look after and I was asked to take the job.

TEN DOLLARS TO WATER GOVERNMENT TEAMS

There is a tradition that \$10 was paid at one time to water a string of Government teams at a well on the divide south of the Platte and that the amount was

allowed in the expense account at Washington. If so it must have been because this territory was known as a desert and in a desert water is often scarce. East of Kenesaw, on the trail coming from the Little Blue over the divide to the valley of the Platte, a distance of some twenty miles there was a well known as the "Government well," but private property, which was more than one hundred feet deep. It was curbed with logs and was a regular stopping place for travelers over the trail. Possibly it was at this well that the "large" price was paid for water for the Government teams. This price is not greatly in excess of the contract price paid for hay for use at Fort Kearney, as related \$20 per ton, and the contractor let the contract to cut and stack the hay in sight of the fort for \$1.25 per ton. Some idea of the enormous expense of maintaining an army at Fort Kearney and Fort Laramie will appear in the following taken from Morton History, Vol. 2: "The cost of transporting (1865) a hundred pounds of corn, hay, clothing, subsistence, lumber or other necessary from Fort Leavenworth (Kansas) to Fort Kearney was \$6.42; to Fort Laramie \$14.10." It is further stated that the cost of a bushel of corn bought at Fort Leavenworth and delivered at Fort Kearney was \$5.03. In 1850 Gen. Winfield Scott complained of the great expense of furnishing supplies for troops on the frontier, in which he states: "The average cost of forage for a horse during one month at Fort Kearney was \$27.72, and at Fort Laramie, \$34.24." In 1873 the writer paid 10 cents for a gallon of water and 25 cents to water a team on the divide south of the Platte and drew the water himself, out of a well much more than one hundred feet in depth.

CHAPTER XVI

A BROKEN AXLE—EDWARD OLIVER AND FAMILY EN ROUTE TO UTAH—AXLE TO WAGON BROKEN NEAR WOOD RIVER CENTER—THE WIFE AND CHILDREN REFUSE TO JOURNEY FARTHER—SPEND THE WINTER ON WOOD RIVER—THE FATHER CONTINUES JOURNEY TO UTAH—THE MOTHER AND CHILDREN REMAIN AND ESTABLISH A HOME—MRS. SARAH OLIVER A LARGELY USEFUL WOMAN—THE OLIVERS TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN THE ORGANIZATION OF BUFFALO COUNTY.

A BROKEN AXLE

The attention of travelers on the overland route over the Union Pacific Railroad is almost invariably drawn to an inviting farm scene in the Wood River Valley of the Platte just west of the thriving Village of Shelton in Buffalo County, Neb. The first thing to attract attention is a large, roomy, up-to-date looking in all its appointments, farm house standing some twenty rods north of both the highway and the railroad which run parallel at this point. To add to the beauty of the scene, as a background lies Wood River with its border of native trees and their varying shades of green. Immediately south of the river are orchards—apple, plum, cherry and smaller fruits—and a garden, and scattered among the trees are “skips” of bees. A little north and west of the house is a large barn. To the north and east of the house beyond the orchard, in the bend of the river, are large corn cribs full and overflowing, and adjoining these are corrals, where in the winter time hundreds of sheep are fattened for market. In front of the house is a well kept lawn extending down to the highway and bordered on either side with evergreen trees; to the east and west and across the railroad to the south are broad level acres of alfalfa, whose carpet of green is so restful to the eye from early spring to early winter, and when the four cuttings of hay, secured from these broad acres each year, are gathered and stored in stacks scattered over these acres, their size and number are indisputable evidence of the almost unlimited fertility of the soil.

So beautiful is this scene that the Union Pacific Railroad Company has reproduced it as an illustration, with the title, “A Typical Nebraska Ranch Home” and the illustration appeared in Union Pacific folders alongside that of their great Overland Limited passenger train, itself a marvel of comfort and luxury of modern railway travel. This beautiful home with its broad acres is that of Robert Oliver and his numerous family, and while greatly enjoyed by all the members of the family, it also adds in some measure to the pleasure and enjoyment of thousands of travelers who each year journey from ocean to ocean over this great overland route.

Possibly it may be of interest to relate a seemingly trivial incident which caused a large family to locate at this point while Nebraska was yet a territory and thus led to the creation of this and other comfortable, luxurious homes in Central Nebraska.

In the year 1860, Edward Oliver, Sr., his wife and seven children, one son married, converts to the Mormon faith left their home in England, their destination being Salt Lake City, Utah. At Florence, a few miles north of the City of Omaha, they purchased a traveling outfit for emigrants, which included two yoke of oxen, a wagon and two cows, and with numerous other families, having the same destination, took the Utah trail up the valley of the Platte on the north side of the river. When near a point known as Wood River Center, now Shelton, 175 miles west of the Missouri River, the front axle of their wagon gave way, compelling a halt for repairs, their immediate companions in the emigrant train continuing the journey, for nothing avoidable, not even the burial of a member of the train, was allowed to interfere with the prescribed schedule of travel, and the dead were buried during the hours devoted to camp purposes.

The Oliver family camped beside the trail and the broken wagon was taken to the ranch of Joseph Johnson who combined in his person and business that of postmaster, merchant, blacksmith, wagonmaker, editor and publisher of a newspaper, a Mormon with two or more wives and numerous children, a man passionately fond of flowers which he cultivated to a considerable extent, a philosopher, and it must be conceded a most useful person at a point so far distant from other source of supplies. The wagon shop of Mr. Johnson contained no seasoned wood suitable for an axle to the wagon and so from trees along Wood River was cut an ash from which was hewn and fitted an axle to the wagon and with the wagon thus repaired the family again took the trail, but ere ten miles had been traveled, the green axle began to bend under the load, the wheels ceased to track, the journey could not thus further proceed. In the family council which succeeded the father urged that they try to arrange with other emigrants to carry their movables and thus continue the journey. The mother suggested that the family return to the vicinity of Wood River Center and arrange to spend the winter. To the suggestion of the mother all the children added their entreaties. The mother urged that it was a beautiful country, an abundance of wood and good water, grass for pasture and hay in plenty could be made for their cattle and she was sure crops could be raised. The wishes of the mother prevailed, the family returned to a point about a mile west of Wood River Center and on the bank of Wood River constructed a habitation, a log hut with a sod and dirt roof, in which they spent the winter. When springtime came, the father, zealous in the Mormon faith, urged that they continue the journey to Utah. To this neither the mother nor any of the children could be induced to consent and in the end the father journeyed to Utah where he made his home to the end of his life. The married son made a home for his family not far distant. The mother, Sarah Oliver, became the head of the family and proved to be a woman of energy and force of character. With her children she engaged in the raising of corn and vegetables, the surplus being sold to emigrants passing over the trail, and at Fort Kearney, nearly twenty miles distant. The emigrants west-bound usually had money to pay for vegetables, eggs and corn, but too often the

emigrant westbound, who labeled his "prairie schooner" "Pike's Peak or Bust," returned later with his label reading "Busted, by Gosh." Sarah Oliver never turned from her humble door a hungry emigrant, eastward or westward bound, and often she divided with such the scanty store needed for her own family. When rumors came of Indians on the warpath the children took turns on the housetop as lookout for the dreaded savages. In 1863 two settlers were killed a few miles east of this point. In 1864 occurred the memorable raid of the Cheyenne Indians in which horrible atrocities were committed and scores of settlers were massacred by these Indians only a few miles immediately south of this point on the south side of the Platte River. In 1865 A. W. Storer, a near neighbor, was murdered by Indians. Sarah Oliver had no framed diploma from some medical college which would entitle her to use the prefix "Dr." to her name, possibly she was not entitled to be called a trained nurse or mid-wife, but she is entitled to be long remembered as one who ministered to the sick, to early settlers along the trail, to travelers over the trail, and to many whose dwelling place was at or near Fort Kearney, many miles distant. Often the messenger from distressed families miles distant was "Pap" Lamb, whose home was near Grand Island, twenty-five miles to the east, and whose route as stage driver was from his home to Fort Kearney, and when this messenger came Sarah Oliver was accorded the seat of honor beside the driver.

Sarah Oliver and her family endured all the toil and privation incident to early settlers, without means, in a new country, far removed from access to what are deemed the barest necessities of life found in more settled communities. She endured all the terrors incident to settlement in a sparsely settled locality in which year after year Indian atrocities were committed and in which the coming of such savages was hourly expected and dreaded. She saw the building and completion of the Union Pacific Railroad near her home in 1866; she saw Nebraska become a state in 1867; in 1870 when Buffalo County was organized, her son, John, was appointed sheriff and was elected to that office at the first election thereafter. Her eldest son, James, was named the first assessor of the county, and her son, Edward, was a member of the first board of county commissioners and later served with credit and fidelity as county treasurer. When in 1871 Mrs. Sarah Oliver died, her son, Robert, inherited her old home and on that old home, established in 1860, is located "The Typical Nebraska Ranch Home" which an attempt has been made to describe.

CHAPTER XVII

GOVERNMENT LANDS—RAILROAD LANDS—SPYING OUT THE LAND—LOADED RIFLES
CARRIED ON ALL UNION PACIFIC TRAINS—FIRST TASTE OF ANTELOPE STEAK—
THE BOYD RANCH—CARRIED A BUTT OF A CORNSTALK BACK TO OHIO—WELL
PLEASED WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY AND OF PROPOSED LOCATION
OF COLONY.

GOVERNMENT LANDS—RAILROAD LANDS

Originally all lands in the county were Government lands, but to encourage the building of the Union Pacific Railroad, the general Government, granted to the railroad company, one-half of all lands for twenty miles on each side of the railroad bed. Also the general Government gave to the public school fund of the state two sections of land—18 and 36—in each Government township. There are in Buffalo approximately, six hundred thousand acres of land and approximately three hundred thousand acres were railroad lands; of the remainder, in round numbers, two hundred eighty-five thousand acres were open to homestead and pre-emption entries and some fifteen thousand acres were school lands. It was not until about the year 1870, that the Union Pacific Railroad came into possession of its lands in the county and the Government surveys completed so that the Government lands were all open to entry. Until settlers could be induced to take homestead and pre-emption claims, and thus begin a settlement of the county, the railroad could not sell off its lands. This led the Union Pacific Railroad Company to enter into an agreement with Col. John Thorp, to locate a colony on homesteads and pre-emptions in Buffalo County.

This arrangement was made in the year 1870.

SPYING OUT THE LAND

(Harry A. Lee, a member of the colony, furnishes the following account of a journey made by himself and Colonel Thorp previous to the coming of the colony.)

John Thorp, the originator of the colony plan and myself had been acquaintances for years and were school-mates at the old Western Reserve Seminary located at West Farmington, Ohio. Shortly after the close of the Civil war, Thorp organized a colony which located in Central Kansas and which proved quite a success. In the fall of 1870, Thorp informed me of his plans for organizing a soldier's colony to locate on the line of the Union Pacific Railroad west of Grand Island. In January, 1871, he informed me he had perfected his

arrangements with the railroad company and would visit the proposed location in February and invited me to accompany him, which I did. We left Columbus, Ohio, on the 25th of February; snow was gone, frost out of the ground and mud very deep.

We passed through Chicago, Rock Island, Illinois to Omaha where we crossed the Missouri River on a ferry boat nearly one-half mile below where the present railroad bridge now is. After visiting the Union Pacific Land Office in Omaha, we boarded the old emigrant train which left for the West at 6 P. M. After examining our tickets the conductor invited us into his car—a caboose. The first thing which attracted our attention was a gun-rack at one end of the car in which stood twenty-four United States rifles. The conductor informed us that all overland trains carried a stand of guns, loaded and ready for use.

We arrived at Grand Island the next morning where we were met by Mr. Kennedy, land agent for the Union Pacific Land Company. Our train stopped at Gibbon switch to let us off. The only house in sight there was the section house and the only other house in sight was on the Boyd Ranch about a mile west of the switch, where was living Thomas K. Wood.

We decided to visit Mr. Wood, learn what he thought of the country and possibly get some horses to ride to the bluffs to the north, and to the Platte to the south, and last but not least get something to eat.

We had been at Mr. Woods but a short time when one of his little girls came running in and said there were some antelope on the bluff about half a mile to the west and sure enough there they were in plain sight.

Josh Wood, a stripling boy, took a needle gun and started after the game, his father remarking in his quiet, emphatic manner, "No use for you to go, you can't kill nothing."

In about half an hour, the little girl, who had been on the watch, came in and said Josh has got one. That evening we had for supper our first taste of antelope. We visited the bluffs to the north, and rode to the Platte River to the south, noted the lay of the land, the quality of the soil, its adaptability, as we thought to agriculture—particularly we noted a few acres Mr. Wood had in cultivation, northwest of his house, and although he told us, "No man could make a living here by farming, for nothing would grow in such a dry soil," I found a butt of a corn stalk, on his field, that measured $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and which I took home to Ohio with me.

Mr. Wood had an ideal location for a cattle ranch and did not wish to be disturbed, and I could not blame him, but "Westward the march of civilization was taking its way" and could not be resisted.

(At that date on the Boyd Ranch, in charge of Mr. Wood, was a herd of 770 Texan steers and some three hundred head of stock cattle, roaming the prairies in all directions.)

We spent the night till 3 A. M. at the section house, near the Gibbon switch, when our section boss—Roger Hayes—swung his lantern across the track and halted a returning emigrant train which we boarded and returned to Grand Island where we remained three days; here we met some former acquaintances from Ohio by the name of Powell and John Donaldson who had lived in Nebraska some years.

We returned home well satisfied with our trip and pleased with the appearance of the country and of the proposed location for a colony.

The day we spent at Gibbon switch was beautiful and spring-like. Had it been like some days I have since seen there, the "Soldier's Free Homestead Colony" might still be seeking a location.

CHAPTER XVIII

SOLDIER'S FREE HOMESTEAD COLONY—ORIGIN OF COLONY—CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP—REDUCED RATES TO COLONISTS—ITINERARY OF COLONY—ARRIVAL AT COUNCIL BLUFFS—CROSS MISSOURI RIVER ON A FLAT BOAT—NEBRASKA LAND—CHECKING BAGGAGE—OMAHA IN 1871.

SOLDIER'S FREE HOMESTEAD COLONY

The origin of the Soldier's Free Homestead Colony was with Col. John Thorp of West Farmington, Ohio, who had already settled a colony on homesteads in Kansas, along the line of the Union Pacific Railroad in that state. During the winter of 1870-71, Colonel Thorp had advertised his colony in eastern newspapers, these advertisements setting forth in rather glowing colors the desirable features of "free homes—free lands," along the line of the Union Pacific Railroad in Nebraska, and making most prominent of all that soldiers could homestead 160 acres of these lands within the railroad limits.

Colonel Thorp and H. A. Lee had visited Buffalo County and stated that from personal observation it was a most desirable country in which to establish homes on lands to be had without money and without price.

A membership fee of \$2.00 was required of those joining the colony, but the membership was not confined to those who had been soldiers.

To those who joined a certificate was issued, signed John Thorp, secretary, but as a matter of fact there was never any such organization as the "Soldier's Free Homestead Colony" other than as a financial venture on the part of Colonel Thorp and even after the arrival of the colony at Gibbon, no steps were taken to perfect an organization, and no list of members was then made and only since from memory, from searching investigation and inquiry forty-four years after the arrival of the colony. At least two classes or kinds of certificates of membership in the colony were issued, one signed "John Thorp, Secretary," the other signed "John Thorp, Agent." On one certificate the title reads, "Soldier's Free Homestead Colony" and on the other "Soldier's Homestead Colony." F. F. Blanchard preserved his certificate of membership, has it framed and it hangs on the wall of his home as a souvenir. Herewith is a copy kindly furnished by Mr. Blanchard.

S. F. H. C. Certificate of Membership

This is to certify that F. F. Blanchard is an accepted member of the Soldier's Free Homestead Colony, and is entitled to all the privileges accorded to members of the association.

West Farmington, Ohio, March 15, 1871.

John Thorp, Secretary.

The following is a copy of a certificate of membership issued to H. A. Lee:

Certificate of Membership Soldier's Homestead Colony

This certifies that H. A. Lee is an accepted member of the Soldier's Homestead Colony and is entitled to all the privileges of that association.

West Farmington, Ohio, June 18, 1872.

John Thorp, Agent.

Colonel Thorp had arranged for reduced rates to colonists, but this applied to passenger rates only as all freight paid full rates as well as excess baggage, which was all weighed and the excess collected in advance. The reduced rates to members of the colony were extended to July, 1872, and as recalled amounted to a saving of about \$15 to each from states as far east as New York and a less sum from points farther west. In the establishment of the colony, it is understood, Colonel Thorp's profit consisted in purchasing desirable railroad lands near the proposed Village of Gibbon, and later selling these lands at a profitable advance in price. Colonel Thorp, with relatives and immediate friends also secured the lands covering the townsite of the Village of Gibbon.

By purchasing Union Pacific land grant bonds, at the then market price, 60 cents on the dollar, and paying for railroad lands with these bonds at their face value, Colonel Thorp and others with means, were enabled to buy railroad lands at about \$1.80 per acre, and from such investment they realized, even in a few years, a considerable profit. The maximum price of the railroad lands—first choice—were priced at \$3 per acre on ten years' time, interest at 6 per cent.

ITINERARY OF THE COLONY

The itinerary of the colony provided, that on the journey to Nebraska, members east of Buffalo, N. Y., should meet at Buffalo on Tuesday, April 4, 1871, in time to take the morning train on the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad for Chicago.

The writer recalls the good-bye given his uncle, James Hanford, a "Forty-miner" to California. Uncle James was just of age, raised on a farm in Delaware County, N. Y., and his relatives and neighbors never expected to again see him on the morning when they said their good-bye, as he was leaving in search of gold in far away California.

Like unto this was the good-bye many of the colonists received on the morning of April 4th, 1871, as they started on their journey to a land of which little was known, except that it seemed far away, and had been the home of cruel, uncivilized Indians for untold ages.

The Buffalo contingent of the members of the colony, arrived in Chicago about noon, Wednesday, and found Colonel Thorp with members from Ohio and other points in waiting. Special cars (ordinary passenger cars) were provided for the colonists over the Rock Island Railway, and we left soon after noon on Wednesday. It was a company of strangers, practically all the eastern and middle states being represented.

Some became acquainted, but for the majority it was a sight-seeing trip, the West being to them a new and wonderful country, its broad prairies, with-

out timber, stumps or stone in the cultivated fields, a constant source of surprise and remark.

It was a temperate class of men, only one of the number, as recalled, became intoxicated during the trip, and that during the stop at Omaha.

A few brought their families, and fewer still their household belongings, but a large majority were men, whose families came at a later date.

It is recalled, one member read his Bible during the entire trip, seeming not interested in the new and wonderful country through which we were passing. We arrived at the Mississippi River in time to see the width of that mighty stream, crossed the State of Iowa in the night, arriving at Council Bluffs in the forenoon of Thursday.

Everything was a new and novel experience, none more so than to arrive at the terminus of a great railroad, and find no station, no village or city, just stop at the end of the track on the bank of a muddy stream and unload passengers, baggage, mail and express on the wide, open prairie. On the bank of the Missouri River, near where our train stopped, was a flat boat, or great scow, used to transfer passengers, baggage and freight. This transfer boat had no wharf at which to tie up, where passengers might gain easy access to it, but the boat was snubbed against the bank, here today, elsewhere tomorrow, as the constantly shifting channel of the river permitted and made necessary.

From the floor of this boat a gang plank, cleated, reached the bank of the river some three feet above the floor of the boat. Passengers with their hand baggage occupied the center of the boat. First came four great, sleek mules drawing a load of mail sacks, the load as long, wide and high as a load of hay and which, it did seem, must upset as the load came with a rush down the steep gang plank onto the boat. The loaded team was driven along the outer side of the boat, and making a complete circuit stood ready to drive off at the same end as it was driven on.

Following came other teams with great loads of baggage, until the boat was loaded to its utmost capacity. Then we steamed across the "Big Muddy," snubbed against the opposite bank (no wharf provided) and all scrambled up the gang plank and at last were on Nebraska soil.

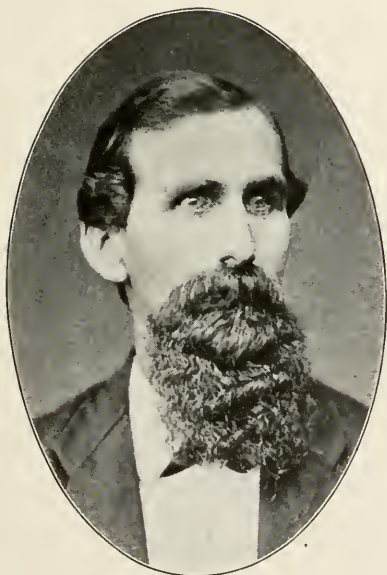
NEBRASKA LAND

On the banks of the Missouri River stood the station of the Union Pacific Railroad, a cheap frame building, scant two stories in height: in the upper story, reached by uncovered stairs from the outside, were the telegraph and other offices for the convenience of the railroad employes; below was a waiting room which might possibly seat twenty persons, a ticket office, and adjoining the station a long, plank platform for the convenience of passengers in entering or leaving the passenger cars. Adjoining the station was also a large baggage room where all baggage was unloaded, handled and weighed, and for passengers going farther than Omaha, re-checked, it being not possible to check baggage from eastern points farther than Omaha. No one who witnessed the re-checking of baggage at the Union Pacific Station at that date will ever forget the scene. Everything about the procedure was new to all passengers, for there was no



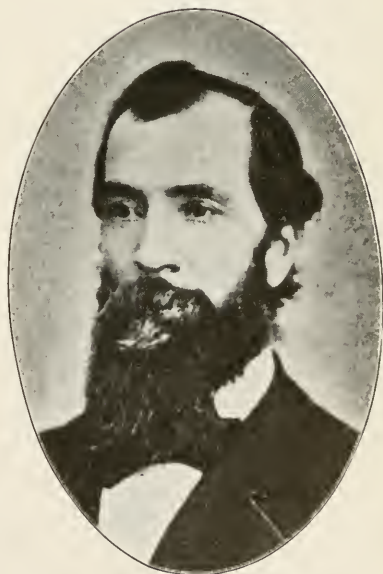
ERNEST GOEHRING

A member of the Saxon Colony
which made settlement in Schneider
Township, Buffalo County, in 1873.



COLONEL JOHN THORP

Founder of Soldiers' Free Homestead
Colony



JAMES OGILVIE

First station agent at Gibbon, 1871

experienced traveler who had made the trip before and therefore knew, in advance, just what to do.

The check caller had a voice like unto a steam calliope and, standing just outside the railing were the baggage owners, holding in hand their baggage checks and tickets. At the beginning it all seemed like an unintelligible jargon, but we soon learned that when the caller shouted at the top of his voice, "Buffalo, L. S. & M. S. 19-046," that he meant the baggage had been checked at Buffalo over the L. S. & M. S. Railroad and the number of the check was 19,046.

One colonist had delivered to him a large trunk, not locked, and when he insisted it was not his, the baggage man asked what he had in his trunk and then opened the one at hand and found woman's wearing apparel instead of a tent, carpenter tools, cooking utensils, a log chain, some bedding, and little clothing which the colonist claimed was in a red chest and which was found later.

The "Overland passenger, No. 1" stood at the station, steamed up when we arrived and as soon as mail and baggage could be transferred (the baggage re-checked), this only passenger train proceeded on its journey. There was no dining car on this train, and as recalled no sleeping cars. In regard to whether sleeping cars were run on the "Overland passenger" at that date, the writer has made an effort to definitely ascertain, but no one connected with the Union Pacific Railroad at this date, 1915, has knowledge. The schedule time of this train was fifteen miles an hour.

OMAHA IN 1871

The colonists began to understand that they were bound for a country or locality where there could be found no hotels or boarding houses, nor even convenient store where supplies might be found, and most of the members laid in a limited supply of crackers, bread and like food.

Omaha in those days was an uninviting, dreary looking village or city. The buildings were cheap frame structures, devoid of paint, few sidewalks, and as the business part was some distance from the railroad station, it seemed the city was much smaller than it really was.

There was no end of saloons and gambling dens, in fact at that date and for some years later, there was an organization of gamblers known as "three card monte" men, with headquarters in Omaha, who regularly traveled on the "Overland" passenger train—in and out of Omaha—and robbed passengers who were foolish enough to play with them. It was some years before public opinion became strong enough to enact legislation to compel the railroad management to drive these gamblers from their trains.

At that date and for many years later no second class passengers were carried on the "Overland" passenger, but instead on an emigrant train, mixed passenger and freight, which ran through to the Pacific Coast.

The schedule time of this train was ten miles.

CHAPTER XIX

SOLDIER'S FREE HOMESTEAD COLONY, CONTINUED—TO THE LAND OF PROMISE—THE COLONISTS ARRIVE AT GIBBON—FIXING UP QUARTERS—VIEWING THE LAND—HOLD RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

TO THE LAND OF PROMISE

The colonists left Omaha on the emigrant train at 6 P. M. on Thursday, and at once the statement was circulated that we were being taken on a night train because, if we saw the country in the day time we would desert before reaching the destination. Although in the night when we reached Fremont the train was boarded by German women with sandwiches, eggs and coffee and also land agents who assured us that nothing could be raised in Buffalo County, no one lived there, and that there were plenty of homesteads near Fremont. When we reached Lone Tree (now Central City), land agents came on board and accompanied us to Grand Island, making the same statements in regard to the country as those made by agents at Fremont, only, the latter fixed the limit in the state, where one could live by farming, at Grand Island.

We reached Grand Island late in the forenoon, having breakfast and dinner at one meal, the Union Pacific having a large dining hall at this point for many years, until dining car service was established.

Grand Island was quite a trading point in those days, and had some fairly good grocery stores and some firms which carried small stocks of drugs, hardware and lumber. Grand Island was also the location of the United States land office.

THE COLONISTS ARRIVE AT GIBBON

On Friday, April 7, 1871, at 2 P. M., the colonists arrived at Gibbon switch and the cars we came in—some passenger cars, some box cars—were placed on the siding and left for our use. It was a warm, spring-like day, sun shining brightly and a gentle breeze blowing. An ideal day, and an ideal time of the day to reach our destination.

On Sunday, April 2d, a prairie fire had swept over the entire country leaving it black, bleak, desolate and uninviting. No rain or snow had fallen since the previous August, and not a green tree, shrub or sprig of grass was to be seen. As the bleak and black prairie lay glistening in the sunshine, it seemed at a distance that we were surrounded by water (a water mirage it is called and very common in the early days of the colony), and to the writer it seemed as



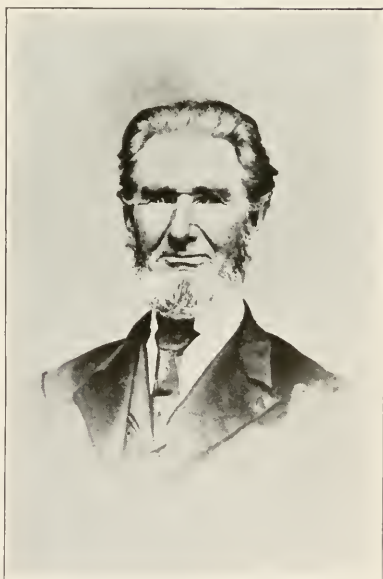
REV. J. N. ALLEN AND DAUGHTER MERTIE

Mr. Allen was a soldier of the Civil war and pioneer settler and missionary in Buffalo County in 1871. He conducted the first religious service after the arrival of the colony at Gibbon, on the open prairie, Sunday, April 9, 1871.



REV. J. MARSH

A pioneer Methodist missionary and father of the Methodist Church at Gibbon.



REV. WILLIAM MORSE

though he was again upon the ocean, out of sight of land. Along Wood River were fringes of bushes. Everything which would make a railroad tie or a stick of wood had been cut and used in the building of the railroad, built through the county in 1866. No trees were on the Platte River or its islands, only here and there bunches of willow brush. At the end of the switch was nearly a hundred cords of wood, cottonwood, for use on the railroad, as some of the engines at that date were wood burners. There was but one house in sight, that the railroad section house, standing where the present one does in 1915, in fact the same house, the only changes in forty-four years being a new roof, chimney, floor, sidewalls and a coat of paint of another color.

Roger Hayes was section foreman and had a corral and a considerable number of cattle. That afternoon the section men placed a box car on a spur on the north side of the main line and an agent of the company, Charles Smith, who had come from Omaha with us, set up his telegraph instrument and opened the station for business. S. C. Ayer, a colonist, at once transferred his belongings to the box car station, making it his temporary home. William Nutter (a "squatter," or as we termed, an "old settler") was planting potatoes on old land near the siding and was at once surrounded by colonists and deluged with questions about the country and what could be raised. He said no rain had fallen since the previous August, and while the prairie was very dry, the old land, which he was plowing and planting, was moist and plowed easily. He had raised the previous year, and was then planting, as fine, large potatoes as one would care to see, and in this sign or sight the colonists found great encouragement. On the previous day a box car, with horses, wagon and other emigrant movables, including a considerable supply of lumber, all belonging to Mr. and Mrs. George Gilmore—Mrs. Gilmore being a sister of Colonel Thorp—and in charge of F. S. and Willmot P. Trew, had arrived, and a like car of emigrant movables, including a team of horses, belonging to D. P. Ashburn, J. S. Chamberlain accompanying Mr. Ashburn. A small shanty, answering for both kitchen and a place to eat, was hastily constructed, so that Gibbon had a hotel or boarding house without delay.

One newly married couple, who were entirely without means, and had no household goods whatever, found employment, for their board, at the boarding place, sleeping on the floor of a car, covered with bedding furnished them. One colonist had shipped his household goods by express instead of freight and the charges amounted to \$75. Not having the money to pay the charges, he hired out by the month to earn the necessary amount.

FIXING UP QUARTERS

Some found box cars on the siding and managed to fix up quite comfortable quarters; for a time some were in passenger cars and slept on the floor between seats or in the aisle. On Saturday morning one colonist took the passenger train for "back East," the only one who did not stay and file a homestead claim.

VIEWING THE LAND

On Saturday the colonists ranged the prairies from the Platte to the bluffs and beyond; some to the east where resided the few early settlers; some to Fort

Kearney, some to Kearney station (now Buda), where there was a station for the convenience of Fort Kearney, and at which place there were a few houses, belonging to hangers-on around the fort, among the number one or two where liquor was sold. Thomas K. Wood was living on the Boyd ranch, about a mile west of the switch; Mr. Wood had a family of several children and also had a herd of native cattle owned jointly with J. E. Boyd, the owner of the ranch. Sam Boyd was making his home with Mr. Wood and had charge of 770 head of Texan steers, ranging between Wood River and the bluffs and corralled at night in a bend of Wood River on the Boyd ranch.

On gathering around the camp fire that evening, a young man, Kingman Fisher, related a terrible experience with thirst. He had gone into the bluffs, some six miles north, and finding no water had nearly perished, being so far gone, as he said, as to "spit cotton." When an old soldier remarked that it took more than a few hours, traveling light, for a man to become so famished for want of water as to "spit cotton," Fisher concluded his degree of thirst was largely imaginary.

On Sunday came James Ogilvie, appointed station agent at Gibbon.

Mr. Ogilvie was a Scotchman, a strong friend of education, a Christian gentleman in all that the term implies, and in the educational, social and religious activities in the community was one of the most useful and helpful of men. He served as station agent until his death in February, 1881.

HOLD RELIGIOUS SERVICE

Sunday was a bright, sunny day. After breakfast it was planned to hold a religious service at 10 o'clock. Out on the open prairie, with the blue vault of heaven above and the warm, bright sunshine of an April day shining over all, seats were improvised from the lumber pile and a sermon preached by Rev. Josiah N. Allen, a member of the colony.

C. Putnam also spoke, calling attention to the fact that we had come to make homes in this new land and that it was equally important that we establish characters for honesty, integrity and sobriety. Practically every member of the colony attended this service. After dinner most of the colonists went sight seeing—land viewing, some as far east as where lived William Nutter, an old settler, he having come with his family two years before.

CHAPTER XX

SOLDIERS' FREE HOMESTEAD COLONY, CONTINUED—AN APRIL BLIZZARD—BOX CARS TO LIVE IN—THE WOOD RIVER VALLEY OF THE PLATTE—THE FIRST MEETING HELD BY THE COLONISTS—DRAWING LOTS FOR CLAIMS—LOCATING THE CLAIMS—FILING ON HOMESTEADS—SIXTY-ONE CLAIMS FILED UPON APRIL 17 AND 18, 1871—NAMES OF THOSE TAKING CLAIMS.

AN APRIL BLIZZARD

About 2 P. M. Sunday it began to "spit" snow, the wind shifting into the north. By nightfall a furious storm of wind and snow was raging. When Monday morning came the snow was piled as high as the tops of the cars in which the colonists were staying. In the two emigrant cars there were stoves which the emigrants had brought with them.

The only other stoves were small affairs in each end of the passenger cars. It is recalled that in one of the passenger cars were four women and four children besides several men. In each end of this car were small stoves fed by cottonwood. The force of the wind drove the snow through the ventilators and window and door frames so that the seats, bedding and floor were wet. The women and children huddled about the stoves and the men took turns bringing wood from the pile of cordwood some forty rods distant and cutting in lengths to fit the playhouse stoves. About noon three men, headed by I. D. LaBarre, came into the car and began taking down the stovepipe to one of the stoves with the evident intention of removing the stove. They were landed outside, and then concluded to explain that in a box car was Dr. I. P. George and wife with no stove in the car. The situation is best explained by stating that on May 15th, following, occurred the first birth among the colonists, Gibbon Thorp George, son of Dr. and Mrs. I. P. George. Understanding the situation, the occupants of the car helped to remove the stove to Dr. George's car. With the going down of the sun, on Monday, the storm ceased. Tuesday was bright and sunny. Investigation showed no snow on the prairie, but all sloughs and Wood River packed full and so hard as to be crossed readily on the snow. On Monday, during the storm, word was telegraphed from railroad headquarters at Omaha to take all women and children to the section house, but only one or two women availed themselves of the offer, all others cheerfully accepting conditions in the cars and making the best of them.

Such a storm as occurred on April 9, 1871, would not at this date be considered at all serious or worthy of mention. With groves of trees, fields of corn stalks, the prairie covered with dead grass, with comfortable houses, with

barns, sheds, fences and the like to break the force of the wind and cause the snow to cover all the ground and not be drifted into sloughs and other depressions so as to fill level with the surrounding prairie; but on the bare prairie, devoid of everything, burned bare of all vegetation just a week previous, the wind swept along with nothing to obstruct its force and the drifting snow filled every slough and Wood River level with the prairie.

The storm itself had no discouraging effects on the colonists, but there were many other factors which did tend to discourage.

Ranchmen like the Boyds and Woods, who kept large herds of cattle, did not want homesteaders, because it would destroy the range for their herds. The early settlers, as they were called, those living on squatter claims before the arrival of the colonists, discouraged the colonists. Not one of these early settlers had filed on claims; most of them had small herds of cattle with an unlimited range for them, and also their source of revenue or market for the corn and vegetables which they raised had been the emigrants which traveled the trail. The coming of so considerable a number of homesteaders as comprised the colony, meant the taking of all government lands in nearby Wood River Valley and a complete change in local conditions. A few of these early settlers had been here living for quite ten years, yet their habitations were mere huts; some of logs, covered with a dirt roof, others living in a habitation part dugout (a hole in the ground), part sod with a dirt roof. Not a thing about such habitations was inviting, especially to members of the colony who had just come from long settled localities in the eastern states, where people took pride and pleasure in their immediate surroundings, houses were comfortable, buildings painted, fields fenced and all the surroundings showed thrift and comfort.

One young wife, with two small children, had plead with tears in her eyes to be permitted to accompany her husband on the morning of April 4th, and when it was explained that there would be no place for her or the children until a house could be built, replied, "I'll be perfectly happy to put up our tent in the corner of a fence until a house can be built." But here was a country with no fences, no nothing but the bare prairie, and while these few early settlers had caves filled with potatoes and other choice vegetables, and also had small cribs of corn, some of the colonists were inclined to reason that if in ten or more years these early settlers had not been able to raise enough to build frame houses, and have tables, chairs and like furniture, as well as horses and wagons and farming utensils like farmers in eastern states, it was not much use in trying to make a home out here where it hardly ever rained and settlers did not seem to prosper and get ahead. It is recalled that a story became current that one of these settlers, living in a dugout, was worth \$10,000, and at once colonists began to speculate what they would do if they were worth such a sum, and it is quite sure their speculations or dreams did not contemplate living in a dugout, though such was in reality the habitation of many of them for some years. The statement that one of the early settlers was worth \$10,000 is greatly exaggerated; of these early settlers living in the immediate vicinity of Gibbon Switch, the record of the valuation of their property for purposes of taxation was as follows: James E. Boyd, \$6,830. This represented the Boyd ranch with its thousand and

more head of cattle. The valuation of the other settlers ran as follows: \$940, \$425, \$335, \$540.

Immediately after the storm the railroad company sent box cars for members of the colony to live in, and such cars remained as long as occupied; in fact some members of the colony lived in such cars during the winter of 1871-2. These cars did not make a very comfortable home, as often in the nighttime a passing freight train would take the siding, come bumping into the box car, upset the stove, and cause a fall of crockery and cooking utensils. The railroad company at once removed the pile of cordwood beside the siding, but as there were plenty of old ties there was no lack of fuel.

THE WOOD RIVER VALLEY OF THE PLATTE

The writer has often wished that some one, gifted, might have written, for the benefit of future generations, a fitting description of Wood River and the Wood River Valley of the Platte before the hand of the white man came to change it. In the fall of 1871, C. Putnam, a member of the colony, wrote as follows of Wood River:

"It is a vast serpentine vineyard, literally festooned with wild grapes."

To this delightful description might be added that in the bends of this winding river were orchards of wild plums, in their season loaded with fruit, the red and yellow of the ripening fruit with the green bordering of trees making a picture of surpassing beauty and loveliness, while the fruit itself was most delicious to the taste.

Did one wish to cross this river there were, at convenient distances, bridges built by those ingenious and cunning workmen, the beaver.

Standing on either bank of this meandering stream, which with its fringe of trees lay like a thread of dark green in the midst of the far reaching valley, and looking across the smooth prairie as far as the eye could reach, could be seen herds of innumerable buffalo feeding and fattening on the nutritious grasses. Always there could be seen flocks of timid antelope, their white "flags" discernable miles distant.

Occasionally would pass herds of stately elk and bounding over the prairie were smaller herds of black tail deer, while the accompanying whir of prairie chicken and quail seemed but the echo of fast fleeing footsteps.

THE WOOD RIVER VALLEY OF THE PLATTE

Before the coming of the white man, a land of fatness, a scene of loveliness passing description. To the white man and his descendants a home of plenty, a dwelling place of contentment, peace and happiness.

A third of a century after the coming of the colony, Chancellor Samuel Avery of the state university, having visited this valley, in a public address at Omaha, spoke of it as follows:

"A few years ago I stood on the bluffs overlooking this valley, near the Village of Gibbon. Below me as far as the eye could reach were fields of wheat, corn and alfalfa. I have made a similar survey of the Rhine Valley from the

mountains of the Odenwald. I have seen the best of the Columbia and the Willamette from the bluffs of their borders, but I have never seen an agricultural paradise to compare with the valley of the Platte as I saw it on that July day."

THE FIRST MEETING HELD BY THE COLONISTS

On Tuesday, April 11th, there was held the first meeting of the colonists. This meeting was held on the open prairie, on the south side of the railroad track and to the south of the present section house. Who presided as chairman or served as secretary can not be recalled. The first question, whether the colonists would remain, was decided in the affirmative, as recalled, unanimously. As each member wished to locate a claim as near as possible to the proposed Village of Gibbon, to be the future county seat of Buffalo County, it was voted that choice for such location should be determined by lot. As some members desired to secure claims adjoining each other, it was also decided that two or more might unite in drawing together.

There were sixty-two who took part in the drawing, divided into twenty-eight lots. In a hat were placed slips of paper containing numbers ranging from one to twenty-eight. The one who drew was to mark on a United States land office map his choice for a claim, and no member of the colony could take that claim until the party had decided he did not want it. This rule held good with all members of the colony with a very few exceptions. Some members did not take part in the drawing, and it developed later that (doubtless having inside information) they had secured claims in the immediate vicinity of Gibbon Switch, which claims the government maps, as furnished, did not disclose were open to home-stead entry.

DRAWING THE LOTS

A few only of the lot numbers, as drawn, can be recalled, or anything definite learned in relation thereto.

William Brady drew lot No. 1 and chose the northwest quarter of section twenty-four (24) adjoining the proposed town site of Gibbon. Choice No. 2 was drawn by John W. Wiggins, Charles E. Brayton and Charles Monks, who took the remaining quarter sections of section twenty-four (24). Choice No. 3 fell to S. C. Ayer, F. F. Blanchard, F. S. Trew and Dr. I. P. George, who located claims on section eighteen (18) immediately adjoining the proposed town site on the east. Choice No. 22 fell to John M. Bayley, who located on section twenty-two (22) in town nine, range thirteen (13). Choice No. 26 was drawn by S. C. Bassett, B. C. Bassett, Robert Waters and Henry Fairchild, who located claims on section six (6), town nine (9), range thirteen (13).

Choice No. 28 was drawn by George H. Silvernail, John Silvernail, Daniel R. Davis and T. J. Hubbard, who located on section ten (10), town nine (9), range fourteen (14).

LOCATING THE CLAIMS

Having made a choice of a claim, on a map, the colonists spent the next few days in locating the claim, looking it over and deciding if they would file upon

it. Some could not find the corners of their claims and were assisted by J. N. Paul, a surveyor, who had been sent by the railroad company for that purpose. The J. N. Paul referred to is now Judge J. N. Paul of St. Paul, Neb. Mr. Paul had helped to survey government lands in the state, and while with the colony began a survey of the proposed town site of Gibbon, which later was completed by C. Putnam. From the 11th to the 15th of April was thus spent in locating and viewing claims as selected.

FILING ON THE HOMESTEAD CLAIMS

The United States land office was located at Grand Island, thirty miles distant. The railroad fare for the round trip was \$4.20.

Arrangements were made with County Judge Patrick Walsh to open an office in a box car and before Judge Walsh the entries were made.

Judge Walsh was paid a fee of one dollar (\$1) for each entry, and the government fee was fourteen dollars (\$14) for a quarter section, and was entitled "surveying fees." Very little friction, as between members, developed in filing on the claims, and it appeared then and later that each felt, all things considered, that he had secured a most desirable location.

On the 17th and 18th days of April, the following named colonists filed upon homestead claims, sixty-one in all:

NAMES OF THOSE TAKING HOMESTEAD CLAIMS

S. C. Ayer	K. Fisher	O. J. Oviatt
J. N. Allen	H. C. Green	C. Putnam
B. Austin	W. W. Gibson	William Patterson
S. C. Bassett	A. F. Gibson	H. P. Rogers
B. C. Bassett	L. D. George	Isaac Starbuck
Jacob Booth	Dr. I. P. George	B. F. Sammons
I. D. La Barre	W. N. Gray	George H. Silvernail
William Brady	John Grabach	John N. Silvernail
C. E. Brayton	T. J. Hubbard	J. P. Smith
F. F. Blanchard	J. M. Irwin	John Stern
J. M. Bayley	W. H. Kenney	F. S. Trew
G. W. Barrett	W. J. Knight	M. D. Thomas
Ira Bunker	Coe Killgore	John Thorp
C. O. Childs	John Lucas	L. A. West
J. S. Chamberlain	Clara E. Lew	Robert Waters
William Craven	John Lloyd	R. F. L. Willard
D. R. Davis	C. A. Monks	A. Washburn
H. Fieldgrove	J. F. McKinley	J. W. Wiggins
D. Fox	W. F. McClure	Aaron Ward
Asa Fawcett	Samuel Mattice	
H. Fairchild	E. Northrup	

CHAPTER XXI

SOLDIERS' FREE HOMESTEAD COLONY, CONTINUED—OFFICIAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE COLONY—A HABITATION—A PLACE TO LIVE—RANGE OF PRICES—FIRST CROPS GROWN—CONDITIONS CONFRONTING COLONISTS—INSECT DEPREDACTIONS—LACK OF MOISTURE—LIVE STOCK CONDITIONS—GROWING SMALL GRAIN—WHEAT AND OATS—THE QUESTION OF FUEL.

OFFICIAL LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE COLONY

The following is an official list of the members of the Soldiers' Free Homestead Colony as adopted at the forty-fourth annual meeting of the Soldiers' Free Homestead Colony Association, April 7, 1915, held at Gibbon:

Allen, Josiah N.	Craven, William	Gibson, William W.
Allen, Homer J.	Darby, John H.	Gilmore, George
Armbus, Valentine	Davis, Daniel R.	Glanville, Mrs. Ann
Ashburn, D. P.	Davis, Perce T.	Goss, H.
Austin, Benjamin	Davenport, C. W.	Grabach, John
Ayer, Simon C.	Day, Usher A.	Gray, Marcellus
Ayer, Mrs. Lois N.	Drury, Delos P.	Green, Henry C.
Barrett, Abram	Drury, Peter K.	Haines, Robert
Bassett, Benjamin C.	Drury, William C.	Hancock, O. C.
Bassett, Samuel C.	Danner, John A.	Henninger, S. F.
Bayley, John M.	Fairchild, Henry	Hick, Robert H.
Blanchard, Frank F.	Fargo, Ezra M.	Hillficker, Henry
Blanchard, John	Fawcett, Asa	Hough, Lemuel S.
Boardman, Frank D.	Fawcett, Barclay	Howe, Frank
Booth, Jacob	Fieldgrove, Henry	Hubbard, Emory M.
Brady, William	Fisher, Kingman	Hubbard, J. J.
Brayton, Charles E.	Fisher, Thomas J.	Henning, John
Brown, George	Forrest, John W.	Irwin, John
Brown, Seneca	Forehand, Lloyd D.	Jackson, William N.
Bunker, Ira P.	Gagin, John	Johnson, David W.
Bushong, Isaac	Garfield, James	Judd, James E.
Buzzell, Oliver A.	George, Amos D.	Kenney, W. H.
Chamberlain, J. S.	George, Ira P.	Kelly, William H.
Childs, C. O.	George, L. D.	Kelsey, James E.
Clifton, Mrs. Mary C.	George, Rodney	Killgore, Coe
Crabbe, D. P.	George, Truman Q.	Knight, W. J.
Craig, Andrew	Gibson, Adelbert F.	Kenedy, A.

La Barre, I. D.	Pember, Mrs. E. A.	Steven, Walter J.
Lew, Clara E.	Plumb, Lorenzo	Stonebarger, Daniel
Lee, Harry A.	Putnam, Christopher	Thatcher, Timothy D.
Lloyd, John	Putnam, John J.	Thomas, M. D.
Lowell, Samuel B.	Roach, William	Thomas, George L.
Lucas, John	Rogers, Horace P.	Traut, Samuel R.
Lux, John K.	Rosseter, S.	Trew, Willmot P.
McClure, William F.	Sammons, Benjamin F.	Ward, Aaron
McCraney, Mrs. E. P.	Seeley, Simon V.	Washburn, Albert A.
McKinley, Jeremiah F.	Short, Nelson W.	Washburn, Oscar B.
Mattice, Samuel	Silvernail, Calvin T.	Waters, Robert
Meisner, George	Silvernail, George H.	West, Levi N.
Mercer, Vernon T.	Silvernail, John N.	White, Alva G. H.
Mills, James H.	Smith, George N.	Whittier, James J.
Mills, Nahum	Smith, John P.	Wiggins, John W.
Monks, Charles	Smith, Sereno	Wilkie, James
Northrup, Emory	Sprague, William H.	Willard, Richard E. L.
Ogilvie, James	Standley, J. C.	Worthington, L.
Oviatt, A. Judson	Starbuck, Isaac	Zimmerman, Adam W.
Patterson, William	Stern, John	

HONORARY MEMBERS

Those residing in the county and in the vicinity of Gibbon Switch on the arrival of the colony were, by action of the Soldiers' Free Homestead Colony Association, made honorary members of the association and of the colony.

Dugdale, Henry	Oliver, James	Thompson, Oliver E.
Meyer, August	Owens, Joseph	Walsh, Patrick
Nutter, William	Slattery, Martin	Wood, Thomas K.
Oliver, Mrs. Sarah	Stearley, George	
Oliver, Edward	Reddy, John	

A HABITATION—A PLACE TO LIVE

The homesteads filed upon, the most important matter was a habitation, a place in which to live. The colonists were all practically persons of very limited means, so much so that quite often two families lived in one house, the house located on the line between the claims.

More often two or more joined in owning one team, wagon and plow.

Several had so little means, nothing but their claims, that they worked for others as occasion offered. Some lived in dugouts on their claims, others built sod houses, and a quite common frame house was 12x16 feet in size, 8 feet in height, boarded up, one thickness of boards, battened, and with a shingle roof, the furniture consisting of a stove, a bed, and three chairs. So exact were the estimates of material for one of these houses that when completed the pieces of lumber left would not make a wheelbarrow load.

RANGE OF PRICES

Oxen were largely used for teams; they cost less to purchase, required no expense for harness, other than a yoke, and required no grain ration, living and working on grass in the growing season and on hay and forage in winter. The sudden and unusual demand inflated prices, oxen selling for from \$150 to \$250 per yoke. Cows sold for from \$50 to \$60. A four weeks old pig (razor back breed) cost \$5 and hens 50 cents each. A quite common price paid for breaking prairie was \$5 per acre. Potatoes, \$1 per bushel. Corn meal, \$2 per 100 pounds. Pine lumber, from \$30 to \$40 per 1,000. If one complained that the prices asked seemed too high, the invariable excuse was "excessive transportation rates on the railroad."

FIRST CROPS GROWN

On the newly broken prairie the crops grown the first year or season were corn, planted with a spade, pumpkins, squash and melons.

No finer squash, pumpkins and melons were ever grown in the county than were grown on prairie sod in the summer of 1871.

Some made gardens on the sod and learned that onions from "black" seed did remarkably well, and later these proved a valuable crop.

On and in the vicinity of the Boyd ranch was a hundred or more acres of "old" land—land that had been previously tilled—and some of the colonists rented from five to ten acres of this land, planting to corn and potatoes. The corn yielded about forty bushels per acre and the potatoes about one hundred and fifty bushels. Practically no weeds grew on this land and most of the corn and potatoes there planted were not tilled after planting, the fact being there were no implements to be had for such tilling. On the newly plowed sod no weeds grew except tumble weeds, which were easily destroyed.

CONDITIONS CONFRONTING THE COLONISTS

Possibly some mention of conditions which confronted these colonists may be of historic interest. First, with a very few exceptions, they were persons of limited means. Second, quite one-half of the number were without practical experience in farming, even in the locality from which they came. Third, this was a new country—quite generally believed not adapted to the growing of crops—a virgin soil, destitute of timber for either fuel or building purposes, destitute of coal, or stone, in a state of nature, other than a railroad, and the base for supplies of all kinds nearly two hundred miles distant.

There were no precedents which could be followed or referred to; no old and experienced farmers to whom the "tenderfoots" could go for counsel and advice. From the construction of some kind of a habitation in which to live to the securing of teams and farming utensils for tilling the soil, seed to be planted, everything to the minutest detail had to be purchased, and at what then seemed and which has since proven to be, extravagant prices. These conditions soon exhausted the resources of the homesteader, even though he expended his



SOD HOUSE ON WASH MILBOURN'S HOMESTEAD

Built more than thirty years ago

means with utmost economy. If compelled to run in debt he found later that to pay from \$150 to \$200 for a yoke of oxen, \$50 for a cow, \$5 for a four-weeks-old pig, \$32 for a breaking plow, and like prices for other needed articles, and then to make payment in corn and potatoes at 10 and 15 cents per bushel required not only hard, hard work, but years of privation and economy to get out of debt, which, with exceeding regret, it is to be recorded, many of the poor homesteaders were never able to do.

There were other conditions which took years of time and long and bitter experience to realize and understand. One of the most important of these to be understood is the relation of the growing season for many crops as affected by altitude or elevation above sea level.

No member of this colony had ever given a thought to the fact that along a parallel of latitude, increase in elevation meant a shortening of the growing season for many crops, especially the corn crop, on which main dependence was placed in all farming operations.

The corn plant requires and can make good use of a growing season of quite 140 days, which condition prevails in the Mississippi and Missouri valleys to the east and which prevailed in the lower levels from which most of the colonists came, but the greater elevation in Buffalo County was such that the growing season for corn was from thirty to forty days less than the colonists had been accustomed to.

It was the most natural thing in the world for colonists to send to their former home, "back east," for seeds of various kinds to plant, and yet when these seeds were planted in this new country, this virgin soil, the conditions confronting the plants from these seeds, were as new and strange as were the conditions of all kinds confronting the members of the colony. It is true that plants adapt themselves to changes in soil, climate, length of growing season and other surroundings and conditions which affect their growth and full development, but plants require time and opportunity to so adapt themselves the same as do people.

INSECT DEPREDACTIONS

Another occasion of failure or at least partial failure of many crops in those early years, was that many kinds of insect life, such as grasshoppers, crickets, etc., feed during the growing season on the leaves and stems of plants, the prairie being alive with such insects at that season. The cultivated plants of the homesteader, such as corn, potatoes, vines of all kinds, and of small grain—wheat, oats—are much more tender and succulent as a food than the native plants and grasses of the prairie, and the result was that these insects flocked to the small crops of the homesteader, either completely destroying, or at least weakening them, resulting in a partial if not entire failure to make a crop. It is recalled that when the grasshopper raids came, that small fields of crops were entirely destroyed, while a large field of corn—a half section or a section in a body—was often only injured by them for a comparatively short distance on the outer edges, the center portion of the field being uninjured.

LACK OF MOISTURE

That this was a land deficient in moisture for the successful growing of crops was understood by the homesteaders, but how best to take advantage of this lack, how to conserve moisture as now understood, had not, in the minds of any one, even a beginning. Briefly stated, the conditions as regards moisture were as follows: For ages the prairies of Nebraska had been annually burned. As our rainfall comes in sudden showers, the result was that a sudden shower of two or even three inches of rain did not wet the prairie to a depth of more than a few inches, the prairie being burned clean of any dead leaves or grass which might hold the rainfall until it could soak into the earth. Under such conditions the rain ran off the prairie as from the roof of a house, into the sloughs, ravines, rivers and thus out of the country, doing vegetation little or no good. Also the prairie being hard and undisturbed, the moisture which penetrated the soil was soon drawn from the soil by the action of sun and winds. It is believed that in the early settlement of the county, 50 per cent of the rain that fell on the prairies ran directly into the ravines and rivers and out of the county, this being especially true of unbroken prairie, while at the present time probably 90 per cent of our rainfall is absorbed in the soil and retained for growing crops. Also, because of more moisture retained in the soil, the atmosphere is much more humid than in the earlier periods of colony history.

LIVE STOCK CONDITIONS

Another condition, not generally understood, occasioned heavy loss of live stock to many homesteaders. Previous to the coming of the colonists it had been widely advertised that cattle would live and keep in good condition during the entire year, living wholly upon the wild grasses. Doubtless this was practically true with half-wild cattle, used to ranging for a living, and where they could range at will seeking shelter in the brush along the streams in time of storms and extreme cold. There were no more nutritious grasses for live stock anywhere to be found than the native grasses of Nebraska. When the homesteader came there was no longer an unlimited range; also native or domesticated cattle, accustomed to being fed and cared for, would not range the prairie and rustle for a living in the winter months, and the result was that many an early homesteader, many a colonist, who perchance borrowed the money with which to invest in cattle to roam the prairie, had only the hides when the grass was green in the succeeding spring.

It is recalled that all of a herd of some five hundred head of cattle being wintered on the Platte River south of Gibbon in the winter of 1871-2, perished, and the same fate met a herd of about one thousand, five hundred being kept the same winter on the South Loup River in the immediate vicinity of the present Village of Ravenna.

GROWING SMALL GRAIN—WHEAT AND OATS

In the spring of 1872 a few acres of spring wheat and oats were sown. Harrows were used to cover the grain; these harrows were home-made, of oak

secured at the Loup River; they were light, "A"-shaped, and of little real service. The wheat and oats were harvested with grain cradles, threshed with flails, on the ground, and cleaned by throwing the grain against the wind. While the yield was fairly good the crops were badly infected with smut—in fact, in the earlier attempts to grow small grain the crops were at times not worth harvesting on account of smut.

Machinery for the rapid harvesting of grain had not then come into use, the better kinds not even as yet invented. The first of these machines was a dropper attachment to a mowing machine (the expense of the mower and attachment \$175). With this machine five men were required to bind and remove the grain as fast as cut. This machine, high geared as a mower, wore out very rapidly. The first Marsh harvester was purchased and operated by William Nutter, using oxen. On this machine the grain was delivered on a platform, on which two men rode and bound the grain. While much more rapid in harvesting, it was very hard work and very wasteful. The first self binders, using wire and costing \$315, were not satisfactory to use and the wire, broken in threshing, caused loss of stock where cattle ate of the straw and chaff.

To pay the above named prices for harvesting machinery, newly invented and not in very satisfactory working order, and to make payment in wheat at about fifty cents per bushel and corn at about fifteen cents, was not a rapid way of accumulating wealth or of paying debts.

THE QUESTION OF FUEL

In the early days of the colony the question of fuel was not so pressing as a few years later. In the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad about two thousand, five hundred ties were used to the mile. It appears that of these ties, to each rail was used four of hardwood (oak or black walnut), the others cottonwood. These cottonwood ties were beginning to be removed before the arrival of the colony and were used for fuel purposes, the only other fuel available being willow brush and dead cottonwood trees on the islands of the Platte.

The Union Pacific Railroad at that date was poorly supplied with rolling stock to use in hauling coal, also the coal mines were undeveloped, and at times in the early winters it was impossible to buy, beg or steal coal from the railroad—the only source of supply—and on one such occasion the railroad authorities advised that organized parties be sent to the Loup River (twenty miles distant) for fuel, stating that any timber found on railroad land could be freely used for such purpose. Many homesteaders, having ox teams, hauled wood from the Loup River, at times making the trip in the dead of winter.

Some families endeavored to keep warm by burning corn stalks, cut stove lengths. Later years when corn was more plenty, the corn itself was burned for fuel. Some ranged the prairie in search of "buffalo chips," the dried droppings of cattle, and used these "chips" for fuel. It made an intensely hot fire but was far from clean and pleasant to use. Many families living near the Platte bottoms used the coarse grass for fuel. It is recalled that J. N. Allen invented a machine which twisted the grass into a hard rope, which he cut in lengths and burned, as wood, in a stove. Ira P. Bunker constructed a furnace

under his house and invented an arrangement (which he patented) by which, from the outside, he fed hay into the furnace and thus heated his house.

Many families used fuel of the kinds described to keep warm in houses built of only one thickness of boards, not lathed or plastered, and more than one child was born in such a house, in the winter time, when the snow sifted into the house, and over the bed whereon lay the mother and new born infant. In those early years, during the extreme cold of winter, to many colonists the most comfortable place, the occasion most looked forward to, was to attend a grange or church service, at the schoolhouse, there to absorb the heat from a red hot stove, a hot coal fire, and enjoy for a brief hour or more the companionship of friends and neighbors in full sympathy with all the surrounding conditions and circumstances. The great lack of fuel, cheap and abundant, was a most serious handicap in the early settlement of Buffalo County, and a cause of much discomfort and suffering during the long months of winter.

CHAPTER XXII

A COLONIST'S TRIP TO OMAHA—\$250 FOR A YOKE OF OXEN—OPENING UP FOR BUSINESS

A COLONIST'S TRIP TO OMAHA IN APRIL, 1871

The homesteads taken, the next step was a habitation in which to live, furnishing for the house, and farming implements, at least a plow.

Lumber, hardware, household goods, farming implements and food supplies could only be purchased in Omaha, as there were no stocks of such goods at a nearer point. A number of the colonists made out bills of needed supplies and chose one of their number to make the trip and purchase the articles. The colonists had brought their funds in New York exchange which would require the one presenting the same to be identified, and as one of their number had an acquaintance residing in Council Bluffs, a lawyer, who could identify him, he was chosen to make the trip.

The railroad fare from Gibbon to Omaha was \$14.75, 7 cents per mile. The party arrived at Omaha about 6 P. M., crossed to Council Bluffs to find his acquaintance attending court at some point in Iowa and not expected home for some days. The next morning found the colonist on the banks of the Missouri ready to cross at first opportunity, but the wind blew at such a furious rate that it was not possible for the boat to make the crossing. All day long the colonist remained, without a bite to eat, awaiting a favorable opportunity to cross.

Several attempts were made without success; on one occasion the ferry boat barely escaped being swamped on one of the piers of the railroad bridge then in process of construction. With the going down of the sun, the wind abated, but the colonist reached the Nebraska side after business hours. Early the next morning a call was made on a lumber dealer, but when the case was stated he replied that he could not take drafts where the party was not known or could not be identified.

A visit was then made to the store of Milton Rogers, a dealer in hardware, stoves and agricultural implements, and the situation explained to Mr. Rogers, who without a moment's hesitation replied, in substance: "We have all heard of your colony in Buffalo County and we want you to stay and help settle the state, and I am more than willing to aid you in any manner possible. I will take your drafts in payment for such of my goods as you desire, will find a lumber dealer who will take your drafts for lumber, and I will endorse your drafts at the bank for the balance so that you may take the remainder home in currency."

This kindness on the part of Mr. Rogers was greatly appreciated and has

never been forgotten. The business of Mr. Rogers was established in 1855, and more than half a century later was being conducted under the name of Milton Rogers Sons.

The articles purchased comprised two car loads—cars being much smaller than at present, ten tons the limit of capacity—and had a wide range from lumber to build several small houses to stoves, furniture, crockery, breaking plows, spades, well buckets, rope, picket pins, pork by the barrel and molasses by the 5-gallon keg. The railroad company made one concession, making the same rate on the shipment as for emigrant movables.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS FOR A YOKE OF OXEN

On this trip an option was secured on a yoke of oxen at \$250. This seemed like and was a large price if not an extravagant one, but teams of oxen were scarce, and a better yoke of oxen never looked through ox-bows than these. They were large, young, well broken and active.

Later the purchase was concluded through Milton Rogers and the oxen shipped to Gibbon. The first use made of the team was to draw a load of lumber out to a claim across Wood River; when in mid-stream the yoke broke and it was necessary to send to Omaha for another before use could be made of the team. These oxen, a wagon, and a breaking plow were owned by three homesteaders.

OPENING UP FOR BUSINESS

Immediately after the taking of the homesteads, Aaron Ward engaged in the lumber business and L. D. George and I. D. La Barre each arranged to engage in the mercantile business. The business venture of Mr. George was on a much more extensive scale than that of Mr. La Barre; T. Q. George, a brother of L. D., came later, the firm being L. D. and T. Q. George and Co. I. D. La Barre at once secured a considerable line of goods and opened for business in a box car on the siding, until such time as his first place of business was in readiness; this store building of Mr. La Barre's was the first building completed in the Village of Gibbon, and the first building to receive a coat of paint; it is, at this date (1915) the first building to the west of the Babcock Opera House, on Main Street. It is recalled that when the prices which the colonists had paid for the two carloads of goods—before mentioned—became known, it occasioned much irritation as between the merchants and their customers. For instance, the price paid at Omaha for a 12-inch breaking plow was \$21; for a stove, \$20; a well bucket, 75 cents; while the prices for like articles at Gibbon were: a 12-inch breaking plow, \$32; a stove, \$30; well bucket, \$1.50. It will be seen that on such standard articles the margin of profit was certainly large enough to warrant success in the business, and yet those merchants, in the end, did not make any marked success of the business, for the reason credit was universal and when a debtor was a homesteader whose whole source of income was from crops raised on his claim, it stands to reason that merchants' losses were large where credit was extended to such a class of customers.

It is a matter of astonishment, at this date, to recall some of the methods of transacting business which prevailed in the early days of which this history treats. It was a common occurrence for a homesteader to agree to pay 2, 3 and at times 4 per cent a month interest on borrowed money. It was a common business transaction for a homesteader, without means, to purchase on time a full line of agricultural implements, their value aggregating several hundreds of dollars, and often not even paying in advance the freight charges on the same, and in case of crop failure, payment had to be extended, and often the machinery was worn out before paid for, and at times it was never paid for. Such business conditions and transactions, can only be accounted for on the theory that the unbounded faith and optimism as to the country and its future development, which caused people without means and experience to come here and engage in agriculture in a country in which nothing was known as to capabilities for support of an agricultural population, included not only the homesteader himself but all classes engaged in business as well.

Just across the Platte River south of Gibbon was the Village of Lowell, and one of the early merchants at that point was Joel Hull. At a reunion held at Fort Kearney, many years later, by Mr. Hull read a paper entitled, "Pioneer Merchandising in Central Nebraska." It presents so true and complete a history of merchandising in Buffalo County in those days that as a matter of historic interest it is here given place.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL—THE COLONISTS AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOL—COLONISTS LIVING IN THE CARS ORGANIZE A SCHOOL DISTRICT—COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT—STATEMENT OF C. PUTNAM MADE FOR RECORD—ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS—ERECTION OF SCHOOLHOUSES—REPORT OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT, JANUARY, 1872—LIST OF LICENSED TEACHERS, 1871-76.

THE COLONISTS AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

That the members of the colony were home builders in all that the term implies is possibly best illustrated by the prompt action taken in the organization of school districts, the building of schoolhouses and the opening of public schools. The records of school district No. 2 (Gibbon) under date of April 15, 1871, read in part as follows:

"At a school meeting duly noticed, held by the inhabitants of Gibbon for the election of officers and the transaction of such other business as might be brought before the meeting, the proceedings were as follows:" The proceedings further set forth that "At a previous assemblage of said inhabitants for the purpose of attending to the school interests of Gibbon and vicinity, a committee consisting of C. Putnam, J. N. Allen and Aaron Ward had written the state superintendent of public instruction for a copy of the school law of the State of Nebraska and such other personal instruction as was necessary for the proper organization of a school district." It appears from the records that no reply had been received from the state superintendent and the meeting adjourned subject to call of the chairman.

Let it be understood that these proceedings had all taken place while members of the colony were living in the cars, when not one of the number was a legal voter, and not one of the number had, as yet, filed upon a homestead or pre-emption claim, and had not been in the state and county of Buffalo one week.

These records further disclose that on April 22, 1871, "At a school meeting duly held by the inhabitants of Gibbon and vicinity for the election of moderator, director and treasurer and other business as follows:" At this meeting (thirteen days after the arrival of the colony) C. Putnam was elected moderator, Aaron Ward, director and F. S. Trew, treasurer. It was voted that \$1,000 be raised by public tax to build a schoolhouse and L. D. George, Aaron Ward and D. P. Ashburn were appointed a building committee.

In the 12 by 16 wing of the first dwelling house erected in the Village of Gibbon, on the 26th day of June, 1871, a public school was opened, with Mrs. Frank Chamberlain as teacher, wages \$35 per month.

The records disclose that the director furnished for use of this school, "One chair, one water bucket, and four seats." Five dollars per month rent was paid for use of the room for school purposes.

In December, 1871, a schoolhouse (22 by 32 in size) was built in this district and furnished with patent seats and a winter term of school held, although the schoolhouse rested on blocks for a foundation, was not banked, and was neither lathed nor plastered. Teachers wages paid, \$50 per month.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Patrick Walsh had been appointed superintendent of public instruction for Buffalo County, but at a meeting of the county commissioners soon after the arrival of the colony (the meeting of the county commissioners was on April 24, 1871) Mr. Walsh resigned and C. Putnam, a member of the colony was appointed superintendent. At that date no record had been kept in the office of the county superintendent. As a matter of history in which the members of the colony had a direct part and interest, herewith is given a statement, made of record by Mr. Putnam on entering upon his duties as superintendent of public instruction in and for Buffalo County.

"Statement of C. Putnam made for Record.

"I received the appointment of superintendent of public instruction for Buffalo County at the meeting of the commissioners of said county in April (24th) 1871, vice, Patrick Walsh resigned. On being qualified no written record whatever was delivered to me. School district No. 1 was organized, had a schoolhouse (a board and sod shanty) and had had a school and made reports up to April 1, 1871. District No. 2 comprised all of Buffalo County, except the eastern range of townships, and all of Dawson County which county was not then organized.

"Mr. Walsh had requested the colony which arrived April 7th to organize into a school district and said colony posted notices according to law, had school meetings at which they elected officers, voted to raise taxes to build schoolhouse, carry on school, etc. On assuming the duties of superintendent of public instruction I had nothing but Mr. Walsh's statement as to the condition of school matters, which was, that district No. 1 was legally organized and that district No. 2 was regularly reported to the superintendent of state of public instruction, and it rested with that district to complete the organization. That there was \$205 in the county school fund besides the railroad tax for 1870, which was about \$1,500."

ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

In December, 1871, school district No. 1, completed a frame schoolhouse (which at this date, 1916, is still in use) and B. F. Sammons, a member of the colony, taught a term of winter school.

October 2, 1871, was organized school district No. 3. Notice of the call to organize was given D. P. Ashburn, who was elected director of the district. A schoolhouse was erected in this district early in 1872, with a cupola and a

bell installed—the first school bell in the county—being known for years as the “bell” schoolhouse.

School district No. 4 was organized November 4, 1871, the written notice being delivered to W. H. Kenney. A substantial frame schoolhouse was built in this district early in 1872 and furnished with patent seats. W. H. Kenney was chosen director and taught the first term of school in the district in 1872.

School district No. 5 was organized March 16, 1872, official notice being given George H. Silvernail and the first meeting being held at the house of Jacob Booth. R. E. L. Willard was chosen director and a substantial frame schoolhouse—22 by 32 feet in size—built during the summer of 1872. The first term of school was taught by George H. Silvernail, a member of the colony, in the winter of 1872-73.

School district No. 6 was organized March 16, 1872, official notice being given Mr. Smith (George N.), the meeting for organization being held at the house of Mr. Smith. A. H. Brundage was chosen director. A substantial frame schoolhouse was built in this district early in 1872, the first term of school being taught by Mrs. D. D. Smith.

School district No. 7 (Kearney) was organized March 23, 1872, the official notice being delivered to A. Collins and the first meeting held at what was known as “Hotel Collins.” James Smith was chosen director. Miss Fannie Nevius taught the first term of school in rented rooms as no schoolhouse was erected until a later date.

School district No. 8 was organized March 27, 1872. Official notice was given George W. Brown and the first meeting held on the open prairie near the residence of Simon V. Seeley. Ezra M. Fargo was chosen director and early in 1872 a frame schoolhouse, 22 by 32 feet in size with 14 feet studding, erected. The first term of school being taught by Simon V. Seeley.

Excluding district No. 7 (Kearney) these school districts embrace the territory upon which the colonists made settlement and in which they exercised control in the organization of the districts and the erection of the first schoolhouses.

During the years 1871 and 1872, schoolhouses were erected in districts Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 at an expense of from \$1,000 to \$1,500 each, bonds for this purpose having been voted. These schoolhouses were furnished with patent seats (seats and desk combined), good stoves, unabridged dictionaries, and in some instances text books had been purchased by the district for the use of the pupils; these schoolhouses were painted, built in a substantial manner and most of them still in use in 1915. In districts Nos. 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8, Sunday schools had been organized and held regularly and in these houses there were regular appointments for religious services.

REPORT OF COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT, JANUARY 11, 1872

District	No. of children	Directors
1	50	H. C. Green
2	29	A. D. George
3	18	D. P. Ashburn



MISS CLARA LEW
First licensed teacher in Buffalo County—
1871

District	No. of children	Directors
4	21	W. H. Kenney
5	23	R. E. L. Willard
6	11	A. H. Brundage
7	36	J. A. Smith
8	36	E. M. Fargo

School district No. 9 was organized June 19, 1872, official notice being sent to John P. Arndt, the first meeting being called at the home of Charles Davis (Elm Creek), D. F. Hood being chosen director.

School district No. 10 was organized July 6, 1872, official notice being served on Henry Fieldgrove and the first meeting held at the home of D. B. Allen. Martin L. Henry was chosen director.

School district No. 11 was organized October 1, 1872, official notice being given John Blanchard, and the first meeting held at the home of Mr. Blanchard. Lloyd D. Forehand was chosen director.

It will be seen that within eighteen months after the arrival of the colony, ten school districts had been organized by County Superintendent C. Putnam, in most of the district schoolhouses erected; also the report of the county superintendent of date January 11, 1872, shows 224 children in attendance at the public schools, in eight of the first organized school districts.

LIST OF LICENSED TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1869—Mary Smith—no certificate.

1870—John Fuller—no certificate.

1871—Clara Lew—first certificate, Mrs. Frank L. Chamberlain, Mrs. Wealthy A. Kelsey and B. F. Sammons.

1872—S. C. Bassett, Mrs. F. F. Blanchard, Mrs. E. A. Pember, C. W. Davenport, Miss Ida Troop, Mrs. D. D. Smith, Mrs. W. F. McClure, Miss Martha Davis and Miss Eugenia Silvernail.

1873—Fannie Nevius, S. V. Seeley, Geo. H. Silvernail, Thomas Maloney, B. Grant, I. More, Miss Lu Allison, Sadie Cook, Delia Putnam, Mrs. C. E. Kenney, B. W. Marsh, Lucy Rosseter, Lora Davis, Miss S. A. Washburn, Chas. W. Springer, Miss N. D. Brooks, Miss N. Rosseter, Miss F. Bunnell, J. J. Whittier, W. A. Cook, M. J. Grant, James Steven, W. R. Bacon, Josephus More and H. H. Haven.

1874—C. E. Hanson, John P. Hartman, Mrs. Mary A. Judd, Miss Jennie Giddings, Miss Carrie Giddings, Omer White, Joseph L. Hartman, Dan A. Crowell, J. G. Gossett, J. Jessup, A. P. Smith, Reta Hollenbeck, Miss C. R. Foster, Miss C. J. Brown, Minnie Richardson, Mrs. E. M. Carpenter, Mrs. H. L. Smith, Mrs. M. V. Willard, A. B. Whitney, Mrs. M. E. Bailey, John Hickey, Wm. A. Allen, John Swenson, Ada Bunnell, Mark G. Lee, Thomas Mahoney, Miss M. E. Waggoner and M. D. Marsh.

1875—James Ewing, H. S. Colby, Miss Louise Broderick, Miss Jennie Holmes, Mrs. R. H. Coffman, C. M. Hull, E. A. Hunt, Forest J. Hunt, Mary E. Peck, Mary J. Holmes, Clara E. Samuels, Miss H. C. Ewing, Miss E. M.

McNew, A. H. Cleveland, J. S. Zerbee, H. B. Gilbert, Geo. D. Aspinwall, W. S. Campbell (first 1st grade certificate issued), B. L. Grant, Homer J. Allen and Miss L. Hall.

1876—H. C. Downer, Emma Morrison, Mrs. N. Humison, Miss Roderick, Miss Adah Seaman, S. B. Grant, Miss Hattie Cook, George Cook, Miss Mary Kraus, Miss Cora LaBarre, Miss Edith George, Geo. W. Hartman, R. H. Pember, Emmet Hunt, F. J. Hunt, Mrs. Arvilla Broderick, Mrs. Emma Treichler, Carrie L. Longstreet, Helim Thompson, Miss Jennie McLouth, Miss Maggie Meyers, G. A. Perego, Geo. Furguson, James A. Scott, Mrs. A. L. Austin, Mrs. H. H. Clark, Mrs. A. V. Marble and Jane Arnold.

CHAPTER XXIV

INCIDENTS IN A WEDDING JOURNEY ACROSS THE PLATTE IN 1869—FORD THE PLATTE AT FORT KEARNEY—TWO PRAIRIE DOGS AND A BOX OF MEDICINE—THE WAGON UPSETS—RESCUE OF THE BRIDE—THE BRIDE'S MOTHER ENJOYS A SMOKE—ALL ENDS WELL.

INCIDENTS IN A WEDDING JOURNEY ACROSS THE PLATTE IN 1869

Mr. Samuel Stearley, a resident of Buffalo County in 1869, furnishes the following interesting account of the fording of the Platte River by a wedding party in 1869: "In the summer of 1869 John Martin and Miss Craig, who lived on the Blue River south and east of Grand Island, wished to get married and in order to do so had to come to Fort Kearney crossing of the Platte and thence east to Wood River Center, where lived Judge Patrick Walsh, who had authority to perform the marriage ceremony. The distance necessary to make this journey was about seventy-five miles. The Platte was very high at this time. Charles Walker, who lived at Kearney station, now Buda, had the contract to freight all Government supplies for Fort Kearney across the Platte and at the time mentioned was engaged in hauling fencing material to fence the Government cemetery near the fort. The wedding party arranged with Mr. Walker to take them

A Memory.

When I loved was torn away
Sorrows blinded me with tears;
Sunshine melted from the day
Darkness loomed for after years.

As the days and months rolled on
Came to me on memory's wings
Virtues of my brother gone,
Joy within my bosom sings.

As in good deeds that he wrought
Bring forth a wealth of cheer;
Though in vain his face is sought,
Fulfillment he still is here.

At six o'clock in the evening John Martin, his sweetheart mother, Mrs. Craig, also an eighteen months old son, came to cross the river. It was our last trip for a light outfit and my business was to keep the oxen on around the islands or toe heads as we called them. I enjoyed the fun and excitement of fording the Platte. For this party across it was necessary to put on a wagon fence pickets to set their trunk and roll of blankets with. The party also had with them two prairie dogs, medicine and these two boxes were put in my charge. I hitched to the wagon and two horseback riders, one from the wedding party was all set, the bull whip cracked. I was sitting on the side of the wagon box with my two prairie dogs and box of medicine in my lap. We waited till we came to the deep channel. Then the water

Our load was so light and the current so strong it turned the wagon, box and all upside down. The result was we were all in the water. When I came up I saw Martin catch his girl and pull for a wagon wheel; next I saw Mrs. Craig come up with her child in her arms, the mother struggling

McNew, A. H. Cleveland, J. S. Zerbee, H. B. Gilbert, Geo. D. Aspinwall, W. S. Campbell (first 1st grade certificate issued), B. L. Grant, Homer J. Allen and Miss L. Hall.

1876—H. C. Downer, Emma Morrison, Mrs. N. Humison, Miss Roderick, Miss Adah Scaman, S. B. Grant, Miss Hattie Cook, George Cook, Miss Mary Kraus, Miss Cora LaBarre, Miss Edith George, Geo. W. Hartman, R. H. Pember, Emmet Hunt, F. J. Hunt, Mrs. Arvilla Broderick, Mrs. Emma Treichler, Carrie L. Longstreet, Helim Thompson, Miss Jennie McLouth, Miss Maggie Meyers, G. A. Perego, Geo. Furguson, James A. Scott, Mrs. A. L. Austin, Mrs. H. H. Clark, Mrs. A. V. Marble and Jane Arnold.

While willing hands and loving hearts
To do the last sad service for the

Brother Deceased During the

DANIEL T. McDONALD, Aug

e that when thy summons comes to
which moves to that mysterious re-

CHAPTER XXIV

INCIDENTS IN A WEDDING JOURNEY ACROSS THE PLATTE IN 1869—FORD THE PLATTE AT FORT KEARNEY—TWO PRAIRIE DOGS AND A BOX OF MEDICINE—THE WAGON UPSETS—RESCUE OF THE BRIDE—THE BRIDE'S MOTHER ENJOYS A SMOKE—ALL ENDS WELL.

INCIDENTS IN A WEDDING JOURNEY ACROSS THE PLATTE IN 1869

Mr. Samuel Stearley, a resident of Buffalo County in 1869, furnishes the following interesting account of the fording of the Platte River by a wedding party in 1869: "In the summer of 1869 John Martin and Miss Craig, who lived on the Blue River south and east of Grand Island, wished to get married and in order to do so had to come to Fort Kearney crossing of the Platte and thence east to Wood River Center, where lived Judge Patrick Walsh, who had authority to perform the marriage ceremony. The distance necessary to make this journey was about seventy-five miles. The Platte was very high at this time. Charles Walker, who lived at Kearney station, now Buda, had the contract to freight all Government supplies for Fort Kearney across the Platte and at the time mentioned was engaged in hauling fencing material to fence the Government cemetery near the fort. The wedding party arranged with Mr. Walker to take them across the Platte and about 4 o'clock in the evening John Martin, his sweetheart and intended wife, the girl's mother, Mrs. Craig, also an eighteen months old child belonging to Mrs. Craig, came to cross the river. It was our last trip for the day. I was with the freight outfit and my business was to keep the oxen on the lead team from swinging around the islands or toe heads as we called them. The water was warm and I enjoyed the fun and excitement of fording the Platte. In order to bring Martin and his party across it was necessary to put on a wagon box and crib up the box with fence pickets to set their trunk and roll of blankets on so they would not get wet. The party also had with them two prairie dogs in a box and a box of medicine and these two boxes were put in my charge. There were ten yoke of oxen hitched to the wagon and two horseback riders, one on each side the ox teams. The wedding party was all set, the bull whip cracked and the procession started. I was sitting on the side of the wagon box with my feet inside and holding the prairie dogs and box of medicine in my lap. We went nicely for half a mile till we came to the deep channel. Then the water went over the wagon box. Our load was so light and the current so strong it turned the wagon, box and all upside down. The result was we were all in the water. When I came up I saw Martin catch his girl and pull for a wagon wheel; next I saw Mrs. Craig come up with her child in her arms, the mother struggling

for dear life. It fell to me to save her and I held her till Martin could come and get her. The other two men were busy taking care of the oxen and holding them. The trunk and roll of blankets went down the river and one of the bull whackers and myself were detailed to go after them. I want to tell you there was lively work for awhile. When we got back with the trunk and blankets to the north bank of the river the wedding party had all got ashore and Mrs. Craig was sitting on the bank enjoying a good smoke out of a borrowed pipe. She thanked me very kindly for saving her life, as she was going under the second time when I caught her. This delayed the wedding as everything in the trunk and blankets was wet and as the old lady's tobacco was wrapped up in the wedding dress the dress was so stained it could not be used for a wedding occasion. Stores were not plenty in those days and the party had to go to Grand Island, twenty-five miles east of Wood River Center, to buy another dress and make it. Some days later Judge Walsh married the happy couple and they went on their way rejoicing.

"About three or four years later I met Mrs. Craig in Grand Island. She called her little boy in off the street and introduced him to me and then told her son that I was the young man who saved his and her life. She then said the only way she could repay me was to give me, for a wife, her last daughter, then about my own age and a very beautiful girl."

In this connection it might be well to state that the Platte opposite the Fort Kearney site is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide from the north to the south bank. This includes islands as well as the channels of the river. These channels have a total width of approximately four thousand three hundred and fifty-four feet, this being the length of the nearest bridge across this river at this point at the present time.

Mr. Dungan, who owns the farm on which the fort was located, states that the old Fort Kearney crossing, commencing on the south side of the Platte, started at a point one-half mile west of the fort, taking a northeasterly course, striking the north bank about two miles east of the fort, making the crossing quite three miles in length. It is related that a ferry was operated at one time near this crossing, consisting of a large flat-bottomed scow drawn back and forth by several yoke of oxen.

CHAPTER XXV

PIONEER MERCHANDISING IN CENTRAL NEBRASKA—LOCATION AT LOWELL IN 1872
—SETTLEMENT OF SOUTHWEST NEBRASKA—EPIZOOTIC AMONG HORSES—MANY
MERCHANTS FAIL—BUYING FURS OF TRAPPERS—FOUR TONS OF BUFFALO HAMS
—STRYCHNINE AND STEEL TRAPS FOR TRAPPERS—A MILLION DOLLARS WORTH
OF GOODS SOLD IN TWO YEARS.

(Note—This article, prepared by Joel Hull, of Minden, Kearney County, Nebraska, was read at the 1909 celebration of the Fort Kearney National Park Association, June 23-26, and is given place in this history as it truthfully and forcefully presents the experience of such pioneer merchants in Buffalo County as L. D. George and I. D. LaBarre at Gibbon; Oliver Brothers at Wood River Centre (now Shelton); R. R. Greer and James O'Kane at Kearney.—Editor.)

PIONEER MERCHANDISING IN CENTRAL NEBRASKA

By Joel Hull

Merchandising in the pioneer days of Kearney County was a calling requiring great care and alertness to fill the demands made by the torrents of immigrants rushing in to take homesteads, pre-emption and timber-culture claims and to buy railroad lands.

From the present conditions in 1909 of these lands, all fenced, ornamented with rows or groves of beautiful, thrifty trees, owned and occupied by prosperous farmers residing in finely appointed roomy residences of architectural beauty of design, surrounded by shapely, well-designed buildings for the comfort of thrifty domestic animals, one would think that such a rush of immigration would soon be over, and all these lands, of their present beauty and the value of \$100 per acre, would be quickly taken. Incredible as it may seem to the present observers of the comfort, profit and happiness now in evidence in this Eldorado, such was not the fact.

In the year 1872, by reason of the location and mapping of the route of the line of railroad by the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad in Nebraska, there came a few venturesome spirits into this territory named Kearney County to the number of thirty-one voters, mostly single men, not one of whom had an inkling of an idea of the value of the lands herein embraced for agricultural purposes, nor of their value for homes and fortunes. These thirty-one voters had made the requisite motions for the county organization of this territory under the name given it by the Legislature, of Kearney County, and after filing their

petition with the acting governor and their holding an election of a set of county officers, it was by the acting governor (William H. James who was also secretary of state) proclaimed to be a legally organized county, dating from the 20th day of June, 1872.

None of those thirty-one voters had at that date looked at any lands embraced within the limits of the boundaries of the new country south of the line of the sand hills running parallel with the Platte River. Nearly every one laid claims upon even numbered sections east and northeast of Lowell, its county seat, and a few claims on sections west of Fort Kearney Military Reservation adjacent to Kearney City, now commonly known as Doby Town. Not a claim of any kind had been made to any land south of the line of sand hills, and not a building of any kind was erected in the county but those in and about Lowell and Doby Town, except a composite sod and board shanty near the southwest corner of the county, named "Walker's Ranch" located upon the trail from Lowell to Republican City.

Your orator came upon the scene as just portrayed on the 30th day of June, 1872, on the tenth day of the legal existence of the county, and found the thirty-one voters who had performed the ceremonies of its organization, and besides these thirty-one there were seven women (three of whom were widows) and nine children, making a total population of forty-seven souls. He carefully looked over the prospectus; took into consideration that the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad Company was then building its road at the rate of about a mile a day, and that the great Republican Valley and the Frenchman and Red Willow and numerous other tributaries had been widely advertised in the East as far as Ohio, and that emigrants were then moving in caravans toward those named locations, which were represented as having rich valleys, the streams abounding with choice fish and pure water and whose banks were lined with large timber of various sorts; and that the route of travel was already changing to the old California trail; and that reasonably there would be a demand for their supplies from their nearest railroad station which would evidently be Lowell for a few years.

You have already clearly concluded that it would be nothing less than folly to commence merchandising with a list of customers numbering forty-seven souls, at a time when there were already two merchants, Thomas W. Vallentine and Albion A. Andrews. But there existed the outlook for the traffic with the Republican Valley settlers and I at once seized the opportunity. On the first day of July I bought the Andrews' stock of goods, and on the third day of July the Burlington & Missouri River arrived at Lowell, set off to the side of the track an old box car for a depot. On the fourth I ordered a fresh stock of supplies and the story of pioneer selling of goods commenced. I arranged with Lincoln, Omaha, Council Bluffs and St. Joseph dealers to supply me with goods, and with the Capital Mills at Lincoln to supply flour and meal. Before August 1st my sales averaged over \$100 per day, and the demand was so great that in September, from Chicago, I laid in a stock of \$33,000 worth of goods in eleven different departments, all bought on credit, having at times barely enough to pay the freight bills, and my trade increased to sales averaging from two hundred to

three hundred dollars per day, much of which were flour and meal, taking two or three cars a week.

I was a very busy man with seven clerks, but not too busy to observe that this immense traffic had been also discovered by others so that in 1873 Lowell had seven general merchandise stores, two drug stores, seven saloons, three hotels, three boarding houses, two doctors, four lawyers. "Old Bill Gaslin" was one of them.

There was a "hot time in the town tonight" every day and night, Sundays included. Money was easy and gamblers plenty. You must not mistake in thinking the merchants had an easy time. Many present remember the panic of 1873 and all have heard something of it. While the panic did not affect this new West in a serious degree, yet in some respects it was felt. In my trade I had occasion to handle commercial paper such as drafts, checks, etc., and at one time I had in my hands three drafts of \$500 each drawn by eastern national banks upon their New York depositories all protested for want of funds, confusing my cash arrangements for the instant to such an extent that I had to ask the First National Bank of Lincoln to deposit to my credit, by telegraph, in First National Bank of Chicago, \$1,000 to make good deficiencies on overdrafts arising from protested drafts just mentioned. While the panic was raging in the East making bankrupts by the thousands, the West was not seriously concerned.

In 1873 appeared a distemper among horses called "epizootic," which was a panic breeder over these plains. During a period of about two months only a few dozen teams of horses appeared in the lively market of Lowell, succeeding a year or more of the daily arrival of from fifty to one hundred teams from the settlements of the Republican, Solomon, the Smoky and their tributaries. Their horses in considerable numbers died and all were disabled that did not die. To such straits were they reduced that hundreds of teams of oxen were hastily caught up from herds and yoked and driven to market for supplies. Some of those wild steers never had their yokes taken off after starting until they returned home. They were thus enabled to haul about half loads or a little more. While it was hard on the settler it was harder on the merchants. The gamblers and saloonkeepers were horror stricken and left temporarily for greener pastures. Half the merchants failed or closed and the remainder did some tall hopping to make ends meet.

I had several experiences new to me during my two years' merchandising at Lowell. Lowell market had attracted the attention of trappers, many of whom along the upper tributaries of the streams to the southwest, west and northwest of Lowell came here to market their pelts and to lay in supplies. During the furnishing of my share of the customers I heard numerous complaints of the unfair dealing they were receiving at the hands of local dealers. I made it my business to investigate the facts and in so doing actually learned the names of the different pelts and watched the manner of inspection of the grades of the different kinds of furs. A load of pelts came in one day and was by the different dealers inspected and quoted, that is, bids were made for the load amounting to about six hundred dollars. I closely watched their proceedings and found what I believed to be a "ring"—that is a secret agreement among them that the load should be bought by one of them and after the hunters left divided. Just then I

stepped in and over-bid the gang, first by going through the form of inspection and then making my figures \$50 above the best bid so far made. I got the load and supplied their outfit, and was the cause of better prices and a better name for Lowell. I had never handled nor owned a fur pelt before but kept on buying, all of the other dealers wondering what market I was going to find for my furs. One day a gentleman from Buffalo stepped into my store inquiring who had a stock of furs. I showed him mine, made him a price, he bought the lot amounting to over twenty-three hundred dollars, at a profit to me of near two hundred and fifty dollars. It was my first and last venture in furs. I never again bought a pelt.

Other hunters in Kansas were busy in another line of profit. In the winter of 1873 large herds of buffalo appeared and the hunters turned out for a carnival of fun and a bushel of money. Thousands of buffalo were slain, the hams cut out with the skin on them and a load sent to Lowell. It was a new deal, none of the dealers would touch them at any price. I bid $3\frac{1}{4}$ cents per pound for the load, and upon a further contract to take other loads, I got it. The other loads came also until I had accumulated over four tons of ham. A notice of the fact in a Chicago daily that I could supply large or small orders brought me customers from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa for one, two, three or four hams at 10 to $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents a pound, by express C. O. D. and all were closed out at a profit.

In 1874 came a German settler who through agents in Europe contracted for the purchase of railroad lands in Frontier County south of Plum Creek, now called Lexington. He came to Lowell and brought his wealth in the shape of a draft of a Prussian bank upon a New York bank for \$1,730 in gold. There was a bank at Lowell at that time but the bank nor any merchant in Lowell dare invest. They had never seen such a thing. He came to me and with the aid of my smattering knowledge of German, and the assistance of the "Mohawk Dutchman" I mastered the meaning of the document, and as the premium on gold was then declining, the day before having been quoted at 8 cents premium, I offered to take the paper at 6 per cent premium, give him all the goods he wanted to buy on it and \$600 in cash, the balance on demand at any time after two weeks from date. He was rejoiced, took out about \$300 trade and the cash I had on hand. I sent the draft to the First National Bank of Chicago which refused to credit any specific amount but forwarded it to New York where it arrived on a day when gold was quoted at 16 per cent premium. My bank account was credited within a week of the date I had taken it for the face plus 16 per cent premium thus clearing 10 per cent on \$1,730 besides my profits on the goods sold him. In about four weeks he again appeared, loaded up two wagons with farm implements, food and supplies and took the balance due him in cash, a happy man and came again and again.

I soon learned the kinds of guns mostly used by hunters and made it a point to keep a good supply of ammunition of all kinds used. I also made it a point to have on hand also a large supply of strychnine used largely by hunters. At one time received a supply from the manufacturer of 180 ounces in dram bottles; and steel traps by the dozen of the size mostly in demand by the trappers. I tried to make it an object for settlers, hunters, trappers and all others to come to the metropolis.

When I came to Lowell there was no Kearney Junction. It had just been platted but not a building of any kind on the plat. Along in the fall the square house used by pre-emptors of section 2, town 8, range 16, was moved upon the street named Wyoming Avenue, now called Central Avenue. In a few days a board shanty was erected for a saloon, those were the first buildings in what is now known as Kearney City.

At the date of my arrival there was no such place as Hastings, but in 1873 the St. Joe & Denver Railroad changed its name and its terminal to St. Joe & Grand Island Railroad, and at its crossing of the Burlington & Missouri, a little town was started and named Hastings. Only an eighty acres was platted at first. The United States Land Office was moved in the spring of 1874 from Lowell to Bloomington. In September, 1874, a new bridge (across the Platte River) was erected at Kearney Junction and a few months later a bridge was completed at North Platte. Lowell was doomed. Your orator saw it. Hastings, Kearney Junction, North Platte, Grand Island were all bidders for the wonderful trade that Lowell had enjoyed in full sway for two years, and I withdrew to my farm and the founding of a new town to become the county seat of this finest county in the state. Kearney County lost its City of Lowell but gained by the founding of a new and larger and better City of Minden.

Buffalo County won the trade at the expense of a new bridge which it built at its own cost and has kept in repair for thirty-five years—whether a profitable deal will be explained by "Bob Greer" who took charge of the customers when I quit.

But 1874 is also an historical year in the fact that in that year and the two succeeding years the locusts came and played havoc with the crops of those new struggling settlers, which plague was finally ended by a fortunate May, 1877, rain, sleet and snow storm, closing with a freeze that utterly destroyed the "hoppers."

Recounting my first advent to this county I now find not one of those thirty-one organizers remaining, but find myself to be the oldest remaining settler of the county. All those who were here when I came are dead or moved away except two old ladies who were here prior to my advent, Mrs. Talbot and Mrs. Paul Peterson.

Upon recapitulation of my merchandising venture July '72 to July '74 I found that I had sold \$1,300,000 worth of goods; that my ledger balance showed that I had made a clear profit of \$13,000, or just 10 per cent on my sales; dividing that, one-half to my father who was my partner, and living expenses of my family for two years, I had enough to erect buildings on my homestead, buy teams and implements and support my family during the grasshopper plague and be just even when the locusts quit.

CHAPTER XXVI

HOMESTEADERS IN BUFFALO COUNTY—A LIST OF 1,265 PERSONS TAKING HOMESTEAD AND PRE-EMPTION CLAIMS IN BUFFALO COUNTY PREVIOUS TO 1880—ARRANGED BY TOWNSHIP AND RANGE, GIVING YEAR OF FILING ON CLAIM.

THE HOMESTEADER

As a pioneer in the settlement of the county and state the homesteader takes first place—first rank. As a rule the homesteader was of limited means and ventured everything in the effort to establish a home. The rapidity with which the county was settled beginning in 1871 is best illustrated by a table showing the number of homestead and pre-emption claims filed upon in the county previous to the year 1880.

A table giving by years the number of homestead and pre-emption claims filed upon in Buffalo County:

1867	1
1870	2
1871	165
1872	177
1873	150
1874	143
1875	71
1876	50
1877	29
1878	268
1879	209
Total.....	1,265

The setback which not only Buffalo County but the state received in the drouth and grasshopper years of 1874, 1875 and 1876 is only half illustrated in the above table, for not only were there comparatively few newcomers, but hundreds of those who had taken claims left the county and state, deserting their claims, which were in later years taken by others.

The rather large number of claims recorded as taken in the years 1878-79 is in part accounted for by the fact that the Fort Kearney Military Reservation, ten miles square and four-tenths of which was embraced within the limits of Buffalo County, was thrown open to homestead entry in 1878 under conditions

which permitted the head of a family to homestead 160 acres, and in the years 1878-79 all these lands were filed upon in the United States Land Office, and as there were no railroad lands in the reservation, every quarter section contained a homesteader. The belief that the reservation would be thrown open to homestead entry led interested parties (the chief promoter being Dr. J. J. Saville) to employ S. and J. Murphy, civil engineers, living at Kearney, to survey the reservation, this about the year 1876, and at that date practically the entire reservation was taken by "squatters," who, when the lands were thrown open to homestead entry in 1878, having the first right to make entry, filed their claims in the land office.

Believing that in a history of Buffalo County the name of every person taking a homestead or pre-emption claim, in the early days, is worthy of being made a matter of record, and that to future generations it will be of interest to know who made the first settlements in the various townships of the county, the editor has copied from the United States Land Office records the names of all those taking a homestead or pre-emption claim in the county previous to the year 1880.

This list is here given by Government township and range, and in the spelling of the names great care has been taken to follow the record in the land office. It will be noticed there are some duplication of names. This is accounted for from the fact that some settlers took both a pre-emption and a homestead claim, it being legal and proper so to do.

List of persons taking homestead and pre-emption claims in Buffalo County previous to the year 1880:

PLATTE TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 8, RANGES 13 AND 14

1878—Jacob Miller, Nelson Jaco, C. E. Darling, F. C. Goodwin, Edward Broderick, A. Smith, H. S. Towers, R. H. Pember, John Stutz, Fred Donner, Heinrich Brenkman, W. H. Wallace, John Nash, Wm. Moreland, Wm. J. Willars, John Hartwell, John Pember, E. Slatie, L. Morrow, Thomas Carson, Sarepta Patterson, A. Johnson, G. W. Rishel, N. Platt, M. Martin, F. A. Morgan, J. A. Combs, Sophia Holbrook, P. McBride, Silas Troop, A. A. Robinson, T. L. Graffius, H. Wilcox, Samuel Boyer, Charles Ernst.

1879—John Vanwey, George Stearley, J. W. Weaver, M. O. Kessler, John W. Shahan, John T. Gilliland, T. Swenier, I. A. Matlick, W. H. Fulton, J. Kent.

SHELTON TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 9, RANGE NO. 13

1870—O. E. Thompson, Andrew Buest.

1871—August Meyer, L. Worthington, B. C. Bassett, Henry Fairchild, Robert Waters, S. C. Bassett, A. S. Craig, J. H. Darby, Ed Lovall, W. H. Sprague, James Oliver, H. C. Green, M. Stearley, H. Goss, B. F. Sammons, Ira L. Bunker, L. N. West, F. F. Blanchard, C. Putnam, Dr. I. P. George, W. H. Kelly, Theron D. Yost, J. N. Allen, B. Austin, J. M. Bayley, C. O. Childs, Kingman Fisher, J. M. Erwin, J. F. McKinley, Isaac Starbuck, James Wilkie, F. B. Reider, Paul Litterman, W. H. Gray.

1872—Edward Oliver, Ephriam Oliver, Henry Dugdale, E. M. Fargo, John Gagin, H. Stockwell, Orin Pratt, S. B. Lowell, A. D. George, Rodney George, George W. Brown, James Wilson, John Haug, Fred Haug, George Stearley, Joseph Buck, Sr., A. W. Zimmerman, J. R. George.

1873—Joseph Owen, Elizabeth Hurley, Mrs. Mary Day.

1874—Patrick Walsh, J. A. Brown, M. Breed, H. Thompson, F. J. Jenns, L. M. Sanford, B. Ashton.

1875—Wm. Nutter, Montrose Fisher.

1876—L. D. Craven, Mrs. E. Pember.

1877—M. G. Lee.

1878—D. S. Meals, D. M. Swayze, W. G. Devall, Mary M. Kirkpatrick, Eli Meals, B. P. Thompson, W. H. Curtis, J. O. Vanwey, George Trace, Jr., L. Vohland, W. H. Bell, N. Meals, M. W. Winchester, W. H. Mauer, J. Bishop, W. H. Ashton, J. P. Bastian, S. L. Boyer, J. B. Loury, J. J. Brown, James Wilson, H. H. Winchester.

1879—George Mortimer, J. H. Leisey, J. Miller.

SHARON TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 10, RANGE NO. 13

1871—V. Armbus, Wm. M. Craven, Albert Washburn, Geo. L. Thomas, O. B. Washburn, O. C. Hancock, Simon V. Seeley, F. D. Boardman, James Garfield, Jame E. Judd, T. D. Thacher, Lorenzo Plumb, J. W. Vance, J. A. Barnes, George Meisner, Casper Meisner, D. Fox, Henry Fieldgrove, John P. Smith, A. Barrett, Alzo Plumb, J. H. Mills, S. R. Traut.

1872—Mrs. Lois N. Ayer, E. Buno, L. Sturges, P. Ruth, R. A. Fox, Robert Goar, T. J. Taylor, J. E. Miller, C. E. S. Cooper, E. Miller, J. M. Kean, J. K. Lux, C. W. Davenport, J. C. Standley, P. McCullough, S. F. Henninger, J. J. Whittier, D. W. Johnson, R. Neil, D. Stonebarger, Mrs. E. Pember, Nathan Mills.

1873—A. Rines, C. S. Bailey, E. S. Judd, T. E. Mundle, A. D. Barnhart, John Henry, M. S. Henry, Daniel Dye.

1874—H. S. Colby, J. D. H. Koch, J. M. Devall, Geo. F. Klingst, F. A. Kappler, O. Gumprech, Isaac Willard, B. Whittaker.

1875—E. W. Borman, J. P. Turbell, E. M. Devall.

1876—F. W. Killner, T. F. Craig, W. S. Freeman.

1877—D. Otto, F. W. Schiemann.

1878—W. F. Koster, H. Sutter, George Conroy, John Conroy, Geo. D. Williams, C. H. Cudney, G. A. Blume, A. Hoag, W. H. Bentley, Florence E. Brown.

1879—John Lubbin, E. L. Smith, T. D. Allen.

GARDNER TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 11, RANGE NO. 13

1874—D. Barrett, A. Bromley, Wm. Barrett, S. Chandler, J. T. Badger, T. J. Smith, Saml. Urwiller.

1875—Geo. L. Gardner, Luke Barrett.

1876—Geo. K. Peck, Wm. Weeces.

1877—W. S. Elliott, Emma T. Peck, S. McCutchen, Henry Willey, G. W. Archer, C. Riddle.

1878—Max Schlund, Claus Sothmann, F. Hentz, H. Muhlbach, R. Beekman, H. Cassidy, J. H. Barrett, G. H. L. Harding, J. G. A. Muhlbach, Jas. Hutchinson, S. R. Hankins, C. C. Knapp, W. L. Lewis, L. Krenzwieser, V. E. Bush, H. Harris, J. G. Harris, Elizabeth J. Aufderhide, John Luce, Robt. Taylor, F. Urwiller, Thomas Carroll, Emil Keebler, C. Karp, George Best, D. Scrivin, J. Urwiller, F. A. Muhlbach, W. F. Muhlbach, J. P. Curry, J. B. Wrightington, Joanna Dean, A. G. Welch, Henry Decker, J. Hendrickson, D. Riley, F. Rohrbach.

1879—Samuel Urwiller, E. Muhlbach, F. A. E. Novck, John A. Hogg, E. Riley, L. Waldron, James Cleary, George S. Post, Wm. Sprect, E. J. Stephens, J. Y. Swigart, George W. Carr, Danforth Demary, C. N. Klammer, John Stuber, R. J. Welch, Eli Campbell, P. Dooley, J. Billingsly.

CHERRY CREEK TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 12, RANGE NO. 13

1876—E. Locke.

1878—A. Kyne, G. M. Hankins, R. J. Hodson.

1879—A. J. Hodson, J. D. Mathews, M. Kyne, E. J. Varney.

GIBBON TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 9, RANGE NO. 14

(Note—The southwest quarter of section 14, town 9, range 14, in this township, known as "Boyd Ranch," was the first claim taken in the county by Joseph Boyd in 1867, and was the first piece of deeded land in Nebraska west of Hall County.)

1867—Joseph Boyd.

1871—A. F. Gibson, W. H. Kenny, W. J. Knight, Coe Killgore, Clara E. Lew, John Lloyd, C. A. Monks, W. F. McClure, E. Northrup, A. J. Oviatt, Wm. Patterson, C. T. Silvernail, H. P. Rogers, John Lucas, Geo. H. Silvernail, Wm. Roach, John Silvernail, Jacob Booth, R. E. L. Willard, J. W. Wiggins, S. M. McDuffee, Aaron Ward, W. D. Hick, C. E. Brayton, John W. Forrest, Wm. Brady, Robert Hick, I. D. LaBarre, R. Forrest, Geo. Gilmore, P. K. Drury, L. S. Hough, J. Delos Drury, S. Rosseter, V. T. Mercer, U. A. Day, John Stern, D. R. Davis, O. A. Buzzell, Asa Fawcett, W. J. Carson, W. W. Gibson, D. P. Crable, M. D. Thomas, A. Kennedy, J. S. Chamberlain, R. S. Shiffert, L. D. George, J. Gable, T. J. Hubbard, W. N. Jackson, E. M. Hubbard, G. A. King, Saml. Mattice, R. Wallace, John Grabach.

1872—P. T. Davis, A. J. Snowdon, W. C. Drury, J. W. Berry, Mary J. Mercer, J. E. Kelsey, D. P. Ashburn, John P. Putnam, T. J. Fisher, D. B. Worley, Wm. Stern, J. A. Danner, H. B. Mercer.

1873—J. Marsh, T. B. George, W. P. Trew, T. J. Mahoney.

1874—Ebon Bray, J. J. W. Place.

1878—A. P. Johnson, H. Lewis, R. W. Wallace, P. Crawford, A. J. Murrish, John J. Marrs, Charles Riley, Wm. Manix, John Murrish, B. M. Guiles, M. Meals, J. McWhiney, T. Pratt, A. H. Boltin, Elisabeth Baker, W. H. Chapman, W. O. Altaffer, S. M. Palmer, H. Cook, F. H. Cook, Mary A. Reis, E. S. Edwards, J. M. Applegate, P. E. Foxworthy, Hattie B. Cook, A. Eddy.

1879—Peter DeClark, Isaac DeClark, A. L. Chase.

VALLEY TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 10, RANGE NO. 14

- 1871—N. W. Short, M. Gray.
 1872—T. L. Mitchell, J. R. Beach, S. A. Barrett, E. Graham.
 1873—W. T. Beatty, H. H. Haven, W. A. Losce, S. F. Berry, M. Oard,
 A. M. Campbell, George Simpkins, Samuel T. Walker.
 1874—Thomas Jones, John Brennon, W. R. Wheeler.
 1875—P. C. Shannon.
 1876—Wm. Puttergill, S. D. Kooser.
 1878—J. B. Wheeler, Geo. E. Fredericks, T. Q. George, O. Knepper.
 1879—R. R. Rathbon, Joseph Glaze, Wm. Trivelpiece, L. C. France, J. Kin-
 nett, G. W. McKay, David Roach, G. W. Walker, N. H. Smith.

SCHNEIDER TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 11, RANGE NO. 14

- 1874—J. Schuller, John Petz, F. Frederick, G. Schiem.
 1875—W. Fischer, J. G. Grossen, P. Mundscheuk, A. Schueller, C. Murbe,
 F. A. Schmidt, C. Kaubler, F. Lochr, F. L. Berbig.
 1876—C. W. Grosser, T. Kender, F. Winkler, G. Middleton, Robert Penson.
 1877—F. A. Scheick, F. Reinhold, F. Gruenther, W. Weber.
 1878—J. Lindloff, Anna Murgerl, J. Soukup, Frank Schuler, E. Goehring,
 W. A. Shreve, Mary Schuller, W. Freyberg, F. Guenther, J. H. Richardson.
 1879—C. H. Dow, Elizabeth Porter, A. Burgess, S. H. Hogg, Silas Robinson,
 R. Goehring, W. Z. Tillson, B. F. Gardner, C. T. Frederick, A. Scheick, F. A.
 Weidner, F. L. Weidner, J. Schmidt, A. W. Clark, J. Weigel, W. W. Pool, W.
 Freyberg, Hans Voss, T. Blaschko, Granvill Robinson, J. A. King, J. Zulauf
 Peter O'Brien, R. McKutchen, J. H. Vorys, T. Hodges.

GARFIELD TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 12, RANGE NO. 14

- 1874—Erastus Smith, H. J. Alward, Wm. Eastridge, D. Miller, W. Freel.
 1876—E. Veith.
 1877—J. T. Lewis.
 1878—F. Stark, A. A. Hixon.
 1879—J. C. Stark, P. Gehrt, J. W. Mommesson, J. M. Smith, C. Uri, W.
 Brough, B. F. Peck, P. N. Round, C. Landers.

CENTER TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 9, RANGE NO. 15

Also all of town No. 8, range No. 15, embraced in Buffalo County.

- 1871—George N. Smith, H. Hillficker, R. Killgore, B. F. Bengsloe, John
 Blanchard, A. H. Brundage, H. D. Smith, W. A. Hunter, Wm. Smith, George
 Hoge, George Enderly, J. H. Miller, George Flehearty, J. H. O'Neil, S. A. Mack,
 A. Shovel, T. M. Faddis, I. B. Wambaugh, H. Comstock, H. T. Faddis, C. A.
 Smith, John Davis, A. W. Tabor, A. L. Ketchum, F. Moore.
 1872—W. H. Killgore, J. Hillficker, J. Wood, John Mahan, L. D. Forehand,
 G. M. Hively, John Hively, J. Enderly, J. Loverin, J. N. Loverin, Mary A.

Smith, A. P. Mitchell, J. Gabriel, A. B. Richardson, J. C. Pierce, I. L. Cuttler, H. S. Guy, J. McClure, G. W. Kern, Jr., S. I. Asterheid, C. I. Asterheid, D. B. Marsh, S. Brandal, A. Row, W. S. Spooner, J. Crinyan, H. Worden, W. M. Brookover, C. Parry, J. Hively, A. Henderson, T. Garland, C. T. Weldin.

1873—J. M. Frantz, N. D. Brooks, George Grabach, A. W. Hanson, D. Bean, W. Troop, Robert Haines, A. Scott, Maria J. Sadler, Mary A. Smith, J. M. Thomas, J. Thomas, H. V. Westhoven, H. W. Morse, J. S. Harrington, J. B. Ingram, J. A. Waters, G. W. Clem, John Høge.

1874—B. Fancette, L. Troop, J. Scott, J. Troop, E. A. Hartman, C. Lee, P. D. Keys.

1875—J. Hormel, D. Clelland, A. A. Brown.

1876—F. E. Babbitt, B. F. Vandyke, S. Van Scyoc, C. C. Black, F. Reynolds, A. H. Edwards.

1877—J. Trumbull, Wm. Schraim, L. Korecek, C. Osterheid.

1878—W. T. Scott, F. J. Switz, H. Burritt, Mary A. Vance, L. M. Brigham, E. C. Calkins, M. Saville, C. A. Westervelt, A. Bessie, Samuel L. Savidge, C. E. Paist, A. B. Clark, I. Henthorn, J. Layton, J. A. Harron, J. E. Lund, M. F. Martin, S. H. McNutt, A. D. Randall, M. O. Riley, H. J. Mack, E. Mathews, G. W. Mecum, M. M. Martin, D. Allen, J. M. Chism, R. W. Russell, S. Landis, C. D. Ayers, H. C. Sams, W. H. Salisbury, S. Wenzell, D. Webbert, W. L. Nash, J. S. Sizer, S. J. Waldron, L. W. Zook, P. Ford, W. E. Hawley, J. Eaton, J. W. Winslow, T. T. Clelland, J. McKain, M. M. Allen, M. Henthorn, T. McBride, James Evans, Rosa Grant.

1879—W. B. McBride, B. H. Goulding, R. H. Eaton, J. Anderson, E. D. McCalve.

THORNTON TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 10, RANGE NO. 15

1873—C. A. Borders, B. Turner, F. Chisler, F. J. Weldin, M. Conners, J. C. V. Kelley, B. J. Holmes, W. S. Hall.

1874—S. S. St. John, J. M. Smith, J. Gass, N. L. Coombs, Joel Miller, N. Fellers, J. Trumbull, W. J. Neely, J. E. Holloway, F. G. Hamer, B. Streigle, G. H. Cutting, W. G. Patterson, S. W. Thornton, E. Goodsell.

1875—G. R. Tracy, S. W. Powers, H. Stanford, J. Schutrum, P. D. Keys, J. H. Borders, D. K. Larimer, E. Cooperider.

1876—G. P. Caldwell, J. A. Waters, G. Schmid.

1878—J. Lake, George Gilming, Z. A. Weldin, L. W. Weldin, D. McCan, W. Weldin, Rebecca S. Neely, C. C. Smith, W. J. Turner, T. Spencer.

1879—Caroline M. Gilming, J. Gass, L. F. Lyberger, R. Gass, F. Gunst, W. S. Ball, T. Caton, A. Henderson, A. W. Smith, I. S. Tracy, F. W. Magee.

CEDAR TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 11, RANGE NO. 15

1873—M. A. Young, I. Bates, Joseph Clayton, S. A. Marshall, S. Kinsey, E. West, E. W. Carpenter, Joseph White, S. J. Houston, J. M. Treichler, S. Higgins, J. Dance.

1874—A. St. Peter, J. McCool, J. Rink, H. Luce, J. E. Miller.

1878—W. C. Tillson, J. Mapes, C. H. George, G. Vater.

1879—A. Barker, J. Barker, G. W. Duncan, J. M. Shields, A. J. Stover, C. W. Putnam, D. McCool, W. Bigsty, T. Hunnebbun, G. A. Tuppan.

BEAVER TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 12, RANGE NO. 15

1873—H. Hughes, J. P. Christensen.

1874—J. Armstrong.

1875—J. E. Nave, J. McGee.

1876—B. F. Parkhurst, H. C. Padelford.

1877—J. W. Herbough.

1878—E. Nervig, W. A. Weller, J. Michie, T. W. Smay, Robt. Hutchinson.

1879—H. Work, W. Lee, Ole Lee, J. L. Miller, T. J. Cocking.

RIVERDALE TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 9, RANGE NO. 16

Also town No. 8, range No. 16, as embraced in Buffalo County.

1871—George E. Smith, Jas. A. Smith, W. F. Marsh, E. T. Jay, Pattie Giddings, W. W. Patterson, Mahlon White, L. S. Dickenson, J. W. Whitlock, J. Q. Potter, J. F. Chace, G. S. Ball, W. S. Croy, N. Gould, A. M. White, I. White, H. Van Arman.

1872—John Henning, D. Lewis, W. Slote, D. M. Logan, James Jenkins, I. Webb, F. L. Perkins, Joseph Scott, J. M. Winterbottom, George E. Smith, A. M. Gay, I. J. Hillman, Anna M. Smith, J. W. Leland, L. B. Fifield, D. Rowan, D. Anderson, A. Fellows, F. W. Dart, A. W. Barlow, Ashbury Collins, F. N. Colwell, C. Winterbottom, F. G. Keens, A. J. Gibson, A. Larson, H. Miller, J. C. Bunnell, L. B. Cunningham, B. C. Byrd, C. Sischo, J. F. Jones, P. Calhoon, C. Stevenson, F. Cuddebach, J. Cuddebach, J. W. Kick, E. S. Perkins, W. G. Carson, J. B. Sammons, S. Wenzell, C. Gould, Wm. Morse.

1873—F. R. Woods, Hannah Jay, Geo. E. Norris, J. N. Keller, J. W. Bradley, W. J. Perkins, J. G. Carson, E. P. McDonald, J. C. Bunnell, J. R. Hurst, J. Carr, A. E. Russell, J. H. Hollenbeck, E. Spencer, W. Smart, A. W. Reddish, Wm. Swartwood, W. C. Griffith, A. H. Connor, J. A. Smith, M. Smidt, W. S. Gregory, W. C. Turner, Max Boetsch, J. Williams, Walter Colby.

1874—J. W. Nash, C. Baumgartner, M. M. White, C. Israel, J. Fish, E. H. Wilcox, W. Hewitt, N. C. Honnold, E. L. Lull, P. Keefer, F. Reynolds, H. W. Ross.

1875—M. N. Hildebrand, J. B. Wicker, J. R. King, C. Larson, Ole Larson, B. Tuesdale, C. Abrandt, W. B. Brown, Wm. Moner, T. C. Roberts.

1876—John Pfrom, C. S. Hill, S. S. Hill, C. W. Porter, L. Wenzell, T. S. Nightengale.

1877—H. H. Magill.

1878—N. Campbell, M. Nevius, H. E. Swan, H. Lantz, D. Lowenstein, C. L. A. Klatte, Julia Haven, C. C. Black, J. S. Atwood, John Barnes, Joseph Black, E. Kleber, J. M. Feather, James Cox, W. S. Slate.

1879—J. H. Lantz, H. Lowenstein, N. D. Bort, S. R. Black, I. J. Sommers, W. L. Nash, W. M. Guardian, M. Smith, A. J. Crossley, J. L. Seymour, A. Sheifeldt.

DIVIDE TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 10, RANGE NO. 16

1872—Wm. Willard, W. Richardson, V. O. S. Reynolds, A. D. Raymond, W. F. Piercy, J. L. Chevaux.

1873—J. F. Young, S. Herod, A. E. Thomas, G. N. McKeen, M. J. Spry, I. Neff, E. A. Cutting, W. L. Willard, G. S. Duncan, I. S. Knight, Mrs. M. B. Fox, D. Inman, D. A. Dorsey, E. W. Thomas, C. A. McConkey, J. Joseph, A. L. Spry, J. Brown, S. A. Atwood, G. L. Bakewell, C. Lewis, B. C. Sprague, J. E. Spry, S. N. Spry, D. Vance, R. H. Eaton, H. W. Collins, T. G. McLaughlin.

1874—T. J. McKee, H. Mitchell, G. Beal, H. Sievert, J. Ginther, C. Kirk, F. Siewert, F. Riesenweber, A. Davidson, F. Willoper, H. Baumgarn, S. Miller, T. Turney, J. Rilinger, A. H. Cleaveland, C. Bishop, John Swenson, J. Schutt.

1875—L. Logan, J. H. Harrison, L. N. Thorndike, D. H. Compton, J. Somerville, Thomas Ginther, O. Neff, Wm. Hueselton, F. Weiss, A. Gartley, H. Randolph, C. Schandtz, E. Cuddebach, A. L. Hopwood, A. Ayers.

1876—L. G. Walter, N. Boquet, C. Stierlen, L. Brucker, A. A. Brucker, T. Hutchinson.

1877—V. H. Barrager, Robert Scheiching.

1878—F. Hone, Lydia P. Bever, A. Stedwell, Robt. Knüttel, F. Juhl, C. Scheiching.

1879—Emory Peck, J. W. Lalone, W. H. Pettit, D. Hamilton, B. Koepe, M. S. Stover, H. A. Wells, K. Holmes, Xaver Hoell, F. Juhl, G. Scheiching, Wm. Stover.

RUSCO TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 11, RANGE NO. 16

1873—E. M. Holly.

1874—A. Peake, John Wilson, L. H. Johnson, J. L. Scott, L. Allen, B. D. Graham, A. M. Morse, F. Boyer, J. H. Lockard.

1875—W. H. Jordon.

1876—W. Rusco.

1877—M. P. Baker, C. Scott.

1878—J. W. Phillips, A. D. Colwell.

1879—E. Beyer, J. A. Beyer, J. T. Field, A. O. Olsen, C. E. Field, S. A. Field, Kate M. Trott, F. M. Moore, J. Nickman.

LOUP TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 12, RANGE NO. 16

1874—H. F. Hand, J. T. Palmer, L. A. Colburn, C. B. Oakley, N. Dick, N. A. Brunce, J. Welch, H. H. Clark.

1876—E. Colburn, J. C. Carr, John Sheckler.

1878—C. F. Madsen, J. H. Booher, R. Reiter, J. J. Parks, C. A. Turner, O. Holmes, J. Pearson, I. Holmes, D. A. Parks.

1879—H. H. Smith, E. Reiter, D. A. Peterson, J. F. Hunter, W. H. Sparks, J. Unick, D. Rohrbarer, C. E. Parks, F. Scholtz.

ODESSA TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 9, RANGE NO. 17

Also that portion of town No. 8, range No. 17, embraced within the limits of Buffalo County.

1871—Dan A. Crowell, B. Allen Crowell.

1872—R. D. Gould, J. Zerk, D. Brown, E. Christianson, C. Christianson, J. F. Suplee, S. Tolefsen, R. Vails, S. W. Homer, Flora Thomas, H. Brown, J. B. Vincent, M. Fagley, H. F. Leonard, Wm. C. T. Kurth, Geo. W. Tovey, J. Ratliff, M. Homer, J. E. F. Vails, John D. Seaman.

1873—C. S. Greenman, E. N. Lord, Geo. D. Aspinwall, George Hall, R. F. Watters, Theodore Knox, James Sturrock, A. Ream, J. E. Chidester, J. Homer, Jr.

1874—James Halliwell, D. Harpst, John T. Brown, Edward Keltner, Wm. F. Reeves, J. M. Grant, Thomas Maloney.

1875—George Jones.

1876—H. Ransom, Catherine Edwards.

1878—F. W. Nickols, J. Vails, George A. Bailey, Susan C. Hurlburt, R. D. Gould, D. Hostetler, H. H. Achey, Susan Grant, L. C. Skelley, Ada Grant.

1879—J. Segard, John Davis, W. Broat, Cordelia M. Waite, J. B. Neal, John Work, George T. Broughton, Wm. H. McNett.

GRANT TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 10, RANGE NO. 17

1872—John Groves, J. Atkinson, Jr., Richard Bell, J. J. Roberts.

1873—M. B. Hunt, W. White, E. S. Marsh, G. L. Kough, A. M. Mudge, J. K. Sanford, W. H. Brown, G. F. Hesselgrave, T. E. Foster, Wm. N. Brown.

1874—Wm. Grant, G. W. Coffman, A. Thompson, Lydia M. Mace, H. Coffman, J. H. Coffman.

1875—H. A. Jules, G. H. Sand, D. Halsey, Charles Wandel, C. L. Hamilton.

1876—M. Butler, A. Clark, L. Major.

1877—Katie Lander, J. W. Brewster.

1878—Daniel Holden, P. H. Esler, M. E. Lathrop, H. L. Seaman, Pat Riley.

1879—J. H. Fisher, B. L. Mushrush, H. Brown, F. C. Almy, W. J. Clark, H. B. Gilbert, J. C. Douke, Wm. M. Hoover.

SCOTT TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 11, RANGE NO. 17

1873—Benjamin Scott, John Laro.

1874—W. Hanshen, J. P. Gilmore, James A. Betts.

1878—J. J. Moore, James Broadfoot.

1879—W. W. McLea, O. H. Lowery.

SARTORIA TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 12, RANGE NO. 17

1878—B. Lee, Nels Lee, Mattie Stockdale.

1879—P. Pierce, W. Cook, C. Cook, W. J. Grant, George Pfeiffer.

ELM CREEK TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 9, RANGE NO. 18

Also that portion of town No. 8, range No. 18, embraced within Buffalo County.

1871—A. F. Fraser, T. J. Holt, B. Foot, H. Ryan.

1872—Fannie Nevius, James Tyler, W. Shreve, R. M. Holt, M. Stout, F. Ryan, D. McAlister, W. S. Leake, J. E. Anderson, P. Hansen, D. T. Hood, W. V. Hoge, J. McKee, J. W. Stevens.

1873—H. B. Steele, John Tyler, D. C. Bond, D. Dooley, J. Degler.

1874—C. J. Swayne, H. T. Morton, J. Meach, J. Dane, J. Ulrich, William Dawns, J. T. Shufflebarger, Wm. Snell, F. Foster, J. DeKam, Charles Davis.

1875—L. Kocker, A. S. Leake, S. T. Wolf, A. Shufflebarger, J. Shufflebarger, Sarah J. Calkins, George Miller.

1876—G. W. House, J. P. Arndt.

1877—D. I. Brown.

* 1878—R. K. Potter, W. C. Shufflebarger, J. R. Churchill, M. Hurley.

1879—J. Somell, A. Straight, S. M. Tingley, H. Hobson, C. E. Holmes, L. Knapp, D. Browning, A. S. Sabin, L. P. Wells, J. Demuth, A. Jarchke, Thomas Bolan, N. O. Calkins, J. B. Wait.

LOGAN TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 10, RANGE NO. 18

1878—C. A. Willis, Ella A. Willis.

1879—Anton Rager.

ARMADA TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 11, RANGE NO. 18

1873—H. C. Harbough, A. J. Fennell, Wm. Carr, R. Burney, Thomas Jeffry.

1874—John Mercer, J. H. Brown, Robert Miller, Oscar Hamilton.

1875—I. Lamb, J. F. Mackey.

1877—A. L. Armstrong.

1878—Wm. M. White, G. A. Roach, H. Zarrs.

1879—J. L. Abel, R. F. Simpson, F. B. Craps, A. F. Burt, H. T. West.

HARRISON TOWNSHIP—TOWN NO. 12, RANGE NO. 18

1879—John Hurse, J. W. Cassell, E. Miles, C. Olmstead, W. N. Wright, E. A. Woodbridge, Cannute Lee.

CHAPTER XXVII

FIRST FOURTH OF JULY PICNIC, 1872—HELD IN DUGDALE GROVE—SUNDAY SCHOOLS FROM BUFFALO AND HALL COUNTIES PARTICIPATE—500 CHILDREN IN ATTENDANCE—SAMUEL B. LOWELL, PRESIDENT—COL. H. D. NILES DELIVERS THE ORATION—PROF. D. B. WORLEY IN CHARGE OF MUSIC.

FIRST FOURTH OF JULY PICNIC

(From Buffalo County Beacon, July 13, 1872)

The day was ushered in by the booming of a big cottonwood log and the ringing of bells. It was one of those beautiful days only to be seen in Nebraska. The Sunday schools of Gibbon and Wood River Union (Centre Township) and their friends assembled at the schoolhouse in Gibbon at 11 A. M., where conveyances were ready, for all who wished to participate, for the grove, situated about four miles east of town on grounds owned by Henry Dugdale. On arrival at the grove, we found it a cool and delightful place on the banks of Wood River, carefully cleaned of underbrush and fitted up with seats, swings, rostrum, etc. District No. 1 and Wood River Station (Hall County) schools were already on the ground. After a short time spent in preparation, the different schools, headed by their superintendents, marched into the grove, the Wood River School first, numbering sixty members and bearing a banner trimmed with colored rosettes and ribbon streamers. The center was the figure of an eagle of beautiful needle work, bearing in its beak a scroll inscribed with the national motto, "E Pluribus Unum." This banner was the work of Japanese men and was presented to the school by Doctor Patterson. Rufus Mitchell was superintendent of this school. Next in the procession came District No. 1 School numbering 115 members with Rev. J. N. Allen as superintendent. Then came the Gibbon School, 150 members, bearing a banner inscribed "Gibbon Sunday School" and on the reverse side "Holy Bible," the banner trimmed with evergreen, Rev. O. A. Buzzell superintendent. Last came the Wood River Union School, sixty-five members, carrying the Stars and Stripes, and a plain banner with the inscription "Union Sunday School" and on the reverse "God is Love," W. H. Kinney, superintendent.

The assemblage was called to order by the president of the day, S. B. Lowell. Rev. Wm. Morse offered an appropriate and impressive prayer. The audience then sang the national hymn, "America," led by Prof. D. B. Worley, who presided at the organ, this followed by the reading of the immortal declaration of independence by Rev. J. J. W. Place. The remaining exercises were as follows: Song, "Beautiful River," by the Gibbon School.

Oration, Col. H. D. Niles.



SAMUEL B. LOWELL

Early settler in Buffalo County. Presided at first Fourth of July Sunday school picnic held in the county, 1872.

The afternoon exercises consisted of a musical selection by Prof. D. B. Worley; an address by Rev. J. N. Allen and recitations by Misses Edith George, Flora Sprague, Carrie Marsh and Flossie Day. * * * It would have taken a great stretch of the imagination to have pictured to the mind the scene which actually took place on the Fourth at Dugdale's Grove. Not less than five hundred children assembled and singing praises to God where eighteen months before the wild Indians roamed at pleasure and herds of buffalo occupied the very grounds the picnic was held on. It shows with what a bound civilization has advanced over the prairies of Nebraska within a short period of time. May the children who took part in the first celebration of our national holiday in Buffalo County live to see many more such.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE COUNTY SEAT—THE FIRST COURTHOUSE—HAULING WOOD FROM THE LOUP RIVER—FIRST TERM OF COURT—LIST OF GRAND AND PETIT JURORS—OFFICERS OF THE COURT—BOUNDARIES OF JUDICIAL DISTRICT—REMOVAL OF COUNTY SEAT—BUILDING A SECOND COURTHOUSE—USING THE OLD COURTHOUSE—ACADEMY AT GIBBON—BAPTIST COLLEGE—UNITED BRETHREN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE—COMMERCIAL COLLEGES—FARMER'S INSTITUTE.

THE COUNTY SEAT

When on the first day of December, 1869, Governor David Butler called a special election to be held in Buffalo County, in order to reorganize the county, he designated that the election be held at the schoolhouse in Precinct No. 1, which was in the immediate vicinity of Wood River Center, and thus Wood River Center became the county seat of the reorganized county.

At this point, in the dwelling of Patrick Walsh, in an ironbound box, secured from Fort Kearney by Sergt. Michael Coady and presented to the county, all the records of the county were kept, the same being in possession of County Judge Patrick Walsh. The official meetings of the county commissioners were held at this point, Wood River Center, until the arrival of the colony in April, 1871. On May 13, 1871, a meeting of the commissioners was held at Gibbon. At this meeting the commissioners authorized the holding of their meetings at Gibbon, it being a more convenient point. About this date, Sergt. Michael Coady, county clerk, who resided at Fort Kearney, being in the military service of the United States, appointed Frank S. Trew, deputy county clerk and the county records were placed in Mr. Trew's keeping. George Gilmore had erected a cheap frame building, 12 by 16 feet in size as a land office. This building was used also by Mr. Trew as a land office and in this building was kept the county records and it was also used by the county as the office of the county clerk, county judge and county treasurer, Patrick Walsh being county judge and by appointment county treasurer. At the regular election held October 10, 1871, the county seat was, by vote, located at Gibbon. At the same election Aaron Ward was elected county clerk, Edward Oliver, treasurer; C. Putnam, superintendent of schools; O. E. Thompson, sheriff; B. F. Sammons, and W. F. McClure, commissioners. As recalled Frank S. Trew served as deputy county treasurer. On May 22, 1872, the county records were transferred to a building erected for a private residence, being at this date (1915) the residence of Mr. F. M. Riggs. On this removal the county clerk was authorized to expend not to exceed \$50 for a desk and other furniture for his office. The county offices and county records were kept in this

building, for which a rental of \$10 per month was paid by the county until February, 1873, when on the completion of the new courthouse the offices and records were transferred to that building.

THE COURTHOUSE

On April 20, 1872, the commissioners, W. F. McClure and B. F. Sammons, ordered a special election to vote on the proposition of issuing courthouse bonds. This election was held May 7, 1872, and resulted as follows:

For bonds, 121; against bonds, 55; majority for bonds, 66. On June 8, 1872, Charles F. Driscoll, an architect from Omaha, appeared before the commissioners and was authorized to furnish plans and specifications for the courthouse building. He received for drawing plans and specifications the sum of \$423.

To build this courthouse there was issued \$20,000 in bonds, bearing 10 per cent interest and dated July 1, 1872. They were twenty-year bonds, optional after ten years. It might be of interest to state that these bonds, are still unpaid (1908); they were refunded in 1888 at 7 per cent interest; in 1893, refunded at 5 per cent interest; in 1899 at 3 60-100 per cent interest. The interest on these bonds from July 1, 1872, to date, 1908, approximates \$51,480. The original bonds were sold to Farr & Trew, bankers at Gibbon, for 87½ cents, that being 5 cents higher than the bid of any other bidder.

The county received in cash for these bonds.....	\$17,500
The county has paid, approximately, in interest.....	51,480
The county has yet to pay on bonds.....	20,000

On July 13, 1872, ten bids were received for the construction of the courthouse and jail, the jail being in the basement of the building. The contract was awarded to H. B. Dexter of Omaha to complete the building for \$16,925. Mr. Dexter further agreeing that the brick would be manufactured at Gibbon. Mr. Dexter at once began the construction of the courthouse. The stone for the foundation and the lumber to be used were shipped from Omaha. The brick were made from clay and sand found in the immediate vicinity of Gibbon and it was planned to burn the brick with wood procured from the Loup River in the north part of the county, a distance of about twenty-five miles by the route necessarily traveled. The contract to cut the wood was taken by W. F. McClure and he was assisted by John Silvernail and Samuel Mattice. J. S. Chamberlain took the contract to haul the wood at \$6 a cord and among those who hauled wood for this purpose were J. S. Chamberlain, W. W. Gibson, S. C. and B. C. Bassett. Bray Brothers and W. F. McClure. McClure hauled with a horse team, the rest with oxen. With three yoke of oxen two cords of wood could be hauled at a load, by doubling the teams from the Loup through the sand, a distance of about four miles. There was a drive of about twenty miles without water, making it necessary to drive in the night a portion of the trip as the oxen could not stand it without water if driven in the heat of the day. It required three days, with good luck, to make the trip with oxen, and it usually took longer as breakdowns occurred or wagon tires became loose, often in the night, when the wheel must be taken off, the tire heated over a wood fire, strips of burlap tacked on the wagon

wheel felloe and the tire, when heated as hot as the green wood would heat it, crowded back on the wheel and cooled with all the water carried in the little five gallon kegs used on such trips. A loose tire was greatly dreaded as it meant a delay of some hours. The wood cut for this purpose was both cottonwood and oak. It was cut on the south side of the Loup, opposite the mouth of Beaver Creek on section 9, Garfield Township, the timber being on an island in the bend of the river and had thus been protected from prairie fires by having water on both sides of the timber.

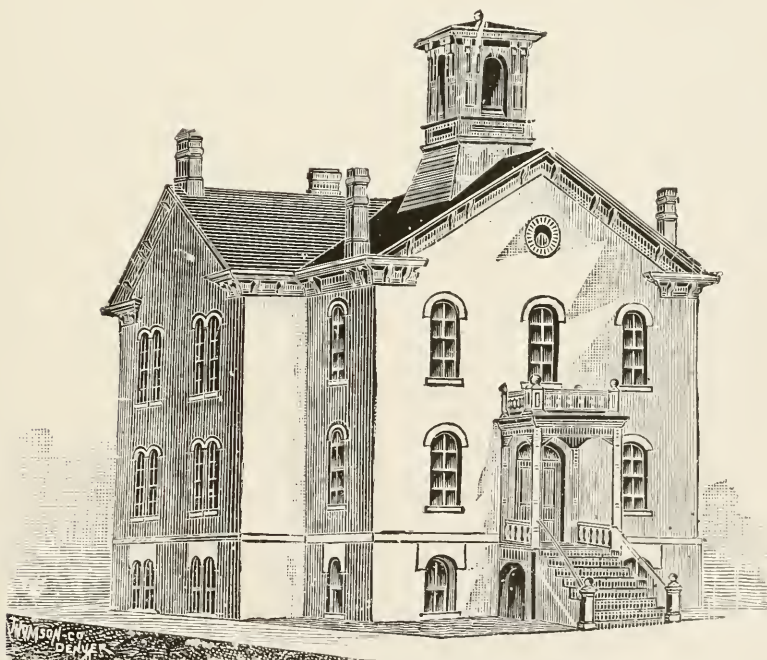
There was no money in hauling this wood at \$6 a cord and the last brick made were burned with coal, it being impossible to develop sufficient heat with the green wood. It might be mentioned that in tearing down this courthouse in 1908, brick used in the inside walls were found that had not been heated sufficiently hot in the making or burning to destroy the grass roots that had grown in the clay of which the brick had been made. Some of the men who hauled wood on this contract carried at times nothing but green corn to eat on the trip, and while green corn is a most toothsome article of food, especially as a side dish where a variety of foods comprise the meal, yet when one has corn for breakfast, corn for dinner, corn for supper, corn, corn, corn, it somehow loses its delicious toothsome flavor, especially when eaten cold. In the drive of about twenty miles, without water, in hot weather and hauling a heavy load, the oxen sometimes became so thirsty as to become unmanageable and it was necessary to unhitch from the load and go some miles to the water. At such times the oxen, frantic with thirst, would break away and bawling run like mad for water and drink till it seemed their hides would burst.

One serious accident occurred in the building of the courthouse. While working in a sand pit on the north side of Wood River, to secure sand for the construction of the building, the sand caved in and thereby William Brady lost his life. Mr. Brady was a member of the colony, a soldier of the Civil war, Company F, One Hundred and Twenty-third New York Infantry. His death occurred on September 17, 1872. He left a wife and four small children and none of the early settlers had a more arduous, laborious struggle than did Mrs. William Brady to support and educate her family of children. She met this struggle, extending over many years, with fidelity and true courage and success crowned her efforts.

Just when the courthouse was completed the county records do not show. Final settlement was made with Mr. Dexter, the contractor, on April 1, 1873. The first meeting held in the new courthouse was on Washington's birthday, February 22, 1873. It was a public gathering of the people on the occasion it now seems, of the formal acceptance of the courthouse. The gathering was in the evening and among the other exercises was an address by Col. H. D. Niles, a local attorney. The exercises concluded with a dance, music for the same being furnished by the Thomas Brothers Orchestra, George, Aleck and Thorn Thomas, homesteaders living in the eastern part of the county. The first entry in the journal of the District Court in and for Buffalo County, is as follows: "The first term of District Court was called (as the law provided) for March 3, 1873. Judge failed to appear therefore I adjourn District Court until March 4, 1873.—Aaron Ward, clerk of the District Court in and for Buffalo County, Nebraska." The court was adjourned from day to day until March 6th when an order was



BUFFALO COUNTY COURTHOUSE, KEARNEY



FIRST COURTHOUSE IN BUFFALO COUNTY ERECTED AT GIBBON IN 1873

received from Judge Maxwell adjourning court until April 3, 1873. This order was issued from Plattsmouth, Nebr.

In the Buffalo County Beacon of March 22, 1873, is given the names of grand and petit jurors, drawn to serve at the ensuing term of the District Court to be held at Gibbon on the 3d of April next: Grand Jury—A. D. George, J. P. Smith, A. Clark, F. D. Boardman, Miles B. Hunt, W. H. Kinney, Ed Oliver, Henry Dugdale, H. Hilficker, Aaron Scott, J. E. Judd, H. Fieldgrove, D. P. Crable, J. N. Keller, DeWitt Brown, S. W. Grant. Petit jury—G. Flehearty, George Hoge, David Harpst, William Patterson, E. S. Marsh, B. F. Sammons, Ira D. Bishop, George Norris, W. H. Barnes, J. Danner, C. O. Childs, Miller H. Fagley, I. C. Starbuck, W. C. Sunderland, L. B. Cunningham, D. B. Allen, S. S. Curry, David Anderson, G. W. Tovey, Charles Lisch, Barnley Foot, E. T. Jay, Robert Goar, W. Hewitt.

In regard to the first term of the District Court the journal records as follows: "At the adjourned March term, 1873, of the District Court of the Third Judicial District in and for Buffalo County, Nebraska, held at the courthouse in Gibbon in said county on the 3d day of April, 1873. Present Samuel Maxwell, judge of said court: M. B. Hoxie, district attorney; O. E. Thompson, sheriff; and Aaron Ward, clerk of said court." The sheriff read the names of (grand) jurors summoned by him and the follow reported present: A. D. George, J. P. Smith, A. Clark, W. H. Kenney, H. Dugdale, H. Hilficker, Aaron Scott, H. Fieldgrove, D. P. Crable and S. W. Grant. The court ordered that the sheriff complete the panel by selecting talesmen from those present, resulting as follows: J. W. Wiggins, S. V. Seeley, C. Putnam, J. M. Bayley, T. Q. George and P. K. Drury. C. Putnam was appointed foreman and the jury duly sworn and instructed. The first case was C. B. Parsons vs. Simon Murphy. The plaintiff filed stipulation and the case was settled without going to a jury. Henry D. Niles presented a certificate from the District Court of Ohio and was duly admitted to practice as an attorney. Norton H. Hemiup presented a diploma from the Supreme Court of the State of New York and was admitted to practice in this district. C. B. Parsons presented a certificate from Iowa and was duly admitted. James A. Smith was also admitted to practice upon presenting his certificate from Indiana. The grand jury reported "no indictments" and the jail in a satisfactory condition. It does not appear that a petit jury was impaneled and doubtless the only case before the court was the one mentioned. There is a tradition that at this term of court Judge Maxwell was presented with a pair of gloves or mittens as a token of respect and esteem as well as a souvenir of the occasion. If this be true the judge had need of them if he was out of doors on the wind swept prairies of the state on the 14th and 15th days of the same month when raged the memorable storm of '73.

At this first term of District Court held in the county it is interesting to note, so far as can be learned, whence came these persons who had a part in the holding of the term of court, representing as it did "The majesty of the law." The judge of the court, the clerk and three members of the grand jury, including the foreman were from the State of New York, the sheriff and one member of the jury natives of England, and of the other members of the jury, three came from Pennsylvania, three from Massachusetts, two from Ohio, and one from Missouri.

As the writer recalls from memory Messrs. F. G. Hamer, A. H. Connor and D. Westervelt were practicing attorneys in the county although their names are not mentioned as being in attendance at this term of court: Including these among the attorneys, three, Messrs. Connor, Hamer, and Smith, came from Indiana, Mr. Hemiup from New York, Mr. Niles from Ohio and Mr. Parsons from Iowa. Mr. Niles was the only attorney residing at Gibbon, his office being in the courthouse; the other attorneys resided at Kearney Junction. Of the twenty-three persons mentioned in the court record as performing duties in connection with the holding of this first term of District Court at least thirteen of the number were soldiers of the Civil war.

In the Civil war it was the custom in the formation of brigades, divisions and corps, to include in these formations regiments from many different states, as it tended to a spirit of emulation and inspiration reaching to every officer and private connected with a regiment. This spirit—pride of birth, country, state, what e'er one pleases to term it, pervades all classes, even those engaged in the making and execution of the law. Able attorneys, learned judges are inclined to give more weight, to place a greater degree of dependence upon a statute or a decision of the court coming from their own native state, and especially is it true that legislators are extremely jealous as regards the superiority of the laws in force in the state whence they came. In the making and executing of the law some of the results, that to a "layman" seems wholly unexplainable, when traced back to the original source are found to have had as a first cause this same spirit before referred to. The township organization law, enacted by the Nebraska Legislature in 1883 is a case in point as regards the making of the laws. This law, as a whole, required things to be done which it was utterly impossible to do. On investigation it was found that the committee which framed this law was composed of men who came from various states, New York, Ohio, Iowa, etc., having township organization and each member of the committee considered the law of his native state in this respect much the best. The result was that the Nebraska law was made up of sections taken bodily from the statutes of the states mentioned without careful supervision to make sure the various provisions would harmonize as a whole; the result, the requiring of impossible things to be done. This spirit of emulation on the part of early settlers, coming as they did from many different states, together with the fact that they were all, men and women, comparatively young, also hopeful, ambitious, courageous, has had much to do with the wonderful growth and development of the county and state.

At the date of holding the first term of District Court, the Third Judicial District in the state, of which Buffalo County formed a part, comprised not only all the territory north of the Platte River except the counties of Douglas and Sarpy, but that part of Dawson and Lincoln counties south of the Platte and all territory west of Lincoln County. The area of this Third Judicial District exceeded 50,000 square miles, an area greater than is comprised in either of the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania or New York.

Under the constitution of the state in force from 1866 to 1875 the Supreme Court was composed of three judges, to each of whom was also assigned the duties of district judge. The three judges in 1873 were George B. Lake, Daniel

Gantt and Samuel Maxwell, the latter being assigned the Third Judicial District.

Under the state constitution adopted in 1875 there was created the Fifth Judicial District, embracing the counties of Buffalo, Adams, Webster, Franklin, Harlan, Kearney, Phelps, Gosper, Furnas, Hitchcock, Dundy, Chase, Cheyenne, Keith, Lincoln, Dawson, Sherman, Red Willow, Frontier and the unorganized territory west of said district.

In 1887 the Legislature created the Tenth Judicial District, embracing Buffalo, Dawson, Custer, Lincoln, Logan, Sherman, Keith and Cheyenne counties and the unorganized territory west of Logan County.

In 1891 the Legislature created the Twelfth Judicial District, embracing Buffalo, Dawson, Custer and Sherman counties.

In 1911 the Legislature changed the boundaries of the Twelfth District to include Custer, Sherman and Buffalo counties.

Before the first courthouse was completed agitation had begun for removal of the county seat. Time is too short, eternity too near, printer's ink and white paper too expensive, to even attempt to relate the history of a county seat fight. On August 24, 1874, the county commissioners, W. F. McClure, Patrick Walsh and J. E. Chidester, were induced to declare the courthouse unsafe and to order that no meetings except for county purposes be allowed in the building. On August 29, 1874, a petition was presented to the commissioners asking for a special election for the relocation of the county seat. On October 13, 1874, a special election for the relocation of the county seat was held, resulting in its removal to Kearney. The records do not show the number of votes cast for and against this question.

In the removal of the county seat the records were loaded in the night on a farm wagon by Joseph Scott, county clerk, and his deputy, F. G. Keens, arriving at Kearney Junction about 2 A. M., and were deposited in a heap on the floor of the Chandler Building, being guarded until morning by F. G. Keens, then a lad of twenty-one years. The Chandler Building then stood on the lot now occupied by the Presbyterian Church. This building is still standing on the west side of Central Avenue and is occupied as a millinery store. About July 1, 1875, the records were removed to the R. R. Greer Building on Twenty-fourth Street, just west of the Catholic Church, and remained there until January 4, 1876. The Greer Building is still standing (1912) on the east side of Central Avenue and is occupied by Greeks as a shoe shining parlor. Much of the early history of the county government was enacted in the Chandler and Greer buildings, while occupied as county offices, one of the most exciting and important events being the auction sale of lots in School Section No. 36, upon which lots then sold many of the buildings of the present City of Kearney now stand. During this period the sessions of the District Court were held in More's Hall, now (1912) the upper floor of the Gilcrest Lumber Company Building on Central Avenue. One of the inducements offered for the removal of the county seat was that the South Platte Land Company and the Union Pacific Railroad Company would donate to the county a site for a courthouse and also erect a building for courthouse purposes. The site donated is the one now in use by the county and which, for a consideration of \$1, was deeded to the county December 27, 1875, and thereon was erected in 1875 by these two companies a cheap frame building, two

stories high, and used by the county until the erection of the present courthouse. This building was first occupied by the county on January 4, 1876. At its own expense the county erected, on the present courthouse site, a small 1-story brick building, with fireproof vaults, for the safe keeping of county records, and in this building were the offices of the county clerk and treasurer. The frame building erected by the Union Pacific Railroad Company for use as a courthouse, when no longer needed for that purpose, was moved to another location, veneered with brick, and is now being used as the W. C. T. U. Hospital.

In 1886 a proposition was submitted to the voters of the county, and adopted, whereby a five-mill levy for the term of three years was authorized, the proceeds of the same to be used for the building of a courthouse. The understanding of the voters was that the cost of the completed courthouse would not exceed the amount of the levy voted, estimated at about \$45,000, but the larger per cent of the levy was used in the foundation of the proposed courthouse and it was necessary for the voters to authorize the issue of county bonds in the amount of \$45,000 with which to complete the courthouse building, making the actual cost of the present building \$90,000. In the light of history, as viewed by the writer, the courthouse proposition has been unsatisfactory and disappointing from the date of the voting of the bonds to build the first courthouse until the present time. It was by means of representations, later found to be not true, that promoters induced the voters to authorize the issue of the \$20,000 in bonds to build the first courthouse, and it was promoters, with city lots to sell, who secured the location for the present courthouse site at a point entirely unsatisfactory to the people of the county.

The casual reader of this history of the first courthouse in Buffalo County, whether he be an early settler or late comer, will be quite apt to exclaim: "What a waste of money! What utter foolishness on the part of some one or more persons that taxpayers should have been compelled to squander more than \$70,000 in paying for a courthouse that was used by the county less than two years for courthouse purposes."

It seems best to complete, in a brief manner, the history of the first courthouse, the uses to which it was put, and possibly when this is understood it will appear that the erection of the building was not after all an entirely useless waste of public money. In 1875 there was established in the courthouse building an academic department of the Gibbon schools, District No. 2. Prof. W. S. Campbell was at the head of this academic department for two years. County Superintendent of Schools J. J. W. Place visited the schools on December 13, 1875, and in his official record reports as follows: "Spent the day in visiting the academic school in Gibbon. The scholars are enthusiastic in their studies. Lessons mostly perfect. Twenty-three scholars present. Prof. W. S. Campbell is an able teacher; he holds the only first grade certificate in the county."

On November 28, 1876, County Superintendent John Swenson records: "Visited the academic school at Gibbon. About thirty-five pupils in attendance, many of whom live out of the district and others have moved in to take advantage of this school. The brilliant success of this school is greatly owing to the personal character of Professor Campbell both as a man and as a teacher. There is need of another teacher in this department."

Prof. J. T. Mallalieu succeeded Professor Campbell and for three years fully maintained the high standing of this school and the excellent work accomplished by the students in attendance. The necessity and importance of this school at that date can hardly be appreciated by those conversant with present educational advantages only. In all the territory of Central and Western Nebraska, at the dates mentioned, there was not a high school nor a school where the educational advantages offered were much above the present eighth grade in our common schools, hence it was that the academic department of the Gibbon schools offered superior educational advantages to students from a large territory and more especially to those students desiring to fit themselves as teachers in our common schools, and students came long distances to attend this school.

Equally as important and far-reaching in results were a series of county farmers' institutes held in the courthouse building from 1874 to 1880, at which were presented and discussed problems relating to the agriculture of the county, and the lessons there learned, the seed there sown, have brought forth fruit in great abundance to all the people of the county. In the growth and development of the county education has been the most important factor. This wonderful growth and development can be best illustrated by a brief comparison. In 1870 the population of the county was 193 and the value of all property for purposes of taxation \$788,988, and 97 per cent of this amount was that of the railroad and telegraph companies. In 1900 the population of the county was 20,254, and the valuation of property, for purposes of taxation, in 1908, \$35,276,110. The total amount of taxes levied in 1870 was \$13,484.56, and in 1908 \$298,998.91.

In 1882 there was established in the courthouse building the Nebraska Baptist College, at the head of which was Rev. G. W. Read, assisted by Rev. George Sutherland, now (1912) president of the Baptist College at Grand Island. This college was well attended and did excellent work in an educational way, but because of a more central location and financial considerations was removed to Grand Island in 1885. In 1886 there was established a collegiate institute under the control of the United Brethren Church, Rev. C. M. Brooke, principal. The attendance at this college was in excess of 100 students, and the educational advantages offered were of a high order. This college, after three years, removed to York, Neb., and takes rank as a leading college of the state. At a later date commercial colleges were conducted, first by Prof. U. S. Conn and last by Professors Boggs and Moody in 1904, so that for some thirty years the "First Courthouse" has been a temple of learning instead of a temple of justice. As before stated, there was pressing need, in the early history of the county, of schools offering the advantages of higher education, and by reason of the sheltering walls of the abandoned courthouse such advantages were provided and made use of by hundreds of students. From an educational standpoint it is believed Buffalo County never made a better investment of public money than in the erection of "The First Courthouse." In the '90s the courthouse was sold to School District No. 2, Gibbon, for the consideration of \$1, the object being to enable that district to secure the permanent establishment of a commercial college. This project failed, and in 1908 the building was torn down and in its place erected an up-to-date high school building at an expense of approximately \$25,000. Of the some 400,000 brick used in the construction of the courthouse building about 100,000 were used in the high school building.

CHAPTER XXIX

BRIDGING THE PLATTE AT GIBBON AND KEARNEY JUNCTION—CONTRACT PRICE FOR GIBBON BRIDGE, \$16.50 PER RUNNING FOOT—CONTRACT PRICE FOR KEARNEY BRIDGE, \$8.50 PER RUNNING FOOT—"IT IS THEIR SKUNK AND THEY MUST SKIN IT," WRITES THE EDITOR OF THE BUFFALO COUNTY BEACON—MUCH BITTERNESS IN THE FACTIONAL FIGHT OVER THE BRIDGE QUESTION—DRIVING THE FIRST PILE FOR THE KEARNEY BRIDGE.

The first bridge across the Platte River in Buffalo County was south of Gibbon and completed in the spring of 1873. The contract price for this bridge was \$16.50 per running foot, including approaches, and H. T. Clark of Omaha was the contractor. The bridge was built at the joint expense of Buffalo and Kearney counties. The contract was let at Lowell, county seat of Kearney County, at a joint meeting of the county commissioners of both counties, the two commissioners on the part of Buffalo County being W. F. McClure of Center Precinct and B. F. Sammons of Shelton Precinct. The county bonds voted to build this bridge bore 10 per cent interest and are not at this date (1912) wholly paid, but have been refunded by bonds bearing 3 6-10 per cent interest. The settlement of the Republican Valley to the south began in 1872-73 and the nearest railroad point for all that section, for at least one hundred miles, was at Lowell on the Burlington and at Gibbon and Kearney Junction on the Union Pacific, the Burlington having also made junction with the Union Pacific at Kearney Junction in September, 1872. Large quantities of lumber and household supplies were needed by the settlers south of the Platte and Kearney Junction business men were greatly handicapped on account of lack of a bridge across the Platte.

A proposition to vote county bonds to build a bridge south of Kearney Junction was twice submitted to the voters and defeated, the defeat creating much bitterness of feeling as between Kearney Junction and the eastern portion of the county. In the Central Star, Moses H. Sydenham, editor, published at Centoria (near old Fort Kearney), under date of January 1, 1873, appears the following: "The people of Buffalo County are to vote a second time on the issuing of bonds for the purpose of building a bridge across the Platte River between Kearney Junction and Centoria. The first proposition not being satisfactory to the people generally was voted down.

"* * * Enterprising men have commenced to do business at Kearney Junction and it is only natural that they should seek to command all the trade

possible of this great region of country, so soon to receive its large acquisitions of persevering pioneers."

On March 18, 1873, the county commissioners submitted to the voters of Kearney Junction precinct a proposition to bond that precinct for \$25,000 to build a bridge, the bonds to bear 10 per cent interest.

This proposition carried and after litigation in the courts a contract was let by the county commissioners, W. F. McClure, Patrick Walsh and D. A. Crowell, to build a bridge of like specifications as the one south of Gibbon, the lowest bid being \$8.50 per running foot. It was T. H. Clark, who received \$16.50 per foot for building the Gibbon bridge, who bid to build a like bridge at Kearney Junction for \$8.50. The writer does not believe, and neither was it generally believed, that the county commissioners who let the contract for the Gibbon bridge were paid by Mr. Clark to award him the contract, but rather that there was little or no competition in bridge building at the time the first contract was let and that Messrs. McClure and Sammons had no knowledge as to a fair price for the work. As a matter of history of the times and the rivalry that existed as between the citizens of Gibbon and Kearney Junction it is interesting to read the following editorial found in the Buffalo County Beacon, published at Gibbon, A. J. Price, editor, which appeared in the issue of March 22, 1873. First is quoted the petition for voting the bonds: "We, the undersigned citizens of Kearney Junction Precinct, Buffalo County, Nebraska, are in favor of Kearney Junction voting bonds for \$25,000, for the purpose of building a bridge across the Platte River at or near Kearney Junction." The editorial reads: "The above statement was presented to the commissioners on Tuesday last, numerously signed, and, though it is not a petition for an election, yet Walsh and Crowell issued proclamation for an election to be held in said precinct, Commissioner McClure voting no and ordering his protest to be recorded. These bonds have been twice defeated by a large majority in the whole county, the people having sense enough to keep their property free from such a damaging incumbrance; and we shall be astonished if the small territory of Kearney Junction Precinct votes to issue these bonds. If they do it will certainly bankrupt them as badly as several counties in Iowa are bankrupted, where many have sold their property for half its worth to get rid of the ruinous tax. But it is their own skunk and they must skin it.

"We warn them that they can safely console themselves with the idea of any trick or catch, for 'eternal vigilance' shall guard the people's interests, and so sure as they rush into this speculation, recklessly determined to dance, so surely they shall themselves pay the fiddler."

After many delays, caused by injunctions and other court proceedings, work was begun on the Kearney bridge. It was a great day when the first pile was driven. Kearney Junction had a population of 245, according to a census taken that year by J. W. Leland, and every male citizen of the town was in attendance at the ceremony attending the occasion.

The following account, published in the Central Nebraska Press, Webb & Rice H. Eaton, editors, gives an interesting report of the proceedings:

HISTORY OF BUFFALO COUNTY

"KEARNEY BRIDGE

"THE FIRST PILE DRIVEN

"A LARGE AND ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD AT THE RIVER

"THE CITIZENS OF THE TOWNSHIP SUPERINTEND THE WORK

"SPEECHES, ETC., ETC.

"Yesterday at 3.30 P. M. was the hour appointed to commence the operations of driving the first pile for the bridge over the Platte River. Most of the male inhabitants of the town assembled on the bank of the stream by the appointed time, all anxious to see a commencement made. The route had been surveyed and under the direction of Capt. L. R. Moore, the first pile was placed in position immediately south of Colorado Avenue, and at 4.56 o'clock, September 24, 1873, the ponderous cast iron hammer of the pile driver came down for the first time upon the first pile driven for the bridge that is soon to connect the north and south banks of the Platte, opposite this point. The Stars and Stripes had been nailed to a staff, and by Mr. Keens (F. G. Keens) was nailed to the driver. Everyone felt glorious and even the appearance of Sheriff Thompson (O. E. Thompson) with his pockets full of injunctions did not affect or stay matters in the least, for our folks have become so used to these little documents that they consider them part of the program on all important occasions. After the pile had received four or five hard thumps from the driver, Judge Hemiup (N. H. Hemiup) was called for and in a neat little speech of fifteen minutes told the people of the importance of this internal improvement, alluded to the trouble we had experienced in getting as far as we have, counseled obedience to the laws of the land and prophesied a bright future for Kearney and the surrounding country.

"He was followed by Judge Connor (A. H. Connor), who spoke about the same length of time. The judge spoke with much emphasis, denounced the enemies of the bridge in strong language, said we had been fought step by step in this bridge matter, but we had defeated the enemy wherever we had met them, and closed his remarks amid loud cheers from the assembly. The crowd then dispersed and the driver proceeded to finish the work of driving the first pile."

CHAPTER XXX

THE SAXON COLONY—CAME FROM SAXONY IN 1873—MADE SETTLEMENT IN BUFFALO COUNTY IN FALL OF 1873—CROPS DESTROYED BY GRASSHOPPERS IN 1874
—REMARKABLE INSTANCE OF ENDURANCE ON PART OF SAXON WOMEN.

THE SAXON COLONY

The saying "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war," has been fully demonstrated in the settlement of the West, and in the settlement of Buffalo County as well. If it be counted as hardship and privation to those living in eastern states to make the attempt to establish homes in the unsettled and almost unknown West in an early day, to make settlement in company with those speaking the same language, accustomed to the same form of government, schools, churches and social relations, how much greater the hardship, the privation to those settlers among us who left home and native land, crossed the ocean to a strange land to found homes among a people speaking another tongue, having a form of government entirely different from that to which they had been accustomed? How strange must the new surroundings have seemed, and how, at times, must these newcomers have longed for a sight of the hold home across the water, to see again the loved ones so far away! In the settlement and development of the West we are indebted in a large measure to those of our people who came from other lands to here make homes. They have been to us living examples of a high type of courage, fortitude, industry, economy and above all loyalty to the home of their adoption, to the Government to which they have sworn allegiance. Schneider Township in Buffalo County was very largely settled by emigrants from Europe and even at this date the names of quite eighty per cent of those residing on the 150 farms in this township indicate that the present occupants of the farms either came from Saxony, Germany, Bohemia or other European countries or are descendants of those who in the preceding generation emigrated from one of those countries to Schneider Township there to make a home.

Schneider Township, six miles square, lies on the divide between the Wood River Valley of the Platte on the south and the South Loup on the north. From the center of the township it is nine miles to Ravenna, on the Burlington Railroad on the north and fourteen miles to Gibbon, on the Union Pacific Railroad to the south. There are no running streams of water in the township and no natural growth of timber. The altitude is approximately two thousand one hundred feet and water in wells is found at approximately seventy feet. The general surface is rolling and somewhat broken. The soil is fertile and easily tilled and produces

abundant crops. There are in the township at this date (1910) six schoolhouses, and three churches but no village. The population is approximately five hundred and the valuation of property by the township assessor for the year 1909 \$964,835.

In the valuation of property in the township it should be borne in mind that this valuation represents farm values only, the value of the farms and personal property incident to farming, as there are no railroads or village or city property within the township. The valuation of the township on a strictly farm basis indicates that the inhabitants are prosperous and as one travels over the township, the comfortable houses and barns, the well tilled fields, the groves of trees, the orchards of fruit, the abundance of well bred, well kept domestic animals, the comforts and conveniences on every hand are indisputable evidence that the people are contented and happy. The present prosperity attained by emigrants who came from a foreign country, without means, and making settlement on lands destitute of timber, without running water and from nine to fourteen miles from a railroad station having trading or shipping facilities.

The first settlement in this township was made by emigrants from the Kingdom of Saxony and for much of the history the writer is indebted to Richard Goehring, a member of the colony.

In the early '70s there were in the Kingdom of Saxony many people of the laboring class who looked with longing eyes toward the New World, where it was reported lands from which homes might be made could be had almost for the taking. Saxony was at that date densely peopled, having an average of approximately four hundred forty inhabitants to the square mile, being twenty-two times the number per square mile as has Buffalo County at the present time, or more than thirty times that of Nebraska as a whole, and because of the poor living and low wages paid in the over-populated factory districts many of the laboring class were anxious to emigrate, hoping thereby to better their financial condition.

Many of these people had not the means to pay their passage across the water which separated them from these lands, and so they organized themselves into classes and agreeing to pay a stipulated amount, in some cases 50 cents, in others \$1, per month, into a common fund and when the amount paid in was sufficient to pay the transportation charges of a few of their number across the water the members raffled off the chance to be one of the lucky number.

The first members of the colony left Saxony April 5, 1873, and arrived in New York April 19th. That was the year of the great April storms, as remembered by early settlers in Nebraska, the storm commencing Sunday, April 13th, and members of the Saxony Colony, crossing the ocean that week, recall that a terrible storm also raged on the ocean causing terror, sickness and great discomfort to those aboard the vessel. These members of the colony journeyed to Detroit and then into Northern Michigan, in the region of Lake Superior, where it had been planned to purchase a large tract of land to be subdivided into farms and also to establish on the tract a village or other business and social center for the members of the colony.

A frost which came in the month of July, that year, in Northern Michigan, so

discouraged the members of the colony that it was decided to abandon that location and seek another in Nebraska.

About this date Doctor Schneider, after whom Schneider Township was named, arrived in the United States and was chosen president of the colony. Doctor Schneider was a native of Saxony and was traveling in Egypt when the colony was formed and left Saxony. It seems that Doctor Schneider conceived the idea that important results might be accomplished by means of such a colony and abandoning his Egyptian trip, came to Michigan and was chosen president of the colony; he was without means and not a good financier and it does not appear that either as an officer or individual he was of help or benefit to the colonists. He came to Nebraska with the colony in 1873 and departed in 1874.

The first members of this colony arrived about October 1, 1873, and lived out of doors on the south bank of the Loup River, opposite the mouth of Beaver Creek, until the first sod house could be built. This sod house was built on section 4-11-14 on a claim taken by Fred Winkler. These members of the colony had no teams to begin with and carried the rafters needed for the sod house on their shoulders from the Loup River, a distance of about five miles. These rafters were necessarily strong, heavy timbers, as they supported a roof made of sod and dirt. Also it was necessary to dig a well and this was no small task; the distance to water was seventy feet. The well was dug four feet square and the dirt hauled by by means of a windlass made of cottonwood limbs, using one pail and a rope. Richard Goehring did most of the digging of the well and relates that he was in constant fear and especially when deep down in the well the pail of dirt went swinging on the rope to the top. It is estimated that in digging such a well about forty wagon loads of dirt would be removed, or more than two thousand five hundred pails full of dirt drawn with the windlass, some of it from a depth of seventy feet from the top of the ground. Two sod houses were thus built and two wells thus dug, the second house and well on section 10 and completed about December 1, 1873.

All the wood used the first winter had to be carried from the Loup River and in order to economize in the matter of fuel and because there was no time to build other houses before winter came the following spent the winter of 1873-74 in the first sod house on section No. 4, the size of this house being about 16 by 24: There were two married couples, Mr. and Mrs. F. Winkler and Mr. and Mrs. Gust Schieme. The single men were C. W. Grosser, Richard Goehring, Wm. Freyberg, Chas. Muerbe, F. Reinhold, Julius Weigel, Carl Kaeupler, Doctor Schneider and Felix Ziehr, in all thirteen persons. Also after a short time Otto Gumprecht and family and Mr. Kappler and family camped at the same place as part of the colony.

Early in the spring of 1874 began the work of building other sod houses by members of the colony and the digging of wells also. About the only timber available at that date for rafters for sod houses was on the north bank of the Loup on section 16 (a school section) and Richard Goehring recalls that all day in the month of March he with others waded back and forth across the Loup, waist deep in icewater, carrying rafters for the sod houses, these timbers being later carried to the claims in Schneider Township.

One-half of the lands in the township were railroad lands and only eighty

acres could be taken under the homestead laws by the members of the colony, and many of the members took pre-emption claims of 160 acres, the law permitting $2\frac{1}{2}$ years to elapse before final payment of \$2.50 per acre must be paid and after payment for the pre-empted lands members of the colony took homestead claims of eighty acres. The Goehring family took claims on section 12 and Wilhelm Fischer on section 10.

When grass had started in the month of May, some members were able to purchase ox teams and cows, and those not able to purchase a team exchanged work so that the sod was broken and crops of corn and potatoes planted and especially large gardens, planted. Every member of the family labored to the end that food might be raised for the support of all. If not able to own or hire a team to plow the land with, it was turned over with a spade and every possible acre thus prepared planted to some useful crop. Mother Earth was kind and as the season progressed and the month of July came there was promise of abundance from the corn fields and gardens of the Saxon colonists. Late in July the ears of corn began to show with their tassels of silk; the early potatoes were of good size; from the gardens came in plenty onions, beans, radish and like vegetables; there was an abundance of pasture for the one or more cows which strained at the picket rope and whose every want was cheerfully looked after by members of the family. There was a pig or two, sometimes tethered out by one leg, to graze, or in other cases confined in a pen whose fence was a deep ditch with an outer wall of sod and the pig fed with weeds, succulent and appetizing, pulled from among the vegetables in the garden; a flock of hens, some of whom escorted a brood of chickens, roamed over the prairie and lived on the fat of the land, the countless insects whose home was the prairie. There was laughing and singing, happiness and contentment among the members of the colony for surely their lines had fallen in pleasant places and a competency for the future seemed already assured.

On a bright, sunshiny day, late in the month of July, 1874, at the noon hour the sun was slightly darkened, much the same appearance as precedes the coming of an eclipse; looking to the north, over the range of bluffs some three miles distant it was remarked that it looked as though we were to have an April snow squall such as sometimes comes in that month when the air is soft and balmy and when the snow flakes are large, melting as they reach the earth. It was the hour for the noon-day meal and all the family passed into the house and were soon in that keen enjoyment of eating which is the great boon granted to those on the sunny side of life, engaged in some useful occupation and to whom the future is bright and hopeful in anticipation. A member of the family going to the well for fresh water returned, hurriedly exclaiming, "come and see the grasshoppers and do look at the chickens." Hurrying to the door it was seen that grasshoppers in great numbers were dropping from the air; at the first as a hopper alighted a hen would dash forward and gobble it up; then without stirring from her tracks she would swallow another and another until, her crop distended to an unusual size, she could hold no more. Then when a hopper alighted near, the hen would cock her head to one side, stretch out her neck and by her actions seem to say, "can I possibly hold one more?"

At first it was not thought that the hopppers would do damage to the crops

but it was soon noticed that in the cornfields near the house the stalks were bending almost to the ground with their load of hoppers; that the potato tops, so rank of growth and dark green in color, were flattened to the ground; also that from the fields came a sound much like that made by cattle in eating coarse fodder and then it was realized that the hoppers were eating the crop. At once forth from the houses came the bedding and extra clothing and an effort was made to cover the most valuable of the garden, such as onions, tomatoes and the like. There was a gathering of dry hay and coarse litter and smudge fires started hoping to save by means of smoke some portion of the crop but all to no avail; the hoppers would eat holes in the clothes or bedding and crawl under and continue to eat the plants, and the smoke from the smudges of hay and litter proved of no practical benefit. When the next morning came there was not a leaf of cultivated plants left, nothing but bare stems of corn, potatoes and other vegetables and where the onions were there were saucer-like holes in the ground, the hoppers having eaten not only the onion bulb but to the ends of the roots as well.

Thus it was that the noon-day meal, began with the keenest of appetite and with feelings of peace, contentment, happiness and the brightest of anticipations for the future was never finished, for with the coming of the hoppers all else was forgotten in the vain attempt to drive them away, some rushing through their fields with whips and cloths, thinking thus to frighten the hoppers and save the crop.

With the loss of crops came the direst of forbodings and in place of laughter and singing there came a great burden of care and anxiety as to what the future had in store. Just how great the reaction, to what extreme in thought and feelings, from hopefulness to despair, the mental pendulum might swing in a crisis of this kind can possibly be illustrated by the relation of an incident which occurred but which has no connection whatever with the history of the Saxon Colony. The destruction of the crops completed and the excitement incident thereto had subsided, came the natural inclination to visit neighbors, talk over the terrible visitation and learn the extent of the grasshopper raid. In the cool of the evening, in company with the good wife, who was always hopeful, we started on such a visit to a neighbor. It was necessary to drive very slow as the great swarms of hoppers which continually raised from the ground as the team proceeded made it impossible to go faster than a slow walk. The particular neighbor had in view was a man of a deep religious nature, had helped to organize a church in his locality, was superintendent of the Sabbath school and until a schoolhouse was erected his house had been used for religious services of various kinds. Himself and family took great pleasure in gardening and were very proud of their garden that it being superior to any in the community. On this occasion there was no opportunity given for a friendly visit for we were met with such blasphemy and cursing because of the destruction wrought by grasshoppers as to make the blood run cold and very soon all thought of a friendly visit was abandoned and the team headed homeward. This neighbor lived for a quarter of a century or more in our midst, loved, honored and esteemed, no one more implicitly trusted both in public and private matters and yet he never resumed his former church relations or had further connection with a church organization. To make this incident complete in a historical way it seems well

to also relate that the pastor of the church to which the neighbor belonged called a meeting of the members of the church to pray for their brother (the neighbor referred to), but the pastor himself forgetting the call, went fishing and the meeting was not held.

The first raid of grasshoppers came in the last days of July, 1874, spring wheat (the only kind then raised) had been harvested and a portion of the oats. Oats not harvested were chipped off by the hoppers and thus lost. Not a large acreage of spring wheat was grown in the county at that date, the average yield per acre being about twelve bushels and the price fifty-four to fifty-nine cents in December.

The grasshoppers undoubtedly ate of the native grasses and plants and of the leaves of native trees but however much might have been eaten of these native plants it was not noticeable. They much preferred to feed on cultivated plants which are more succulent than are native ones and all cultivated plants were stripped of their leaves and all growing crops destroyed. Onions were a profitable crop in the early settlement of the country, being raised with little labor on newly turned sod because practically no weeds grew and while the seed was expensive, one or more acres could be found on nearly every claim. There was nothing the grasshoppers seemed to prefer more than onions, and they ate them, tops, bulbs and roots.

The grasshoppers remained, as recalled, two days and disappeared as mysteriously as they came. About the noon hour they arose as if in answer to a command, and darkening the sun as on the day they came, flew toward the south. No hopper of the migratory kind remained nor were any eggs laid in the fall of that year. The migratory hoppers returned from the South in the summer of 1875. Their arrival was at a little later date than in 1874. Corn was far enough advanced that kernels had formed at the butt end of the ear and all corn harvested that year was ears having one or two inches of kernels on the butt end.

In the fall of 1875, the hoppers laid millions of eggs. The eggs were laid in the hardest of ground, traveled roads across the prairie. The hoppers would dig a hole about one inch in depth and deposit from forty to sixty eggs in a sort of egg-shaped sack glued firmly together and shaped like the end of a finger. In the month of April, 1876, these eggs began to hatch, the top eggs in the sack first and all at once it was discovered that the ground was literally alive with little black hoppers. Instinct seemed to lead them to gather and feed on the fields of wheat and oats and although every possible effort was made to destroy them it seemed impossible so to do as there seemed no limit to their numbers. But just when it appeared that every cultivated plant would be destroyed by them and the destruction of all crops would be complete, that nothing in the nature of a cultivated crops could be raised, there came late in May a three days' storm, rain and snow, freezing temperature, and as all prairie had been burned over there was no protection for the young and tender hopper and all perished.

It is difficult to describe, in the limits of a brief historical narrative, the conditions and feelings of the Saxon colonists after the destruction of their entire crop by grasshoppers. The members of the colony were without financial resources, without credit, and still more distressing, were strangers in a strange

land. All their available means had been expended in transportation charges from their native lands and in the construction of a habitation in which to live and their entire resources and reliance for the future were bound up in promising crops which were destroyed in a few hours' time by a swarm of devouring insects.

The barest necessities of life could not be purchased on credit, for it is a matter of history during this period that honest, industrious men were refused credit for even a sack of corn meal at a time when there was an utter lack of food in their homes for their families. Had it not been for the carloads and trainloads of food and clothing so generously contributed by the kind-hearted people of the eastern states for the settlers in Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas, whose crops had been destroyed by clouds of grasshoppers, the entire settlements in these states must have been deserted for a time until means could have been secured for another venture.

Just how the members of the Saxon Colony met this crisis in their affairs can best be explained by relating a few personal incidents which, in a general way, apply to all the members. In one family the only article of any value that could be disposed of was a gun and this two sons in the family sold to George Meisner, living near Shelton, for \$8, and with this purchased coarse shirts, overalls and coarse shoes and thus respectably clothed started on foot toward the East seeking work. At Grand Island one of the sons found employment with Fred Hedde and the wages thus earned went to the support of the family on the claim. For years all his wages went to the support of the family and the improvement of the claims and being a single man he was able to make proof on his own claim, one of the first homestead claims proved up on in Schneider Township. Later he married and became a permanent resident of Grand Island; has been in the lumber business in that city for many years, is the owner of two valuable business blocks; has served as county supervisor of Hall County for four years; councilman of the City of Grand Island for six years and is one of Hall County's most honored and respected citizens, and with a good substantial yearly income, Richard Goehring, a Saxon colonist in 1873, is spending the evening of his day in comfort and happiness.

Another instance illustrates both perseverance and endurance on the part of a member of the colony seldom equalled. Some months after the grasshopper raid there called at the home of the writer about the noon hour, a woman who after resting and partaking of food continued on her journey to Kearney, sixteen miles distant, the entire journey from her home in Schneider Township being twenty-eight miles. At the relief headquarters in that city she procured for her own and other families some food supplies which she placed in a basket carried on the head and shoulders. The next day about sundown she again called at the home of the writer, so exhausted that she could not, unaided, remove the basket of food supplies from her head and shoulders. When her shoes and stockings were removed, her feet, a mass of blisters, were so pitiable a sight that tears streamed down the cheeks of women of the family as they helped to bathe the feet and apply soothing and healing lotions. When the morning came a team was hitched to a wagon and the good wife asked permission of the woman to take her home. She declined and seemed distressed when the matter was urged, possibly fearing she could not afford the expense as she seemingly could not understand

that the request or offer was not for hire but would have been deemed a pleasure and so assisting the woman to lift the loaded basket to her head and shoulders she started bravely forth on her twelve-mile journey over the bluffs to her home.

Mrs. Ernest Goehring, mother of Richard Goehring herein mentioned, was about fifty years of age when she carried that load of food supplies from Kearney, twenty-eight miles distant, to her home in Schneider Township. She is now eighty-five years of age, is the owner of 160 acres of land in Schneider Township and while bowed with age and the result of a life of toil and privation is still able to assist in the household duties. Scores, yes hundreds of like instances might be related of privation, endurance, courage, fortitude and finally a large measure of success on the part of many of the most useful and respected citizens who left their homes in foreign lands and made for themselves and their families homes in our own loved lands, and a history of what many of them endured and of their measure of success brings more forcibly to our attention the truth of the sentiment first quoted, "Peace hath her victories no less than war."

In 1874 a survey was made with a view of establishing a village on section 22-11-14 in Schneider Township to be named Berg, but no village ever grew there although a postoffice named Berg was established at that point in 1874 or '75 with Friedrich Friedrich as postmaster. As recalled there was a mail route from Gibbon to Berg.

The members of the Saxon Colony were all of the Lutheran faith, 97 per cent of the inhabitants of Saxony being of the Protestant faith; there is a Lutheran Church with a large membership in an adjoining township. At a quite early date there was erected in the immediate vicinity of Berg postoffice a Presbyterian Church and a Catholic Church. Schools were not established in the township until the '90s.

The names of the members of the colony as furnished from memory are herewith given: Gust Schieme and wife, Fred Winkler and wife, Otto Gumprecht and family, F. A. Kappler and family, August Weidner and family, Louis Weidner and family, Wm. Weber and wife, Wm. Fisher and wife, C. W. Grosser and wife, Ernest Goehring and family, Carl Rost and wife, and those unmarried, Frank Guenther, J. C. Grosser, Charles A. Muebe, August Schmidt, Carl Kaeupler, Fred Reinhold, Wm. Freyberg, Felix Ziehr, Richard Goehring, Julius Weigel, Louis Veit, Emil Veit. All those who remained accumulated property and established comfortable homes and those now living are spending the evening of their days in ease and comfort on incomes secured by industry and economy. —Dated June 23, 1910.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE APRIL STORM OF 1873—NOT POSSIBLE TO DESCRIBE ITS FURY—EXPERIENCE OF A MISSIONARY MINISTER

THE APRIL STORM OF 1873

The April storm of 1873 is memorable in the annals of the West. Not in the memory of the white man has a storm so furious and destructive as was this one ever swept the plains west of the Missouri River.

It is not possible to fully describe the fury of this storm nor the terror it inspired in the hearts of many members of the colony, living as they were on claims distant from neighbors and in houses cheaply constructed and illy fitted to protect against the fury of a storm so long enduring. Let me tell the story of this storm as it affected many of the colonists by relating what occurred to Rev. Charles Marvin and family, Mr. Marvin being a missionary of the Presbyterian Church in this locality at the time. On Sunday, April 14, 1873, Mr. Marvin was holding a religious service in a schoolhouse quite ten miles from his home. It was a warm, sunny, spring day with a southerly wind. Just at the close of the service, about 4 o'clock, in the twinkling of an eye, the wind shifted into the north, there came great clouds of dust, obscuring the sun, quickly followed by rain and hail. Mr. Marvin realized that a great and furious storm was at hand and that it was imperative that he speedily reach home to render assistance to his wife and children. That on foot and alone he finally reached home in safety was due to the fact that he traveled in a southeasterly direction; had it been otherwise he certainly would have perished. Commencing about 4 o'clock on Sunday, April 14, this storm raged in all its fury until the going down of the sun on Wednesday. Many settlers on claims perished, how many will never be known owing to the thinly settled and scattered settlements and lack of facilities at that date for gathering statistics. Live stock by the thousands perished, some in streams which they were endeavoring to cross, some in stables and corrals, their owners unable to reach and afford relief, some in cars on railroad sidings, railroad traffic being abandoned, some in depressions where they had sought shelter and perished beneath snow drifts many feet deep. It was not the intensity of the cold which added to the terror and danger of the storm. It was the fine particles of snow driven by the furious wind which wet man and beast to the skin and chilled them to the marrow of their bones. On Thursday, friends of Mr. Marvin, greatly concerned for the safety of the family, loaded into a wagon supplies of family necessity, not forgetting coal, and drove the ten miles. They learned that having neither shelter nor hay for their cow she had

been brought into the lean-to kitchen, fed the straw in the bed tick and also food needed for the family. Running out of coal, the family had spent most of the time in bed in the effort to keep warm, but there being a young babe in the family and other young children, it was necessary to keep some fire and so the one partition and most of the furniture had been burned, and yet Mr. Marvin uttered no word of complaint, and when all were gathered around the table he devoutly thanked the Loving Father for his manifold blessings. Many members of the colony suffered serious financial loss by reason of live stock which perished in the storm, much of this stock having been purchased with borrowed money.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE GRASSHOPPER PLAGUE—GRASSHOPPERS DESTROY CROPS IN 1860—THE RAID OF
1874—THE RAID IN 1875—HOPPERS LAY EGGS

THE GRASSHOPPER PLAGUE

In the Huntsman's Echo, published at Wood River Center (now Shelton), mention is made that migrating grasshoppers destroyed crops for settlers along Wood River in the year 1860. The grasshopper raid with which the colonists had to contend came first late in July, 1874. The small crops of wheat and oats then raised had just been harvested. On a bright sunny day, late in July, about 2 P. M., an unusual sight appeared on the bluffs north of Wood River, having much the appearance of an April snow storm, with large flakes. Soon it was noticed that the sun had a hazy appearance and suddenly grasshoppers by the millions covered the ground. Corn was the principal crop grown by the colonists, because it required little expense for seed, little labor in cultivating the crop, and promised quick returns. The hoppers gathered in the corn fields till the stalks bent to the ground beneath them and the sound of their feasting was like unto a herd of cattle in a corn field. In a few hours' time that afternoon the hoppers destroyed all cultivated plants in fields and gardens. In the corn fields just the bare stalks were left.

The destruction of native grasses and plants and of leaves on native trees was not noticeable, but the destruction of cultivated plants and cultivated trees and shrubs was complete. These hoppers came from the north, remained over night and about noon the next day disappeared towards the south as suddenly and mysteriously as they came.

The corn crop and all gardens were unusually promising that year and their sudden destruction caused great privation among the colonists, most of whom were without means and dependent upon the growing crops for means of living. Had it not been that kind hearted and generous people in eastern states sent food and clothing to the grasshopper sufferers most of the settlers must have left the country.

These hoppers which came in the year 1874 laid no eggs, but in August, 1875, there came a hopper raid from the south. Many believed these were descendants of the 1874 hoppers, hatched farther south and returning to the home of their parents. When the hoppers came in 1875 the ears of corn had formed and there was about an inch of kernels on the butt of the ears. The hoppers destroyed the silk on the ears, thus preventing further fertilization of the corn. The leaves of the corn were only partially destroyed by the hoppers

and farmers had ears of corn to harvest with about an inch of kernels on the butts. These hoppers were most industrious in laying eggs in the traveled roads and wherever the ground had been tramped by herds of cattle. These eggs hatched in April, 1876, and in May the ground was literally alive with young hoppers, who soon began to assemble on the growing crops of wheat and oats. Late in May came a three days' storm, rain and snow, and to the joy of the colonists the young hoppers perished.

HOPPERS DESTROY ONIONS

Aside from the destruction of the corn crop by hoppers in 1874, many colonists suffered a grievous loss of their onion crop, for the hoppers not only ate the onions greedily but dug holes to get the last morsel of the roots of the onions. Onions from "black seed" had been found to be a profitable crop, notwithstanding the large expense of the seed. The onions grew best on sod breaking, and as there were no weeds in those early days there was little labor in making the crop. Such onions grew to good size and sold readily for \$1 a bushel. It is recalled that A. J. Snowdon of Centre Township grew and marketed 1,500 bushels of such onions one season, selling them for \$1 per bushel.

Early potatoes made a fair crop in the year 1874, although the hoppers destroyed all the tops. Such potatoes were good eating but did not keep well during the winter.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SHELTON—KNOWN AS WOOD RIVER CENTER FROM 1860 TO ABOUT 1873—COUNTY SEAT OF BUFFALO COUNTY—FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES HELD IN 1870—AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT IN THE HANDWRITING OF PATRICK WALSH—OLIVER BROTHERS ESTABLISH A STORE IN 1871—AN OFFICIAL NOTICE TO THE POSTMASTER GENERAL NOTIFYING HIM OF CHANGE IN THE NAME OF THE POSTOFFICE—LIST OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS—THE FIRST DENTIST—SHELTON FLOURING MILLS—THE FIRST GRAIN ELEVATORS—ALFALFA MILL—THE SHELTON CLIPPER—TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB—FIRST TERM OF SCHOOL IN COUNTY BY LICENSED TEACHER—SHELTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS—PUBLIC LIBRARY—BANKS—CHURCHES—FRATERNAL AND BENEFICIARY LODGES.

SHELTON

At the locality where now (1915) is the thriving and prosperous Village of Shelton, at as early a date as 1860, on maps and publications of that date appeared the name Wood River Center, and there is good reason for believing that at an even earlier date there was here a hamlet, a way station, as it were, for travelers over the Overland Trail, doubtless dating from the establishment of Fort Kearney in 1848.

The trails up the Platte Valley, on the north side, extended from the Platte to the bluffs until in the vicinity of Wood River Center, when all trails north of Wood River (those which had followed Prairie Creek) crossed to the south of Wood River at or near this point, proceeding westward on the south side.

To this point in the year 1859 came Joseph E. Johnson, a Mormon, a man of considerable means and of more than average ability. Here he established a store, a blacksmith and wagon repair shop, a tintype gallery, a bakery and place where meals might be had and in April, 1860, a newspaper (The Huntsman's Echo), published, as announced in its columns, at Wood River Center, Nebraska Territory, so that from April, 1860, until February 3, 1873, the name of the place was officially and otherwise known as Wood River Center.

Mr. Johnson fenced with poles cut from Wood River an enclosure, where he engaged in gardening, raising of flowers and planted small fruits and also cherry and apple trees. From copies of the Huntsman's Echo, in the library of the State Historical Society, we learn that near this point was a portable saw-mill in operation; that corn and spring wheat were grown; that Mr. Johnson had a portable mill in which he ground both corn and wheat for customers.

From the Huntsman's Echo, published in 1860-61, it appears that in the year 1860 J. Sterling Morton and other candidates for congressional and territorial

office came to Wood River Center and made political addresses on the streets of the village. We learn that in the fall of 1860 an election for county officers was held at this point, forty-two votes being cast, resulting in the election of Henry Peck, probate judge; J. H. Wagner, Joseph Huff and Thomas Page, county commissioners; P. H. Gunn, sheriff; L. VanAlstine, coroner; James E. Boyd and J. H. Wagner, justices of the peace; James E. Boyd, treasurer and register of voters; Edward Huff, county clerk; P. H. Gunn and John Evans, constables, and Joseph E. Johnson, county superintendent. It was at this point, August 20, 1860, that the first postoffice in the county was established, Joseph E. Johnson, postmaster. It was in this immediate vicinity in the early '60s that the families of Mrs. Sarah Oliver, James Oliver, Owen, Dugdale, Meyer, Nutter, Walsh, Thompson, Slattery and Stearley made settlement on lands, becoming permanent residents of the county, honored citizens of the commonwealth. It was at this point in 1860 that the Great Western Stage Company, extending as far west as Fort Kearney, established a stage station, with August Meyer in charge.

When in August, 1864, occurred the stampede, memorable in the history of the territory, occasioned by a raid of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians, in which terrible atrocities were committed in Central Nebraska Territory and many lives of white settlers lost, and all inhabitants west of the Missouri River terrorized, it was at Wood River Center that settlers north of the Platte gathered, placed themselves under command of August Meyer, who had served in the United States regular army, barricaded themselves in an unfinished log building, and later all journeyed to Omaha and Iowa points until fear of the raid was over—except August Meyer and "Ted" Oliver, who remained to care for the stage company horses. Here the first school district was organized, the first schoolhouse provided, the first terms of school held.

It was citizens of Wood River Center, Patrick Walsh, Martin Slattery and others, who joined in a petition to Governor David Butler to reorganize Buffalo County in 1869, and it was in the schoolhouse at this place that the special election reorganizing the county, January 20, 1870, was held, Wood River Center being the county seat.

In this schoolhouse, in the winter of 1870-71, was held the first public religious services in the county, conducted by Rev. David Marquett, a Methodist missionary.

AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT—1871

The following is a copy of an official certificate of appointment to office, issued by the county clerk of Buffalo County under date of February 24, 1871. This document is in the handwriting of Patrick Walsh and bears the seal of Buffalo County, Nebraska:

"State of Nebraska }
"County of Buffalo } ss.

"I Patrick Walsh Deputy clerk of said county do hereby certify that at a meeting of the county commissioners of said county on the 18th day of this



MAIN STREET, LOOKING SOUTH FROM THE RAILROAD, SHELTON



WEST SIDE OF MAIN STREET, SHELTON

month the said commissioners have duly appointed Oliver Thompson for the office of county Sheriff of Buffalo Co. and that he has been duly qualified by taking the oath of office and giving bond as the law requires.

"Given under my hand at Wood River Center this 24th day of February A. D., 1871.

(Signed) "MICHAEL COADY, Co. Clerk.

(Signed) "By PATRICK WALSH, Deputy."

"Seal of
Buffalo County."

(Note—The original of this document is in possession of Shelton Township Library.)

In the year 1873 Edward Oliver and brother established a store at Wood River Center, first in a building 12 by 16 feet in size, later occupying a much larger building south of the track and carrying a line of dry goods and groceries. An advertisement of E. Oliver and Brother, dry goods, groceries and provisions, Wood River Center, appeared in a copy of the Buffalo County Beacon, published at Gibbon, in 1873. A postoffice at Wood River Center was established October 11, 1872, with Patrick Walsh as postmaster, the postoffice being kept in Mr. Walsh's dwelling, a log house, and later in the Oliver store, with E. Oliver as deputy postmaster. There is a tradition that when the postoffice inspector visited the office and found no stamps on sale the deputy informed him that he did not have to keep stamps for sale without a profit and the inspector threatened to close the office, the salary of the postoffice being some twelve dollars a year.

The name of the postoffice was changed from Wood River Center to Shelton on February 3, 1873, Mr. Walsh continuing to serve as postmaster until March 31, 1879, when Mark G. Lee was appointed.

The postmasters in their order have been Patrick Walsh, Mark G. Lee, John Conroy, J. M. Harman, S. F. Henninger, Frank D. Reed (three terms), I. T. Peterson and John Conroy, dating from August 1914. The revenue of the office in 1914 was \$1,500.

It is related that the village was named in honor of N. Shelton, an auditor in the land department of the Union Pacific Railroad Company.

There is a tradition that Postmaster Walsh, desiring the name of the postoffice changed, notified the postmaster general in substance as follows:

"Mr. Postmaster General,

"Washington, D. C.

"Dear Sir:

"You are hereby notified that the name of this postoffice has been changed from Wood River Center to Shelton and you will govern yourself accordingly."

In the year 1879 Patrick Walsh had a townsite surveyed on his homestead farm and additions were soon after surveyed by the Union Pacific Railway Company and by Michael Coady, who had a claim on an adjoining section.

In the year 1876 the Union Pacific established a station and installed George Mortimer as agent.

PHYSICIANS

As recalled, the pioneer physician was Doctor Childs, who erected a two-story frame building south of Wood River bridge on the west side, the lower rooms occupied by More & Nethercut, dry goods and groceries.

Of resident physicians in the life of the village the following are recalled: Henry W. Brickett, Ames, Theron E. Webb, R. M. Beecher, Geo. C. Paxton, E. L. Smith, Charles Lucas, W. W. Hull, R. Kanzler, J. Soper. Of the physicians named doubtless Dr. E. L. Smith was most widely known, had the most extensive practice. His devotion to his chosen profession, his ready response to the calls of suffering humanity doubtless had much to do with his death in the prime of life.

The pioneer dentist was Alex Thomas, who had a pair of rough, home-made forceps, about the size of horse forceps. He had an improvised chair in which to perform his dental operations, his office being in the pioneer hardware store of Eb Marsh, and later John Heatherington.

INCORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE

The Village of Shelton was incorporated January 6, 1882, the county board naming as trustees H. S. Colby, Edward Oliver, George Mortimer, Mark G. Lee and E. O. Hostetler. The oath of office was administered by B. F. Sammons, justice of the peace. H. S. Colby was chosen chairman and F. D. More clerk. The first meeting was held in Oliver Hall, south of the track.

The United States census returns give the population of the village, 1890, 706; 1900, 861; 1910, 1,005.

In the year 1904 the village installed a water system, bonds to the amount of \$12,000 being voted.

In the year 1915 the village took over the electric light plant of the Shelton Light and Power Company, village bonds to the amount of \$8,000 being voted for the purpose.

Members of the village board in 1915, J. B. Hodge, chairman; E. L. Templin, Lee Roberts, Fred Spahr, H. C. Hofgard; G. L. Bastian, clerk; V. L. Johnson, treasurer.

THE HORSE INDUSTRY

Much attention is given to the breeding of horses and some of the finest draft stallions in the state are owned by Shelton parties and kept for breeding purposes. Colt shows are held and the animals exhibited are among the finest specimens of their class. In the year 1905 mention was made in the public press of the weights of some of the colts of draft breeding shown. In the two-year-old class, Jacob Johnson's weighed 1,390 pounds, H. H. Stedman's 1,320, Albert Allen's 1,200, Chauncey Cook's 1,150, Silas Coon's 1,170, C. J. Soderstrom's 1,130. In the yearling class I. K. Henninger's weighed 1,010, H. J. Dugdale's 950, John Hesler's 810, Lew Anderson's 830.

Shelton has a driving park association, a fine half mile track, and speed



HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, SHELTON



STREET SCENE IN SHELTON

events are held each year at which liberal purses are offered and which attract large numbers of speed horses from this and other states.

The Shelton Flouring Mill was erected in the year 1874 by Jason I. and Dr. I. P. George, brothers.

Wood River, which furnishes the water power to operate this mill, is a stream exceedingly difficult and expensive on which to maintain a dam, and the owners of the Shelton Mill in the earlier days were put to great expense on this account.

In the year 1901 the mill was owned and operated by the Shelton Milling Co., composed of S. A. D. Henninger, F. T. Turney and S. G. Carlson.

In the early spring of 1912 the old dam was completely washed out by an immense flood and the new permanent dam was immediately built of reinforced concrete.

In 1893 the mill was changed from the old stone system to the modern roller process and has been constantly kept up to date with new machinery.

A fine grade of flour is made by this mill which is not only sold largely in Shelton and surrounding towns, but considerable shipments are made abroad.

In the year 1915 the mill was still owned and operated by the Shelton Milling Co., which is composed of S. A. D. Henninger only, who in turn is the acting president and manager.

The milling capacity is 100 barrels per day and the grain storage capacity is 12,000 bushels.

From the earliest history of the county Shelton has been prominent as a grain shipping point, one of the first to engage in the business being "Jake" Rice, about the year 1878. At that date there were no elevators for storing grain and when cars could not be secured in which to load the grain for shipment, it was piled on the ground and at times several thousand bushels of wheat were thus in piles on the open prairie awaiting cars for shipment, and as Mr. Rice could not pay for the wheat until loaded in a car, when he drew on the bill of lading, the wheat was in these piles at the risk of the farmers.

Fortunately, in those years, there was little rainfall in the fall of the year and the loss on the wheat thus exposed was not large.

At first the storage elevators were "shovel elevators," that is, grain was shoveled into the storage bins from the farm wagons and then shoveled into cars. When the first elevators were built the loaded wagons were drawn up an incline plane to the top of the elevator and then dumped. In 1915 Shelton has four grain elevators, with a total capacity of 130,000 bushels.

Alfalfa is extensively grown in this locality and in the year 1911, at an expense of \$15,000, E. C. Warren erected an alfalfa meal mill with a capacity of thirty tons per day.

THE SHELTON CLIPPER

The Shelton Clipper, in the history of Shelton, has been recognized as a model country newspaper of the state—model in its mechanical make up, model in its editorial and business management. Frank D. Reed, for many years its owner and editor, brought the Clipper into statewide recognition and left a last-

ing impress in the village and county in which he did the most useful and important work of his lifetime. His death, which occurred November 7, 1911, was a distinct loss to the county and state.

In Vol. II, No. 13, of the Shelton Clipper Editor H. C. McNew gives the following history of the Clipper to that date:

"The Clarion, the second newspaper in Shelton (the first being The Huntsman's Echo in 1859-60-61), was started in 1879 and came under the control of the present publisher of The Clipper in May, 1880, after being five months under the management of four men at different times. The Clarion continued to be published until October, 1880, when the name of the paper was changed to the one now used. This was done in order to protect our own interests and prevent trouble with former publishers of the Clarion.

"In 1883 The Clipper was purchased by Reed Bros., William M. and Frank D. Reed. In 1895 The Clipper became the property of the junior member of the firm, who still continues as editor and publisher. The Clipper office was destroyed by fire on March 22, 1903; the loss was almost total, the insurance being very small. Mr. Reed at once made arrangements for a temporary office until the building could be replaced, and issued the usual weekly number on the regular publication day, not a single issue being missed on account of the fire.

"The office is now equipped with a full complement of up-to-date machinery and material and is above the average for a town of the size of Shelton. The job work turned out is of superior quality and The Clipper is a newspaper of which Shelton citizens and the Twentieth Century Club members are justly proud."

On the death of Frank D. Reed in 1911 the editorial and business management of The Clipper was taken over by E. L. Templin and C. C. Reed and still (1915) enjoys a wide circulation and a profitable patronage.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB

In the Twentieth Century Club souvenir edition of The Shelton Clipper, Mrs. Catherine Smith writes of the history of the Twentieth Century Club excerpts from which appear in this article.

"In 1892 a woman's club was organized in Shelton, its object being 'To stimulate the intellectual development of its members and for the promotion of unity and good fellowship among them.' It was known as the Nineteenth Century Club."

"In 1887 a Chautauqua circle was formed with a membership of fifteen: Some dropped out, some moved away. Mrs. H. A. Hostetler alone finished the course, in 1891 receiving her diploma at the assembly in Beatrice. It was through her influence the Nineteenth Century Club of Shelton was organized. She served as its first president and has held that position at different times since. At the meeting of the organization of the state federation in Omaha she represented the Shelton Club and it became a part of the federation in 1894."

"In 1901 the name of the club was changed to the Twentieth Century Club. Our colors are purple and gold; the club flower, the pansy; the motto, 'All that is human must retrograde if it does not advance.'

"The study has been history, art, music, literature and current events."

"The club has done some work along altruistic lines. The present library is the outgrowth of a library established by the club in 1896. We are aiding in a small way a colored Nebraska girl to fit herself as a kindergartner to go South and teach among her own race. The club is also interested in the public schools. The lady teachers are usually active members."

The membership of this club in the year 1915 was thirty. Mrs. Charles Lucas, president; Mrs. C. S. Lyle, vice president; Mrs. Maurice Weaver, recording secretary; Mrs. S. E. Smith, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Albert Allen, treasurer.

The past presidents of the club, Mesdames M. A. Hostetler, H. H. Stedman, Charles Lucas, Rufus Bentley, Eugene Phelps, George Meisner, C. F. Graves, George Prouty, Carlton Bly, Joseph Owen, Jr., E. F. Monroe, Roy Reynolds, Frank Turney and I. K. Henninger.

FIRST TERM OF SCHOOL BY LICENSED TEACHER

The first term of school in Buffalo County, taught by a teacher duly licensed was in the summer of 1871. The teacher, Miss Clara Lew, was a member of the Soldier's Free Homestead Colony, coming from the State of Ohio in April, 1871. Miss Lew was the first teacher to whom a certificate to teach was granted in the county.

The records disclose that her examination took place before C. Putnam, county superintendent; on June 3, 1871, who issued to her a third grade certificate. This school was taught in a board shanty, sodded on the outside, located on the farm of Joseph Owen in school district No. 1. Originally this schoolhouse was a rough board shanty used in the construction of the Union Pacific Railway and purchased by inhabitants interested in having a school in that locality.

James Dugdale, who was old enough to go to school but who had to herd cattle furnishes, from memory, the names of the scholars attending the school as follows: Lulu Slattery, Albert Slattery, Hattie Bayley, Harry Oliver, John Walsh, John Stearley, Lester W. Bayley, Thomas Dugan, James Walsh, Mary Stearley, John Bayley, Maggie Walsh, Wm. H. Nutter and George Dugdale.

SHELTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Shelton has from the beginning taken great pride in her public school and spared neither time nor expense in the effort to have the best, for in educational lines the best is none too good.

In the Twentieth Century Club souvenir edition of *The Shelton Clipper* (1895) Miss Elsie Burr writes as follows of the history of the Shelton schools: "As early as 1866 this part of the country was settled by people destined to be forerunners of a commonwealth, forerunners in politics, citizenship and education.

"One of their first thoughts was for the education of their children, so clubbing together and headed by Patrick Walsh they bought lumber that had been used for a section house in the building of the Union Pacific Railroad.

With this they built the first schoolhouse in Buffalo County. This before the county was organized in 1870. This schoolhouse was located on the same spot where the district No. 1 now stands and was known as school district No. 1. Mrs. Harry Norton was the first teacher in Buffalo County. There were no funds (public) with which to pay the teacher so these men paid her—\$35 a month. Beside this she 'boarded round,' and it is said as the school did not require her undivided time, she even did dress making during school hours. The term was for four months. For several years (1866 to 1871) school was held in this building. About 1876 a new school district was organized, taking some territory from district No. 1 in Buffalo County and also some from Hall County, making the present school district of Shelton known legally as No. 19 in Buffalo County and No. 41 in Hall County.

"The first schoolhouse was a frame structure 14 by 18 feet in size. The seats were arranged around the walls of the room and in front were rude, home-made desks. Miss Mattie Davis of Gibbon was the first teacher. This building was used for two years when a larger and better building was erected. In this structure the youth of Shelton received instruction for four or five years when the school was divided owing to crowded conditions. Mrs. Max A. Hostetler taught the last term before division was made. One section of the school remained in the schoolhouse under the instruction of Miss Addie Thomson, the other division was located in a room over Mr. Oliver's store in charge of Miss Laura Hardin. This division was made about the year 1881; in the year 1882 a four-room building was erected on the site of the present building; at first but two rooms were used, Professor Griffin taught in one and Miss Lulu Slattery the other."

From Miss Burr's article it is further learned that the school building was greatly enlarged and in the year 1905 twelve grades were being taught. In the year 1911-12 one of the finest, most up-to-date school buildings in the state was erected at a cost of \$40,000, school district bonds for such being issued. Supt. E. F. Monroe, writing as to the later history of the Shelton school says: "It has been said that the first class to be graduated was that of 1890, from an eleventh grade.

"I believe from the evidence that the twelfth grade was introduced in 1899. The six-year high school (the six-and-six plan) was begun in 1911-12, with beginnings in 1909-10 and 1910-11, in the old building and was put in full force in the new building in 1912-13.

"In 1912-13 the Shelton schools were accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, thus giving the Shelton schools the official rank as one of the fifty best public school systems out of about five hundred high school systems in the state. This accreditation includes the colleges of sixteen states from Ohio to Montana, and admits Shelton graduates without examination."

The enrollment of the school as given by Superintendent Monroe for the school year 1915-16 is: boys, 163; girls, 202; total 365. Number teachers employed, twelve. The members of the school district board, 1915, W. S. Ashton, Frank Easter, George W. Smith, Dr. Charles Lucas, H. H. Stedman, and V. S. Pierce.

SHELTON SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS IN 1881

H. C. McNew in Shelton Clipper, 1881.

In educational matters, Buffalo County has taken a decided lead. J. T. Mallalieu, county superintendent, has labored faithfully for two years to build up the schools of the county, and it may be truthfully said, that the greatest success has crowned his efforts. We paid our first visit to the Shelton School in an official capacity last Thursday. We "went in" with the scholars after recess and remained until noon, and would have stayed longer but did not care to stay there alone. The school is under the management of G. W. Hartman and Miss Addie Thomson. Mr. Hartman, one of the graduates of our state university, and one of the young men who built up Buffalo County's good reputation in that institution, will have charge of the Oliver Hall School, when the school will be divided, which will be soon. Miss Thomson will continue the intermediate department in the old school building. When the school is divided, Shelton can boast of as good schools as any town of its size for it certainly has two as good teachers. About seventy pupils were in attendance. In the space of one hour six classes were heard, two of the number arithmetic, numbering thirteen and fourteen pupils. Both classes were reciting at the same time, Mr. Hartman hearing one class, Miss Thomson the other. Notwithstanding the large number of pupils in one small room, the best of order prevailed. We were greatly pleased with the general appearance of the room, and can assure the patrons their children are well cared for and instructed.

Miss Lulu Slattery is wielding the birch in district No. 17. She has thirty-five scholars—this her second term.

Miss Annie Barbour, sister of Mrs. Frank More, is teaching in district No. 43.

Miss Stonebarger, lately from Illinois, is teaching in district No. 52.

Miss Ella Smith has a six months' term on district No. 1.

George K. Peck is teaching in Hall County.

James Steven holds forth in the Nebraska brick building (a sod school-house) in district No. 41, Elm Island.

E. O. Elliot is teaching the young ideas "how to shoot" in district No. 10.

C. Allen Cook is engaged in district No. 11, near Buda.

Cooley Walker is teaching his first term in Hall County.

Frank Cooper is teaching over in the bluffs.

SHELTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

In the Twentieth Century Club souvenir edition of The Shelton Clipper (1905) Miss Rosa Stebbins writes of the early history of Shelton Public Library: "In the year 1896 the Nineteenth Century Club, believing a circulating library to be in the highest degree beneficial to the public, first assumed the responsibility of placing one in the town. Certain of its members solicited the community and secured by subscription the amount of \$50. With this capital the club subscribed to what was known as the Fremont Circulating Library. This library sent out a set of books every three months, the club paying the freight and subscription and being entitled to their use for five years. Miss Anna Wood

(later Mrs. John Light) was authorized to care for these books as librarian. Later on in the year 1898, the club ladies believed that a library owned by the public would prove more far reaching and satisfactory, and thereupon began their work for the establishment of a public library.

"A call was extended to all ladies interested through the Clipper which resulted in the formation of an association with a membership of thirty-five ladies. At this time it became independent of the club, and became possible through the courtesy of A. H. Morris, who donated the use of a steam-heated room for this purpose, and to those who subscribed books and money. The club donated a large number of books they had on hand. During the next three years, Miss Minnie Smith being made librarian in 1901, by dint of hard work and unflagging interest on the part of the association, the library was kept open, and at the close of the year 1902, 670 books were reported on the shelves.

"On November 1, 1903, the association deemed it advisable to close the library for one year, there being a deficiency of funds, and a seeming lack of interest on the part of the public. In January, 1905, the association again took up its work with redoubled vigor, and reorganized with a much larger membership than ever before.

"The library is now (1905) situated at the north end of Main Street, a pleasant room in the Meisner Building having been donated by Mr. Meisner for its use. The library hours are from 2 to 6 o'clock on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and the room is also kept open on the same evenings as a reading room. There are now 1,370 books on the shelves and subscription to several magazines has been donated. Although the Twentieth Century Club deserves credit for the first establishment of a library in the town, the idea and desire for it originated in the mind of Mrs. H. H. Stedman."

In January, 1908, it became the Shelton Public Library, a village tax being levied for its support. On April 25, 1912, at the annual town meeting of Shelton Township, it was made a township library, one of the first thus established in the state and a two mill tax levied for its support. On April 7, 1913, Andrew Carnegie's offer of \$9,000 with which to erect a library building was received and accepted.

On June 1, 1914, the library moved into the new building. The members of the library board (1915) are George W. Smith, president; V. L. Johnson, Leroy Barrett, Mrs. J. H. Dugdale and Mrs. George Prouty, secretary.

The annual report for the year ending June 1, 1915, shows: Number of volumes in library, 3,411; number of volumes issued, juvenile, 3,113; number of volumes issued, adults, 4,582; number of readers, 2,748.

Those serving as librarians, Minnie Smith, Rosina Stebbins, Jessie Smith, Hattie Bissett, Gladys Adams, Edith Weaver, Mrs. H. A. Vose.

BANKS.

The Shelton Bank was started as a private enterprise in 1882 by Coleman and Leachey, who were succeeded in about a year by Huggins and Leachey and these in turn (in June, 1883) by H. J. Robbins and S. H. Graves; the bank remained a private affair until July, 1889, when it organized as a state bank with



METHODIST CHURCH, SHELTON



SHELTON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY
Erected 1912

an authorized capital of \$50,000, one-half paid in. The charter members were J. S. Hedges, D. P. Junk, George Mortimer, S. H. Graves, and L. F. Stockwell; George Mortimer, president; S. H. Graves, cashier. In 1902 was organized the Farmers Bank, with a capital stock of \$10,000. George Mortimer, president; M. L. Phelps, vice president; P. H. Graves, cashier. In the year 1905 the Farmers Bank was taken over by the Shelton Bank. In 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus, \$6,200; deposits, \$120,000. The officers of the bank, H. C. Hansen, president; H. H. Stedman, vice president; V. L. Johnson, cashier.

Meisner's Bank was a private enterprise on the part of George Meisner, starting in the year 1884 with a capital stock of \$35,000. In June, 1889, the bank was reorganized as First National Bank with a paid up capital of \$50,000, the charter members being George Meisner, J. H. Robbins, H. J. Robbins, M. G. Lee, Henry Fieldgrove and George Smith; Mr. Meisner, president; A. H. Sterrett, cashier; F. D. More, assistant cashier.

In the year 1895 the bank was chartered as a state bank (Meisner's Bank) and in the year 1915 had a capital stock of \$40,000; surplus, \$8,000; deposits, \$250,000. President, H. J. Robbins; vice president, M. G. Lee; cashier, George W. Smith; assistant cashier, F. D. More.

THE METHODIST CHURCH

The first history of record of the Methodist Church at Shelton appears to be that of Rev. J. Marsh, who came to Buffalo County in 1873, taking a homestead claim in Gibbon Township. Mr. Marsh records that he organized in 1873-4 a class at Shelton with Rufus Mitchell as leader. The names of the members of this class as given by Mr. Marsh are: Eunice Mitchell, Nathan T. Britton, Jane A. Warner, Alexander Ross, Henry M. King, Margaret Vanwey, Jane A. West, Isaac A. King, Hannah Britton, Josephus Morgan, Eliza J. Ross, Amanda E. King, Robert Gilispie, Emma J. Bly, Charlotte C. King, James A. Light, Celesta Morgan, John C. Vanwey, Joseph T. Ross, Angeline Gilispie, Almira Jaunta, James O. King, Mary A. Light, Eliza Vanwey, Wm. J. Vanwey, Kate Ross, Roswell West and Almed Morrow.

The church services were held in the old schoolhouse until 1882 when a church edifice was erected. In the year 1896 the Epworth League room was added and extensive repairs made.

The Methodist Episcopal Aid Society was organized in 1882. In 1915 there were forty members, the officers being, Mrs. George Hauke, president; Mrs. Charles Lucas, vice president; Mrs. Clyde Burkard, secretary and Miss Elizabeth Richardson, treasurer.

In the year 1906 a new church building was erected at a cost of \$9,500.

The following pastors have served the Methodist Church at Shelton: Revs. J. Marsh, Charles Reily, Peter DeClark, J. A. Bartholemew, H. Somers, H. C. Harman, Charles A. Mastin, G. H. McAdam, J. G. Martin, C. C. Wilson, C. C. Snavelly, S. Blair, James Leonard, M. T. Stiffler, W. H. Mills, W. H. D. Horne-day, A. L. Umpleby, J. R. Martin and E. E. Carter.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The First Presbyterian Church of Shelton was organized April 12, 1880, by Rev. George L. Little, assisted by Rev. J. G. Tate.

The charter members were George L. Warner, Mrs. Jane A. Warner, James W. White, Mrs. Ella J. White, Henry Fieldgrove, Mrs. Margaret Fieldgrove, Philip Smith, Mrs. Philip Smith, Mrs. E. Gilbert, John Gutherless, Mrs. L. L. McDonald, Shield Smith, Mrs. Shield Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Meals, Mrs. J. G. Tate, Mr. and Mrs. George Smith, Mrs. Emily Beekman, O. J. Vandyke, Mrs. Sarah Vandyke, Mrs. A. J. Heatherington, Mrs. B. P. Thomson, Miss Addie Thomson. George L. Warner, Shield R. Smith and O. J. Vandyke were chosen elders and Henry Fieldgrove, Philip Smith and A. A. Burrows trustees. A church building was erected in 1887 and since improved at a total cost of \$5,000. The manse was built in 1904 and since made modern at a total cost of \$2,000.

The membership of the church in 1905 was seventy-two and in 1915 sixty-five.

During the pastorate of Rev. F. A. Mitchell a pipe organ was installed in the church at an expense of \$1,200.

The pastors who have served this church in their order have been: J. G. Tate, George Bray, John Gilmore, James Griffis, C. F. Graves, L. W. Scudder, F. L. Higdon, J. M. Skinner, F. A. Mitchell, George McNab, John R. Bennett, George F. Williams.

The Presbyterian Social Circle was organized in 1884. In the year 1915 the membership was fifty. The officers were: Mrs. M. G. Lee president; Mrs. A. L. Strand, vice president; Mrs. F. H. Redington, secretary; Mrs. O. R. Crumley, treasurer.

UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Shelton Mission was organized by the annual conference held at Athelstan, Iowa, March 16, 1896. The board of trustees for the church were elected and organized April 7, 1898, and were incorporated the following day. Services were held in the Advent Church for some time and in the month of November, 1899, under the pastorate of Rev. E. W. Brooker, a subscription paper was circulated for the purpose of securing funds to erect a church building in Shelton.

This church was dedicated by Bishop R. Dubs, May 30, 1900, under the pastorate of Rev. M. B. Young.

The church building was built at an expense of \$2,700 and a parsonage at an expense of \$1,300.

The pastors who have served in this field have been: Revs. I. B. Wolford, E. W. Brooker, M. B. Young, C. F. Beller, B. A. Shively, Con Hewett, H. C. Farley, H. Wood, W. T. Randolph.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The cornerstone of the Catholic Church at Shelton was laid in May, 1908, the building completed the following year. The structure is of brick and cost \$11,000. It was largely through the efforts of George Meisner that the work of



CATHOLIC CHURCH, SHELTON



LAYING THE CORNERSTONE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AT SHELTON
IN MAY, 1908

building was accomplished, he donating the first \$1,000 towards the building fund. Non-Catholics of Shelton and vicinity were most liberal in their donations toward the church building. Edward B. McDermott, a law student at Creighton College, Omaha—a resident of Shelton and a graduate of Shelton High School—delivered the address of the day when the church was dedicated.

Rev. P. J. Daly, the first pastor of the church, was active in securing the building of the church.

The church at present (1915) has a membership of forty families. The pastors of the church have been: Rev. P. J. Daly, Rev. H. Alberts, Rev. H. Muenstermann.

THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The Seventh Day Adventist Church at Shelton was started through the efforts of Elders George Langdon and A. L. Hooper, who held a course of lectures here in 1885.

The church was organized with a charter membership of thirteen.

A church building was erected in 1893 at a cost of about twelve hundred dollars.

It has a seating capacity of 125.

The church was dedicated August 5, 1893, by Elder Daniel Nettleton, assisted by Elders G. Smith and W. B. White. In the year 1905 the membership was twenty-eight and in 1915 fifteen.

The pastors or elders in charge of the church have been: Simon Mosser, Lorenzo Plumb, Albert Danman.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

The First Baptist Church, Shelton, was organized January 30, 1904.

The charter members were: Sarah L. Wilkenson, Benjamin Wilkenson, M. P. Cleveland, Daniel Stonebarger, Hannah Stonebarger, Thomas Blakeley, Sarah Blakeley, Mary Keefauver.

A church building was erected in 1904 at an approximate cost of two thousand dollars. The membership in 1915, twenty-three.

The first pastor was Rev. J. W. Groves, the others in order: B. F. Farrer, Edwin Hardcastle, C. F. Deuholm, Joseph James, M. C. Powers.

UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

In School District No. 22, in Shelton Township, was organized the United Brethren Church in Christ on November 20, 1873.

The church was organized by Rev. W. S. Spooner, in the house on the homestead farm of George Stearley. The charter members were: A. W. Zimmerman, Louisa E. Zimmerman, husband and wife; George Stearley, Barbary Stearley, husband and wife.

The name given the organization at the time was "The Zimmerman Class."

In the year 1897 a church was built at a cost of approximately twelve hundred dollars. In the year 1915 the membership of the church was fifty-five.

As near as can be recalled the pastors who have served this church and people, in their order, are as follows: W. S. Spooner, O. Knepper, J. M. Witters, John Green, H. S. Munger, J. J. Smith, J. M. Witters, J. Bremser, W. S. Fields, Mr. Fowler, W. Thompson, T. B. Cannon, C. W. Bohart, A. Boyd, A. L. Zimmerman, Wm. Tooley, A. Boyd, W. C. Miller, L. L. Epley, G. W. Arnold, Walter Smith, W. G. Rooker, F. Grow.

The church was built during the pastorate of Rev. A. L. Zimmerman.

LADIES' AID SOCIETY

The first ladies' aid society in Shelton was organized in the year 1882. The meeting was held in the unfinished building of the M. E. Church, the ladies sitting, meantime, on piles of lumber. Mrs. Max A. Hostetler was elected president; Mrs. James Steven, secretary; Mrs. M. L. Phelps, treasurer. A bazar was held soon after in a corner of the church building. The Methodist Church was the first church erected in the village and everyone interested in churches assisted with labor and finance. When the church was completed it was painted a white color. The painter, being something of an artist, conceived the idea of an oil painting high above the front windows. Accordingly, he painted a woodland scene—a stream, some fallen logs, a man with an ax and a cow. An elderly gentleman, being asked later what he thought of the painting, replied: "Well, I guess the painting is all right but it seems a funny place for a cow pasture."

W. C. T. U.

The first county organization of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union appears to have been in Kearney in 1890, Mrs. Cooley organizer. The officers were: Mrs. Louise M. Collins, president; Mrs. A. H. Connor, Kearney, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Max A. Hostetler, of Shelton, recording secretary; Mrs. James H. Davis, Gibbon, treasurer.

It is recalled that Miss Mary Ripley, of Kearney, was greatly interested in this work, especially along the line of scientific instruction in the public schools.

Miss Frances Willard, national president of the W. C. T. U., spoke on two occasions in Kearney in the interests of the work of the Union. On both occasions there was a large attendance, both Shelton and Gibbon being well represented.

The records of the organization of the W. C. T. U. in Shelton disclose Mrs. C. F. Graves, president; Mrs. H. H. Stedman, treasurer; Miss Elizabeth Richardson, secretary. In the year 1915 there were twenty-one members: Miss Elizabeth Richardson, president; Mrs. Charles Soderstrum, vice president; Mrs. R. A. Mears, secretary; Mrs. H. H. Stonebarger, treasurer.

P. E. O.

A P. E. O. society was organized in February, 1914, with a membership of twelve persons. The officers in 1915 were: Mrs. H. H. Stedman, president; Mrs. E. C. Enigh, vice president; Mrs. Leroy Barrett, corresponding secretary; Mrs. F. H. Redington, recording secretary; Mrs. H. C. Hansen, treasurer.

Joe Hooker Post No. 28, Grand Army of the Republic, was organized at Shelton December 6, 1879. Its first officers and charter members were: C. S. Bailey, Com.; J. R. George, S. V. C.; Patrick Walsh, J. V. C.; D. B. Allen, Q. M.; S. A. Banks, O. D.; J. H. Barrett, O. G.; Rev. J. N. Allen, Chap.; A. D. Burrows, Surg.; H. S. Colby, Adj.; J. H. Heatherington, Sergt. Maj.; W. H. Barnes, Q. M. Sergt.; C. H. Horth, S. R. Blois, T. Carrol, W. W. Dubbs, B. F. Sammons, L. Waldron, Rufus Mitchell, H. Willey, W. McCracken, James McCreary, J. R. George, J. H. Smith, J. P. Smith, George L. Gardner. In 1915 the Post had a membership of seventeen. The officers were: R. A. Mears, Com.; Aug. Meyer, S. V. Com.; W. S. Allison, Q. M.; J. A. Light, O. D.; W. H. Barnes, Adj.; D. Stonebarger, Chap.; J. H. Bliss, P. I. Forty-seven soldiers of the Civil war are buried in Shelton cemetery.

Joe Hooker Woman's Relief Corps No. 136, of Shelton, was organized April 17, 1891. The charter members and officers were: President, Amelia H. Sterrett; S. V., Lottie Murphy; J. V., Eunice Mitchell; Treas., Kate McCreary; Chap., Mary E. Smith; Cond., Mary Bolding; G., Ollie Armbus; Secy., Maude L. Beecher; Bertha L. Hedges, Mary B. Town, Hannah Stonebarger, Emma Childs, Lide Waters, Angelina Horth, Polly E. Marble, Olive Armbus, Emretta Fisher, Jane Lippincott, Lettie M. Hedges, Della Beecher.

In the year 1915 the membership of the corps was seventeen. Pres., Mary Light; Secy., Jessie Meyer Lawson; Treas., Margaret Bliss.

Banner Lodge No. 48, Degree of Honor, A. O. U. W., was organized at Shelton April 3, 1893. The officers were: Mrs. Ella White, P. C. H.; Mrs. Laurene Hostetler, C. H.; Mrs. Edith Bailey, L. H.; Mrs. Max A. Hostetler, Rec.; Mrs. Sarah Barrett, Fin.; Mrs. Sarah Blakely, receiver; Mrs. James Stevens, C. C.; Miss Gertrude Graffius, usher; Miss Nancy Bastian, I. W.; George Smith, O. W. In 1915 the officers of the lodge were: Mrs. Mary Bills, P. C.; Mrs. Maggie Corrigan, C. H.; Mrs. Maggie Fieldgrove, L. H.; Mrs. Sarah Vandyke, C. C.; Mrs. Max A. Hostetler, Rec.; Mrs. L. Anna Adams, Fin.; Mrs. Hazel Templin, receiver; Mrs. Hattie Reed, usher; Mrs. Sarah Meusch, I. W.

Dewey Lodge No. 598, Modern Brotherhood of America, was organized in August, 1899, with Max A. Hostetler as president: C. A. Washburn, secretary. The charter membership was left open for some time and when closed the lodge had a membership of 151. In 1915 the lodge had a membership of 103. Officers: G. W. Dawson, Pres.; C. A. Washburn, Secy.

Anchor Lodge No. 14, A. O. U. W., located at Shelton, was organized August 23, 1883, the charter members being: H. J. Fleck, J. P. Bastian, A. A. Burrows, E. Oliver, James Steven, H. E. Jones, A. E. Rice, Rev. J. G. Tate, D. W. Underwood, Henry Fletcher, T. E. Mundle, H. C. McNew, Dr. R. M. Beecher, Rev. J. M. Harman, J. H. Waters, J. M. Hawk, D. W. Smith, J. W. Kearn, Paul Kalmuk, John Gutherless.

The present (1915) membership of the lodge is 137. M. W., James Buck; Rec., F. Carpenter; Fin., V. S. Pierce; receiver, R. R. Mathieson.

Phoenix Lodge No. 158, A. O. U. W., was organized February 27, 1897. The charter members were: C. F. Graves, P. M. W.; A. D. Graham, M. W.; James

W. White, Rec.; John Heatherington, Fin.; J. W. Weaver, Erford Wescoatt, J. P. Moore, James Waters, Thomas Blakeley, O. P. Guffey.

The present (1915) membership of the lodge is thirty-five. M. W., Barney Wiest; Rec., Jeff Devall; Fin., M. A. Hostetler; receiver, J. P. Moore.

Buffalo Camp No. 1190, M. W. A., of Shelton, organized October 10, 1889. The records of the camp were destroyed by fire in 1903, making it not possible to give the number of charter members. The first officers were: Coun., C. M. Wallace; W. A., E. O. Hostetler; banker, James McCreary; clerk, J. W. Wharton; escort, F. A. Bailey; watchman, Wm. P. Harmon; sentry, Robert Beekman; managers, C. S. Bailey, J. S. Hedges, M. G. Lee; physician, Dr. E. L. Smith.

In 1915 the camp had a membership of sixty. The officers: Coun., R. Kesterson; advisor, Frank Webbin; banker, J. B. Hodge; clerk, C. M. Wallace; escort, W. H. Lute; watchman, H. G. Grunprecht; sentry, Leo Kesterson; trustees, A. H. Morris, John Mullen, M. G. Lee; physician, Dr. Charles Lucas.

Shelton Lodge No. 141, I. O. O. F., was instituted February 26, 1886, by Grand Master Arthur Gibson, assisted by members of the order from Gibbon and Kearney. The charter members were: James Steven, F. J. Taylor, D. P. Crable, W. V. Fox, Edward Oliver, J. M. Harman, E. V. Bush, Joseph Owen, H. C. Bull, A. N. Murphy, W. E. Bull, W. W. Watters, J. H. Watters, James Vanwey, Eli Campbell, L. D. Hile. Joseph Owen, N. G.; James H. Watters, R. S. In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of seventy-nine. Officers: Samuel Druse, N. G.; Fred Haug, V. G.; Joseph Owen, Sr., R. S.; H. J. Dugdale, Treas.

Ellen Rebekah Lodge No. 306, I. O. O. F., was instituted at Shelton February 5, 1913, with sixteen charter members. The officers were: Ella Grafius, N. G.; Clara A. Smith, V. G.; Bertha E. Kunkle, Secy.; C. C. Grafius, Treas. In 1915 the lodge had forty-seven members. The officers were: Melissa E. Kunkle, N. G.; Lillian F. Webbin, V. G.; Bertha E. Kunkle, Secy.; Maggie Webbin, Treas.

Shelton Lodge No. 99, A. F. & A. M., was organized July 28, 1882, with a charter membership of fifteen. George L. Gardner, W. M.; Rodney Beecher, S. W.; Moses L. Phelps, J. W.; B. F. Sammons, Secy.; M. G. Lee, Treas.; John A. Hogg, S. D.; Joseph Smith, J. D.; George L. Thomas, Tyler. In the year 1915 the lodge had fifty-two members. Lawrence E. Treat, W. M.; Vernon S. Pierce, Secy.; M. G. Lee, Treas.

FRATERNAL AID UNION OF AMERICA

On January 19, 1909, there was organized at Shelton a lodge of American Order of Protection, with a charter membership of thirty-seven. The instituting officer was ex-Governor W. A. Poynter.

At a later date the name was changed to Fraternal Aid Union of America.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of sixty. Pres., J. R. Johnson; V. Pres., John Oliver; Secy., E. L. Light; Treas., Mary Light.

Castle Hall, Shelton Lodge No. 92, Knights of Pythias, was instituted at Shelton December 1, 1887, with a charter membership of forty-four. Officers: F. E. Ellis, P. C.; J. S. Hedges, C. C.; C. A. Kinney, V. C.; David Neely, M. of

Ex.; F. D. More, M. of F.; F. H. More, prelate; J. H. Heatherington, M. of A.; S. H. Graves, K. of R. & S.; C. S. Bailey, I. W.; J. W. White, O. G.

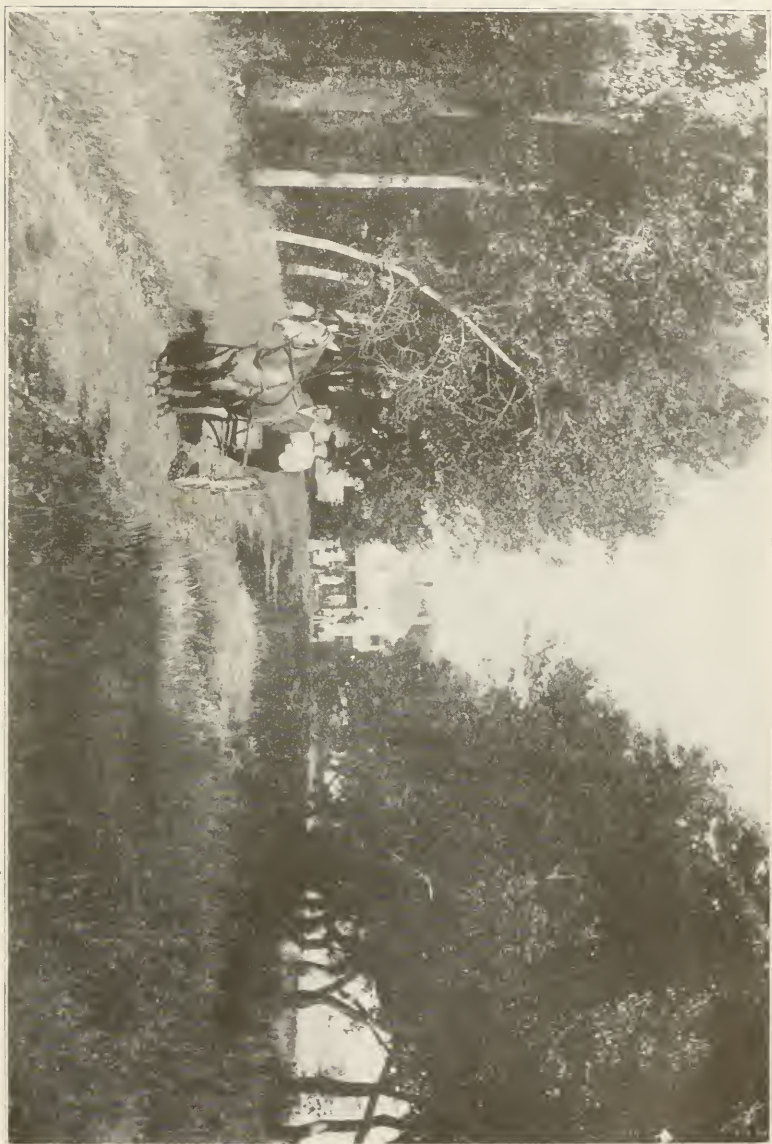
In 1915 the castle had a membership of seventy-four. Officers: Joseph Owen, Jr., C. C.; V. S. Pierce, V. C.; Joseph Owen, Sr., M. of Ex.; Lee Roberts, prelate; F. T. Turney, M. of A.; W. H. Barnes, K. of R. & S.; Paul More, I. G.; Carl Carlson, O. G.

CHAPTER XXXIV

GIBBON—NAMED IN HONOR OF GEN. JOHN GIBBON, U. S. A.—WILSON AND STAATS THE FIRST SETTLERS—WILSON DROWNED IN THE PLATTE—FIRST DEEDS TO LOTS PROHIBITED THE SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS—I. N. DAVIS DONATED TEN ACRES FOR TOWNSHIP PARK—LIST OF POSTMASTERS—LIST OF PHYSICIANS—FIRST NEWSPAPER, BUFFALO COUNTY BEACON—GIBBON REPORTER—RIVERSIDE CEMETERY—AN INCLINE GRAIN ELEVATOR—THE GIBBON CREAMERY—INCORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE—FIRST BOARD OF TRUSTEES—GIBBON COMMERCIAL CLUB—THE GIBBON CHAUTAUQUA—THE PUBLIC SCHOOL—THE FIRST WINTER TERM OF SCHOOL—WOMAN'S STUDY LEAGUE—GIBBON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY—BANKS—CHURCHES—FRATERNAL AND BENEFICIARY LODGES.

GIBBON

In the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad a siding was built at this point in 1866 and named "Gibbon Switch." As the editor of this history understands, the name Gibbon was in honor of Gen. John Gibbon, a graduate of the United States Military Academy in 1847. He served in the war with Mexico. Subsequently he was in garrison and on frontier duty against hostile Indians until the outbreak of the Civil war in 1861. For gallant services in battle in the Civil war Captain Gibbon received successive brevet promotions from major to that of major general, U. S. A. Gibbon is located on section No. 13, all of which would have been railroad land had it not been that a man named Wilson "squatted" on what proved to be, when surveyed, the northeast quarter of section 13. From the heirs of Wilson, J. E. Kelsey purchased the squatter's right" and filed thereon a soldier's homestead claim. John Nutter relates the following incident connected with the first family who made settlement where now is the Village of Gibbon: In the year 1865 a man named Wilson "squatted" on a claim, now within the incorporated limits of Gibbon. Here he built a habitation, part dug-out, part logs, and then went to Dobytown, a hamlet two miles west of Fort Kearney, for his family. His family consisted of a wife and several children, some of sufficient age and experience to drive an ox team. He had an ox team, a covered (prairie schooner) wagon and also owned a mule. Loading his family and belongings into the wagon it was arranged that the two older boys should drive the oxen and the father follow, riding the mule. To celebrate their removal to their claim the father indulged in a few drinks and the start was made. The crossing of the Platte was opposite Fort Kearney. It was in the month of June, and, as the saying is, the Platte was running full banks at high water mark. The most difficult and dangerous part of the cross-



RESIDENCE OF SAMUEL C. BASSETT, NEAR GIBBON

ing was known as "ox channel," it having a deep, swift current and occasional quicksand holes.

Crossing this channel the boys had great difficulty in extricating their ox team from a quicksand hole and in the excitement incident thereto none of the family seem to have thought to look back for the father. When the family had reached land they looked for the father, but could see nothing of either him or the mule and neither of them were seen or heard of since. It is conjectured that the mule encountered a quicksand hole and was drowned and that Mr. Wilson, too drunk to help himself, drowned as he floated down stream in the turbid, swift flowing waters of the Platte. Jack Staats married Sophia, daughter of Mr. Wilson before mentioned, the families living together. It is related that in the days of the building of the Union Pacific, James E. Boyd claimed nearly everything in sight, there being a story current that he was paid \$500 for the privilege of permitting the wood to be cut on Wood River, although he had no rights on any land other than his claim on section No. 14, known as Boyd's Ranch. When the Staats and Wilson families squatted on their claim Mr. Boyd rode down and ordered them to leave. When Staats refused, the story as related is, that Boyd started to draw his gun, but Staats being the quicker, shot Boyd through the hand and would have killed him had not Boyd immediately left.

The names of Staats and Wilson appear in the list of tax payers in the county in the year 1867.

The Village of Gibbon had its beginning in April, 1871, on the arrival of the soldier's free homestead colony, and in the history of the colony, elsewhere given, appears much of the early history of the village.

The records disclose that the original townsite of the Village of Gibbon—the southwest quarter of section 13, township 9, range 14 west—was purchased of the Union Pacific Railroad Company, consideration, \$600.

The townsite was surveyed by C. Putnam. The owners of the townsite donated one block for a public school site, one block for a courthouse site and a site for a church building.

The first deed to a lot in the Village of Gibbon was given I. D. LaBarre and signed by John Thorp, George Gilmore, Jane Gilmore. In the deed given for this lot is the following condition:

"If the said I. D. LaBarre shall sell, keep, give away or permit to be sold, kept or given away any malt, spirituous or vinous liquors on the premises, or shall keep, sell or give away or allow to be kept, sold or given away any medicated liquors, styled bitters, to be used as a beverage, then this conveyance to be void; otherwise in full force and effect.

"Dated May 6, 1872."

As a matter of history it may be well to add that the foregoing provision in this deed and others of like nature were openly and notoriously violated by the sale of so called "bitters," which served every purpose of intoxicating liquors.

I. N. Davis donated to the Town of Gibbon ten acres of land within the incorporated limits of the village for a public park and which has been improved and is a source of great pleasure to the entire community.

In the early history of the village there was a story current that the junction of the Burlington Railway with the Union Pacific could have been secured at

this point had the owners of the Gibbon townsite been willing to donate liberally of the lands of the townsite. Those who read of "The Founding of Kearney Junction" in this history will be convinced that the junction point of the two railroads was determined before members of the homestead colony had filed upon claims, before, in fact, there was any certainty that here would be a village. The original owners of the townsite of Gibbon, as well as a large majority of the members of the colony, were temperance people, opposed to the sale of intoxicating liquors, and deeds to the first lots sold in Gibbon contained provisions that no intoxicating liquors should ever be sold on the premises. It was nearly twenty years before a saloon license was issued in the village.

A postoffice was established soon after the arrival of the colony, L. D. George, postmaster, the salary \$12 a year, the office being kept in the store of Mr. George. In the order named the postmasters who have served at Gibbon have been I. D. LaBarre, A. J. Price, S. C. Ayer, M. D. Marsh, H. H. Haven, C. Putnam, J. E. Kelsey, J. B. Ring, D. P. Ashburn, H. N. Miller, W. A. Rodgers, R. A. St. John, H. J. Dunkin. In 1914 the salary of the postmaster was \$1,500; the revenue from the office, \$3,600.

In the life of the village the following are the names of those physicians and surgeons who have in largest measure and for longest periods of time practiced their profession and ministered to the bodily ills of the people of the community: I. P. George, D. H. Hite, S. D. Steere, Josiah Slick, J. C. Carson, L. B. Hill, J. W. Miller, R. S. McLain.

A station agent, like a postmaster, is a most useful official in the life of a village, and in this respect Gibbon has been well served by efficient, public spirited men who took an active interest in the life and activities of the village. James Ogilvie served from the establishment of the station in 1871 to his death in February, 1881. Following Mr. Ogilvie came D. F. Ingles, who served until 1895. Our genial agent, E. S. Harte, has completed (1915) twenty years of service and the patrons of the office hope that twenty years hence he will still be selling tickets, checking baggage, receiving and forwarding freight and serving as a member of the school board.

In July, 1872, was issued the first copy of the Buffalo County Beacon, A. J. Price, editor. There was scant support for a local newspaper at that date and in March, 1873, the subscription list and good will were sold to Webster Eaton, proprietor of the Central Nebraska Press, published at Kearney. When the Nebraska Baptist College was established at Gibbon in 1882 Rev. J. M. Taggart established the Buffalo County Beacon of that date, the hand press and type being from a printing outfit brought into Nebraska Territory in the early '50s. Both Mr. Taggart and Rev. G. W. Read served as editors until 1884, when the plant was purchased by S. C. Bassett, who within the year sold to F. C. Hitchcock, and in a short time the Beacon became the property of W. H. Carson, a practical newspaper man. In 1890 the Gibbon Printing Company purchased the Beacon plant and the publication was continued until 1900, when the entire plant was sold to E. C. Krewson and removed to Elm Creek. In 1890 W. H. Carson began the publication of the Gibbon Reporter, which in 1901 was purchased by R. A. St. John, who has since been its editor and publisher.

In 1915 Eugene Wiggins was still connected with the Reporter. "Gene," as



PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING, GIBBON



HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, GIBBON

his friends (and everybody is his friend) lovingly call him, first began his newspaper career at Gibbon at some dim and distant date in the last century, when the Union Pacific was a one-track road, long before the telephone and motor cars came into use, long years before a postmaster who believed in the principles of the democratic party was permitted to read the postal cards and distribute mail to the people of Gibbon and vicinity. Faithful "Gene;" when the next century shall be with us may you still be setting type, making up forms and writing the subscription list of the local newspaper.

In the year 1876 was organized the Riverside Cemetery Association, the first of its kind in the county. Those most active in its organization were D. P. Ashburn, James H. Davis, James Ogilvie, C. Putnam, A. Eddy, Henry Cook, D. B. Worley, J. J. W. Place.

The cemetery was located on the pre-emption farm of D. P. Ashburn, six acres being donated by Mr. Ashburn. The grounds were surveyed and platted, free of expense, by C. Putnam. About the year 1890 the cemetery was taken over by Gibbon Township, township trustees elected at the annual township meeting and a township tax levied for its support, this being the first township cemetery in the state and also one of the first to make provision whereby the township, for a consideration, contracted to perpetually care for a cemetery lot.

Riverside Cemetery, located on the banks of Wood River, a "city of the dead," is a beautiful spot, at all times well cared for.

In 1879 grain began to be shipped in considerable quantities, the first elevator being built and operated by D. P. Ashburn. In delivering grain at this elevator the wagon was drawn up an incline plane by means of a rope, pulley and team to the top of the elevator, where the loaded wagon was dumped. About 1881 a more modern elevator was erected on the site of the present (1915) Hoard Elevator. In 1915 Gibbon had two grain elevators with a capacity of about seventy thousand bushels.

In the year 1881 D. P. Ashburn built and operated the Gibbon Creamery. This creamery was one of the first established in Central Nebraska. It was operated on the "cream gathering" plan and was successful and profitable until other like creameries and a cheese factory were established, dividing the patronage, which extended over a considerable extent of territory, until all ceased operations for want of support.

Permission to incorporate the Village of Gibbon was granted by the county board of supervisors January 14, 1885. The members of the first board of trustees were D. M. Fulmer, D. Carson, F. C. Hitchcock, George E. Evans, H. H. Havens.

In 1907 the village installed a waterworks plant, bonds to the amount of \$15,000 being voted.

In 1908 a private corporation installed an electric light plant, the capital stock of the corporation being \$10,000, furnishing light for the village and also individual customers.

An event of more than ordinary interest in the life of the village was the erection, in the year 1892, of the Babcock (L. J. Babcock) Opera House and the J. W. Harrel building, the first brick buildings to be erected in the village. The formal opening of the opera house was on October 26, 1892. The program

consisted of music, recitations and addresses. Those taking part were: Invocation, Rev. George VanWinkle; music, Mrs. H. F. Flint, Mrs. C. M. Beck, Mrs. R. E. Rogers, Messrs. Hayward, J. N. Ashburn, I. A. and J. C. Kirk; recitations, Misses Jennie Rodgers, Mary Brady, Rosa Ogilvie and Mrs. I. W. Perdue; addresses, D. P. Ashburn, F. S. Fulmer, Prof. U. S. Conn, A. M. Eastman, George E. Evans, C. Putnam, S. C. Bassett. The reception committee was composed of S. H. Robb, H. F. Flint, T. J. Mahoney, O. McConaughy, D. F. Ingles, C. C. Holloway, W. H. Buck, C. M. Beck.

In the year 1909 was organized the Gibbon Commercial Club, its first president being O. K. Campbell and the secretary E. R. Mercer.

In 1909 the club arranged to have held a chautauqua, guaranteeing its financial success. A chautauqua has been held each year since with an average session attendance of about four hundred and fifty, the patronage paying all expenses. The Commercial Club took an active interest in the establishment of the public library, in securing the erection of a more modern depot building, and in the improvement of public roads. In 1915 the president was W. H. Buck and the secretary R. A. St. John.

In the year 1915 the trustees of the village board were Charles L. Wallace, W. H. Buck, B. F. Henline, J. G. DeWolf and George R. Little; W. S. Randall, village clerk; I. A. Kirk, village treasurer.

The people of Gibbon and vicinity have always taken marked interest in their public schools, mention of which efforts, in the earlier years of its history, is elsewhere made. About the year 1880 there was erected a four-room school building and a high school established. In the year 1886 was graduated the first class from the Gibbon High School, the graduates being Emma L. Davis, Nettie N. Morrow, Sue L. Morrow, Rosa E. Ogilvie. In the year 1908 the district erected a fine, up-to-date brick building at a cost of about twenty-five thousand dollars, school district bonds to the amount of \$18,000 being issued for the purpose.

In the year 1915 ten teachers were employed and 260 pupils enrolled. The members of the school board were M. D. Marsh, I. A. Kirk, W. M. Ross, W. L. Randall, J. G. Walker, G. C. Lunger.

FIRST WINTER TERM OF SCHOOL IN DISTRICT NO. 2

In the fall of 1871 a schoolhouse was built in School District No. 2. This building was about 22 by 32 feet in size, set on blocks as a foundation, was not banked to keep out the cold of winter and neither lathed nor plastered. In this building a three months' term of school was held in the winter of 1871-72 with S. C. Bassett as teacher.

Blanket Indians of the Pawnee tribe, using bows and arrows, were trapping and hunting along the Platte and Wood rivers that winter and often camped near the Village of Gibbon. These Indians often visited the school; that is, without warning some of these Indians would be seen in the school room, at first greatly frightening the children. Such visits seemed to be out of curiosity, the Indians remaining but a brief time, going as quickly and silently as they came.



BUDA SCHOOL

The names of the scholars attending that term of school are as follows: Perry, Edward, Nora and Delia, children of Thomas K. Wood; Joanna and Lena Rodig, step-daughters of R. E. L. Willard; Clara, daughter of Capt. J. H. Darby; Edith, daughter of A. D. George; Cora, daughter of I. D. LaBarre; Carrie and Edward, children of George Gilmore; John, son of Charles Walker, living at Fort Kearney Station (now Buda); Zara, son of L. Worthington; Frank and William, sons of A. S. Craig; Allison, son of Dr. I. P. George; Elmer E. and Flora, children of W. H. Sprague; Etta and Ella, daughters of Coe Killgore; John N., son of Wm. Nutter; Alice and Emma, daughters of Jeremiah McKinley; Cora, Flora and Ida, daughters of L. D. George.

(Note—For history of the organization of School District No. 2 see chapter 23.)

WOMAN'S STUDY LEAGUE.

In the year 1905, June 26, was organized the Woman's Study League of Gibbon, the charter members being Mesdames Hattie Ashburn, Lucia M. Bassett, Susie Beck, Flora Buck, Mabel Campbell, Maud Davis, Evalyn De Wolf, Ida Drury, Robbie Dunkin, Flora Fay, Mae Ferguson, Susan Flint, Grace Hershey, John Hershey, Clara Kirk, Rosa Linger, Mary Miller, Pearl Nicholson, Blanche Noble, Jennie Rodgers, Jessie Sargent, Louise Scott, Sybil Walker, Misses Mattie Pierce, Jessie Kean; Mrs. Grace Hershey, president; Mrs. Blanche Noble, vice president; Mrs. Jessie Sargent, recording secretary; Mrs. Jennie Rogers, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Maud Davis, treasurer. In the same year the league joined the State Federation of Woman's Clubs, Mrs. Jessie Sargent attending as delegate.

The league in addition to a course of study for mutual improvement, first agitated the subject of a modern school building, which was erected in 1908 at an expense of \$25,000. The league secured the establishment of a public reading and rest room in the town hall and were largely instrumental in the establishment of a public library and the erection of a library building.

In 1915 the league had thirty-five members. The officers were, president, Mrs. Blanche Mickey; vice-president, Mrs. Lillian Webster; treasurer, Mrs. Grace Linger; corresponding secretary, Miss Fern Leas; recording secretary, Mrs. Pauline Little.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

Elsewhere in this history mention is made of the "first library" established in Gibbon. At the close of the Woman's Study League for the year 1909, Mrs. C. M. Beck, president, there remained on hand a surplus of \$45, and the league set this sum aside as the beginning of a public library fund, each member of the league pledging to earn \$1 during the ensuing year to be added to the fund. This and entertainments given by the league during the year brought their contribution to \$245. The Good Samaritans contributed \$37, and popular subscriptions by people of the community added \$183, making a total of \$465.

On May 10, 1910, was organized the Gibbon Public Library Association, the officers and directors being: S. C. Bassett, president; Miss Mattie Pierce, secre-

tary; Miss Jessie Kean, treasurer; Mrs. J. G. Walker, L. A. Wight, W. M. Ross and W. C. Ogilvie. The Township of Gibbon donated the use of a room in the town hall where the library was installed with Miss Mattie Davis as librarian. In the year 1912, at the annual township meeting, the library was taken over by Gibbon Township and a two-mill levy voted for its support. The first trustees named were W. C. Ogilvie, R. A. Francis, L. A. Wight, Mrs. J. G. Walker, Ray R. Cook, Mrs. J. G. Walker, president. From funds (\$6,000) donated by Andrew Carnegie a beautiful library building was erected in 1913 on a site donated by the Village of Gibbon. This was one of the first two township libraries established in the state and the first township library building erected in the state.

The annual report for the year ending June 1, 1915, as furnished by Miss Mattie Pierce, librarian, shows:

Number volumes in library.....	1,541
Number volumes issued—juvenile.....	2,103
Number volumes issued—adults	3,402
Number readers	690

GIBBON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

By L. A. Wight

In no institution in our midst do the people of Gibbon seem to take a greater pride than in their Carnegie Public Library. It is housed in one of the finest buildings in the town, practically fireproof. More than 700 readers comprise its list of patrons. Over 1,500 volumes make up its stock of books. On its reading tables may be found a choice selection of the leading periodicals, and besides these there are innumerable pamphlets and Government bulletins. There is also a fine collection of curios and historical relics. The Gibbon library spirit, long standing and determined, far antedates this well-nurtured forerunner of our present tax-supported township library, having come, apparently, with the first settlers of our community, surviving in spite of every adversity and thriving under any show of prosperity until now it takes its full measure of pride in a firmly established and thoroughly prosperous public library. In the early days, soon after the coming of the "colony" in 1871, in spite of adversity and the abounding cares incident upon the conversion of the wilderness into a suitable abiding place for the new community, an unquenchable love of books made itself distinctly manifest, and, in 1872, under the auspices of the Gibbon Library Association, we find a collection of standard books installed in the depot, under the care of Station Agent James Ogilvie. Several of these comparatively ancient volumes may yet be found doing yeomanlike book service beside the best sellers of the present day, and after having passed through the hands of the various educational institutions occupying the old courthouse, they have come finally to an ideal bookhouse in the township library. Inside their covers, modestly hiding behind the book pockets of our present library, may be found the printed rules of this first Gibbon library of 1872.

But these patriarchs of the book shelf are by no means anything like lonely



EXCHANGE BANK BUILDING, GIBBON



GIBBON TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

"last leaves" on account of their longevity. Crowding around them are hundreds of the newest and the best in literature and the stock is being constantly replenished.

The Gibbon Public Library caters to the needs of the public schools in the township, assisting students in their research work, becoming more and more a fixed department in our public school system.

The love of good books has certainly here a vigorous stimulant, and the Gibbon Public Library has undoubtedly opened upon an exceptionally useful career.

The success and the great measure of usefulness already attained by the Gibbon Public Library is due in large measure to its efficient, progressive and enthusiastic librarian, Miss Mattie Pierce.

EXCHANGE BANK

In the year 1885 James H. Davis and Horace F. Flint engaged in the banking business with a paid in capital of \$20,000, the firm name being James H. Davis & Company. In the year — the bank was reorganized as First National Bank with a paid in capital of \$50,000. The stockholders were: James H. Davis, Horace F. Flint, L. J. Babcock, Thomas Kirk, S. C. Bassett, John Reddy, W. A. Rodgers. James H. Davis, president; H. F. Flint, cashier. In the year 1892 the bank was reorganized and chartered as a state bank and named Exchange Bank, with a capital stock of \$10,000.

In 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$16,000; surplus, \$4,000; deposits, \$155,000. Officers, H. F. Flint, president; I. A. Kirk, cashier; W. C. Ogilvie, assistant cashier.

COMMERCIAL BANK

In the year 1884, Frank C. Hitchcock, John Silvernail and John P. Hartman established a bank, The Bank of Gibbon, a private affair with F. C. Hitchcock as manager of the business.

In the year 1885 the bank was reorganized with a paid in capital of \$5,000; the principal shareholders, Ira Holloway, H. F. Flint, J. P. Hartman, J. H. Silvernail.

The bank was chartered as a state bank under the name, Commercial Bank; for a few months H. F. Flint served as cashier but as finally reorganized the officers were C. M. Beck, president and C. C. Holloway, cashier. In the year 1915 the bank had as capital stock, \$5,000; surplus, \$3,800; deposits, \$97,000. The officers: I. F. Henline, president; B. F. Henline, cashier; C. A. Torrance, vice president; Roscoe Lunger, assistant cashier.

ORGANIZATION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH AT GIBBON

On Tuesday evening, January 16, 1872, Rev. J. N. Webb, general missionary of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society, preached a sermon in the schoolhouse at Gibbon, after which the following named persons organized

themselves into a church to be known as the First Regular Baptist Church of Gibbon, Buffalo County, Nebraska, adopting as their church government and articles of faith and practice those drawn by J. Newton Brown and published by the American Baptist Publication Society. Ira P. George, Mrs. Ira P. George, Jacob Booth, Mrs. Jacob Booth, C. Putnam, John P. Putnam, W. H. Sprague, Mrs. W. H. Sprague, Henry Winklebeck, George H. Silvernail, Amos D. George and Mrs. Amos D. George. At this meeting Dr. Ira P. George was chosen deacon and C. Putnam, clerk.

On Sunday, February 11, 1872, after a sermon by Rev. J. Gunderman, the church granted a license to exercise his gifts in preaching the gospel, to Jacob Booth. On February 25, 1872, the church extended a call as pastor to Rev. J. J. W. Place, which was accepted. Mr. Place served the church, as pastor, until March 8, 1874. After that date the following named served as pastors: Rev. O. A. Buzzell from June 6, 1874, to March 7, 1875; Rev. J. J. W. Place from April 14, 1875 to September 2, 1876; Rev. J. R. Shanafelt from February 3, 1877 to September 2, 1877; Rev. G. W. Read from September 8, 1880 to October 6, 1883; Rev. L. F. Compton from January 1, 1884 to November 8, 1885; Rev. G. W. Willis from November 15, 1885 to December 18, 1887. When the Nebraska Baptist College, which had been established at Gibbon in 1882, was removed to Grand Island, several members of the Baptist Church moved from Gibbon and those members who remained became discouraged because it seemed well nigh impossible to longer carry on the church work. On July 21, 1888, at a meeting held in the Presbyterian Church in Gibbon it was decided to reorganize and form a new church to be named the Baptist Church of Gibbon, Neb. The following named persons wishing to join the new organization, permission was obtained from the original first church by letter: Mr. and Mrs. Applegate, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Taylor, Rev. and Mrs. G. T. Willis, Rev. and Mrs. D. G. Sturtevant, Rev. A. E. Carson, Mrs. Laura Carson, M. M. Carson, Mrs. S. E. Carson, W. B. Southwell, F. C. Overton, Mrs. A. M. Blue, Miss Lena Carson; on Christian experience, Mrs. M. M. Ingham; from the First Baptist Church, Ottawa, Kan., A. B. Carson; by letter from the First Baptist Church of Kearney, Neb., Mr. and Mrs. O. McConnaughey, Misses Thena and Hattie McConnaughey, Mr. and Mrs. D. Carson, H. F. Carson, Miss Nettie Carson. The church voted to call as pastor Rev. Joseph Smith, who served as pastor one year. During this period work was begun on a brick church in size 35 by 46 feet; this church was completed at a cost of \$4,500, and dedicated, free of debt on June 20, 1890. Following the pastorate of Rev. Joseph Smith the following pastors have served the church: J. H. Veder, George Vapsickle, A. E. Carson, A. T. Norwood, C. P. Kirby, J. W. Graves, F. D. Kennedy and in 1910, U. G. Miller; R. Richards and M. C. Powers, 1912.

ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN BUFFALO COUNTY

The organization of the Presbyterian Church of Gibbon as appears from the church records was as follows:

"Church organization at Gibbon, Neb.

"This place was visited by Rev. George R. Carroll, district missionary of the



METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
GIBBON



BAPTIST CHURCH. GIBBON



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GIBBON

Presbyterian Board of Home Missions for Western Iowa and Nebraska, January 22, 1872. Some families were visited during the day and brief services were held at the schoolhouse (Gibbon) in the evening. On the following day after visiting and consultation with friends interested, it was thought best to proceed at once to the organization of a church. Accordingly at 4 o'clock P. M., January 23, 1872, the people came together and after reading the scripture with remarks appropriate to the occasion and prayer for the Divine blessing the following paper with names attached was read."

The paper referred to was a statement in favor of organizing a Presbyterian Church in this place (Gibbon) to be in connection with the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America.

The charter members signing this paper were D. P. Crable, Mrs. M. J. Crable, F. A. Schweinsbury, Mrs. C. Willard, Mrs. Mary Brady, D. B. Worley, Simon V. Seeley, Mrs. Martha O. Seeley, Henry Fairchild, Mrs. Emma Fairchild, and Miss Joana Rodig. D. B. Worley and Simon V. Seeley were duly elected and ordained as elders and the following resolution adopted:

"Resolved: That this church be called the Presbyterian Church of Gibbon, and that we request the presbytery of Missouri River to receive us as a church under its care."

As appears from the records the following persons became members of this church during the years 1873 and 1874: James E. Judd, Mary A. Judd, T. Dwight Thatcher, Flora M. Thatcher, Harriett M. Brown, Mary E. Marvin, Miss Adelia A. Putnam, James Ogilvie and Margaret Ogilvie, and on January 25, 1874, James Ogilvie and Henry Fairchild were elected and ordained elders. In 1873 was erected the first church building in Buffalo County. This church was erected by contributions from members of the church, citizens of Gibbon and vicinity and with funds furnished by the board of church extension of the Presbyterian Church.

The building was a wooden frame veneered with brick, and was built by H. B. Dexter who also was the builder of the first courthouse in the county. Rev. Charles S. Marvin, a Presbyterian missionary, who was pastor of the church for some years, beginning in January, 1873, was largely instrumental in securing the erection of the building, spending much time and effort and contributing liberally of his limited means. The first service held in this church was on March 23, 1873, conducted by Rev. Charles S. Marvin. This building was also used by the Methodist and Baptist Church organizations. The district missionaries and pastors in charge of this church are as follows, the date given being that of the beginning of their respective terms of service: Rev. George R. Carroll, June, 1872; Rev. C. S. Marvin, January, 1873; Rev. J. H. Rainard, April, 1878; Rev. Thomas Blayne, March, 1879; Rev. Arthur Folsom, November, 1882; Rev. C. G. A. Hullhorst, March, 1885; Rev. Julian Hatch, January, 1894; Rev. C. F. Graves, 1896; Rev. Fred C. Phelps, 1897; Rev. J. L. Atkinson, 1898; Rev. F. A. Mitchell, April, 1898; Rev. John Steele, June, 1903; Rev. M. O. Reynolds, March, 1904; Rev. R. L. Purdy, 1909; Rev. E. F. Hammond, 1913.

It is related in the early history of the Presbyterian Church at Gibbon, owing to removal of members and from other causes the membership became small and but little interest manifested, that the presbytery had in mind to abandon

the church organization, there being at the time no resident pastor. The tradition is that Mrs. Margaret Ogilvie, Mrs. Mary Traut and Mrs. N. I. Morrow, all widows, attended the session of the presbytery and urged that the church organization be not abandoned; their petition and prayer was granted and from that date the church organization seemed to take on new life and enter upon a larger sphere of usefulness. The membership increased and in the year 1909 the original "First Church in the county" was razed to the ground and a beautiful and commodious building, one of the finest in the county erected at a cost of approximately twelve thousand dollars.

GIBBON METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A history of the Methodist Church at Gibbon quite properly begins with mention of Rev. J. Marsh who may appropriately be called the "Father" of the church both at Gibbon and the surrounding community. Mr. Marsh and family came to Nebraska from Erie County, Pa., in 1873 and took as a homestead claim on section No. 4 in Gibbon Township.

He at once entered into both the spirit and the work of organizing and building up the Methodist Church, consecrating his life and all his energies in the cause; in this cause he labored for years far beyond his strength and received but little in the way of financial remuneration. On horseback he rode the prairies in all directions, in summer's heat and winter's cold, having one sole object in view, his Master's work and the building up of the Methodist Church.

It appears that under Rev. Wm. Morse's administration no church or class records were kept and to Rev. J. Marsh is due the credit of the brief written history of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Gibbon and of the classes organized in the vicinity.

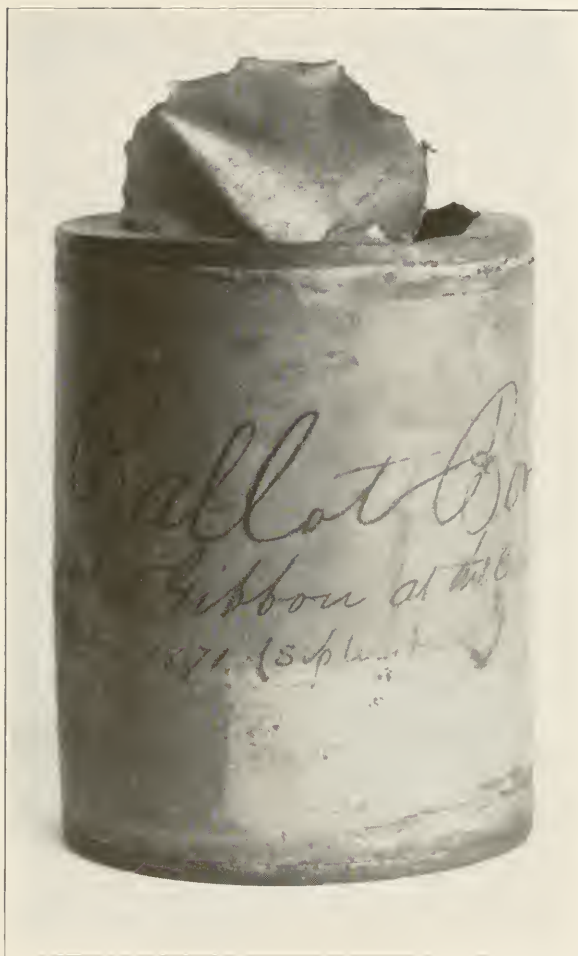
From the church records of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Gibbon, is copied the following history of the organization of the church as written by Rev. J. Marsh: "This church record was secured by Rev. A. G. White (presiding elder of Kearney district), for Gibbon charge in 1874.

"Gibbon the previous years with Kearney Junction but this year (1874) Gibbon circuit was formed with the following appointments: Gibbon, Erie, Wood River and Prairie Creek with J. Marsh as pastor, transferred Erie (Pa.) to the Nebraska conference the same year.

"The Gibbon and Erie classes were formed by Rev. Wm. Morse of Wisconsin Conference in 1872. Wood River and Prairie Creek classes were regularly organized in 1873 by J. Marsh then a supernumerary of Erie (Pa.) Conference, though there had been a class temporarily formed by Brother Fairchild, but no record being found, the class was organized as above.

"At the foundation of Gibbon charge the entire membership numbered about eighty." "Signed, J. MARSH."

The writer is of the opinion that in the above statement, "At the foundation of Gibbon charge the entire membership numbered about eighty," that this included the members of classes at Erie, and Prairie Creek as well as at Gibbon. The records disclose that Rev. J. Marsh was returned to the Gibbon charge for 1875-76, and that there were about fifty conversions. Rev. Charles Riley was



BALLOT BOX USED AT AN ELECTION HELD AT GIBBON IN SEPTEMBER, 1871, TO ADOPT OR REJECT A STATE CONSTITUTION. THIS BALLOT BOX—A FRUIT CAN—LABELED AND PRESERVED BY C. PUTMAN.

pastor in charge for the year 1876-77, Rev. J. Marsh being returned to the charge for the year 1877-78.

Rev. A. H. Summers was pastor in charge for the years 1879-80, and during this period it seems steps were taken to build a church building at Shelton, which up to that time seems to have been a part of the Gibbon charge. The Shelton church was completed in the year 1880.

It appears that Rev. J. Marsh was returned to the Gibbon charge in September, 1880, and continued until September, 1882. It was during this period that the church at Shelton was completed. It appears that during his last pastorate at Gibbon Rev. J. Marsh preached at Gibbon, at Buckeye Valley, Box Elder Valley and had regular appointments at three other schoolhouses. Rev. C. A. Mastin came to the Gibbon charge in September, 1882, and remained until September, 1885. It was during the pastorate of Rev. C. A. Mastin that the Methodist Church erected their first church building in Gibbon. This church was dedicated March 4, 1883, by Presiding Elder T. B. Lemon. At the dedication a subscription of \$1,200 was raised to pay off all indebtedness. For the building of this church great credit is due Samuel B. Lowell and wife for financial assistance. It was during Mr. Mastin's pastorate that Charles E. Fulmer was licensed to preach and assigned to the Sharon charge, which had been a part of the Gibbon charge. The church building, erected in 1883, was struck by lightning in 1899. It is related that no great effort was made to put out the fire, the pastor in charge saying in substance, "Let it burn; we need a new church anyway." Another church building was erected on the same lots in 1900.

As no charter membership list is available, there is herewith given the list of members of classes at Gibbon, Erie and schoolhouse or School District No. 5, as appear in the class records prepared by Rev. J. Marsh. No date is given in the record, but it is assumed it was for the year 1874:

Class No. 1, Gibbon, Helim Thompson, Leader.—Helim Thompson, Julia Thompson, Aaron Ward, Mrs. Sarah Ward, Elizabeth Cherry, Charles E. Brayton, Mrs. Charles E. Brayton, Lemuel S. Hough, W. H. Wheeler, Jane Wheeler, Mrs. S. A. Jackson, Jerusha Marsh, Milton D. Marsh, J. Eugene Marsh, R. Luvern Marsh, Henry H. Haven, Mrs. Henry H. Haven, Mrs. Ann Glanville, J. B. Wheeler, George Gilmore, Jane Gilmore, Cora LaBarre, Pauline Wheeler, Monroe D. Breed, Rhoda Breed, Mrs. Mary Day, Mary E. Fee, Minerva Rice, Isaac D. LaBarre, Mrs. Mary LaBarre, Alva G. H. White, Henry J. Dunkin, Thomas J. Mahoney, Mrs. Laura Mahoney.

Class No. 2, Erie Schoolhouse, John K. Lux, Leader.—Samuel B. Lowell, Samuel R. Traut, Caroline Barrett, Clark Washburn, James H. Mills, Julia A. Washburn, John K. Lux, Valentine Ambus, Albert Washburn, John Smith, Nancy Fox, Mrs. Caroline C. Lowell, Mrs. S. R. Traut, Jane Barrett, Benjamin Whittaker, Susan M. Mills, Samuel T. Walker, Mrs. C. M. Lux, Olive Ambus, Sarah J. Washburn, Sarah T. Smith, Nancy Rollston, Abram Barrett, Sarah J. Barrett, Libbie Lowell, Mary Whittaker, Lois N. Ayer, Martha Walker.

Class No. 1, No. 5 Schoolhouse, Sydney A. Barrett, Leader.—Sydney A. Barrett, Margaret Graham, Eugenia R. Silvernail, John Lucas, Stephen L. Lucas, Nora M. Graham, Cora J. George, Truman J. Hubbard, Cora Hubbard, Delia A. Barrett, C. T. Silvernail, Fred Silvernail, Matilda Lucas, Wesley G. Walker.

H. M. Chamberlain, Ida George, Jeanett Hubbard, Dorah Hubbard, Edward G. Graham, Abigail Silvernail, William Roach, Caroline Roach, John H. Graham, Flora A. George, George H. Silvernail, Marcia Silvernail, Hannah T. Walker.

Class No. 2, No. 5 Schoolhouse, Nelson W. Short, Leader.—Nelson W. Short, Martha J. Davis, Terry E. Davis, Emory D. Hubbard, Jeanett Losee, Martin Oard, Lucy A. Rosseter, Nancy M. Short, Lora E. Davis, William C. Wheeler, Frank Hubbard, Robert H. Hick, Hannah Oard, Walter George, Perce T. Davis, Esther Davis, Wilson J. Marsh, Warren A. Losee, Neta Hick, Shelburn Rosseter.

Pastors Methodist Episcopal Church, Gibbon.—William Morse, 1872-73; J. Marsh, 1874-76; Charles Riley, 1876-77; J. Marsh, 1877-78; A. H. Summers, 1879-80; J. Marsh, 1880-82; C. A. Mastin, 1882-85; M. G. Vessels, 1885-86; O. R. Beebe, 1886-89; Price A. Crow, 1889-91; James Leonard, 1891-92; Erastus Smith, 1892-94; A. B. Chapin, 1894-95; A. W. Coffman, 1895-98; G. F. Cook, 1898-1901; George H. Jones, 1901-02; T. M. Ransom, 1902-05; A. J. Clifton, 1905-08; R. H. Link, 1908-09; A. Gilson, 1909-13; W. E. Henry, October, 1913-November, 1913; O. E. Johnson, 1914-.

EPISCOPAL

St. Agnes' Chapel (Episcopal) was organized by Reverend Doctor Oliver about the year 1890, with twelve charter members, among whom can be recalled Mrs. M. H. Noble, Mrs. R. J. S. McCallum, Mrs. G. W. Cherrington, Mrs. Doctor Dalrymple, Emma Masters.

It is related that a friend of the Episcopal Church, living in an eastern state, gave to the diocese a block of lots in the Village of Gibbon. These lots, with the exception of one on which the present (1915) church building stands, were sold and the proceeds used by Bishop Graves in the erection of a church building, the people of Gibbon and vicinity contributing towards the expense, Bishop Graves himself contributing liberally. The church building was erected about the year 1892.

The church has had no resident pastor, being supplied from pastors residing at Kearney and Grand Island.

In 1915 the church had a membership of nine.

The St. Agnes' Guild was organized July 21, 1909, with a charter membership of nine. The first officers were: Mrs. Roy Smith, president; Mrs. R. Carson, vice president; Mrs. H. E. Hershey, secretary; Mrs. E. Tunks, treasurer. In 1915 the guild had a membership of seventeen. The officers: Mrs. R. Carson, president; Mrs. I. A. Kirk, vice president; Mrs. D. Dwiggins, secretary; Mrs. E. R. Mercer, treasurer.

WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

A local organization of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was instituted at Gibbon July 2, 1905, with eighteen charter members. The first officers were: Mrs. Ada Codner, president; Miss Ella Codner, secretary; Mrs. H. J. Dunkin, treasurer.



SOLDIERS MONUMENT AT GIBBON

Gift of the Woman's Relief Corps

In 1915 the officers were: Mrs. G. W. DeWolf, president; Mrs. Della Cory, vice president; Mrs. Minnie Henson, secretary; Miss Mattie Davis, treasurer.

GIBBON LODGE NO. 37, I. O. O. F.

Of the fraternal orders one of the first, if not the first, to be instituted in the county was Gibbon Lodge No. 37, I. O. O. F., on May 30, 1873. The instituting officer was Grand Secretary John J. Evans, and the place of meeting the audience room in the newly completed courthouse. The date first fixed to organize the lodge was April 15th, but when that date arrived the memorable and historic blizzard of April, 1873, was raging, making it impossible to hold meetings of any kind, and a later date was taken. The charter members were: John W. Wiggins, Robert Haines, Sergt. Michael Coady, Vernon T. Mercer, Henry L. Newell and Henry C. Green. The first applications for membership: A. J. Oviatt, H. D. Mercer, D. P. Crable, S. Rosseter, O. E. Thompson, R. E. Barney, I. D. Evans, G. S. Fox, Joseph Owen and I. D. Labarre.

The first officers: N. G., John W. Wiggins; V. G., Vernon T. Mercer; R. S., Henry C. Green; P. S., Robert Haines; T., Michael Coady.

During the grasshopper raids in 1875-76 this lodge received and distributed \$1,000 among those of its members needing financial assistance.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of eighty-five. Its chief officers: N. G., John Bauer; V. G., H. G. Silvernail; Sec., Earl G. Tunks.

MASONIC

The first Masonic lodge organized in the county was at Gibbon in the year 1873. The meeting was held in the newly finished courthouse. The name of the lodge was Robert Morris No. 46, C. Putnam being W. M.

In the year 1875 this lodge was relocated at Kearney, where it still is in existence.

On February 14, 1889, was instituted Granite Lodge No. 189, with a charter membership of twenty-three and the following officers: Joseph C. Carson, W. M.; James H. Davis, S. W.; Sherman D. Frederick, J. W.; J. E. Williams, secretary. In 1915 the membership was fifty-five. The officers: J. N. Ashburn, W. M.; C. P. Miller, S. W.; C. A. Gordon, J. W.; I. A. Kirk, secretary.

GIBBON CAMP NO. 708, M. W. A.

Gibbon Camp No. 708, M. W. A., was organized August 31, 1888, with twenty-one charter members. The officers: R. S. Woolley, V. C.; M. H. Noble, W. A.; W. H. Buck, clerk; W. C. Drury, escort; G. W. Cherrington, watchman; M. DeWyant, sentry; Thomas Kirk, H. P. Smith, J. H. Murnen, managers; M. D. Marsh, banker; Dr. E. Henderson, S. C. Bassett, delegates.

In 1915 the camp had a membership of 102. The officers: T. B. George, V. C.; E. F. Wiggins, W. A.; C. L. Wallace, clerk; W. C. Ogilvie, banker.

WILD ROSE CAMP NO. 38, ROYAL NEIGHBORS OF AMERICA

Wild Rose Camp No. 38, Royal Neighbors of America, was organized at Gibbon, August 16, 1893, with twenty-six charter members. Its officers: Carrie

M. Marsh, oracle; Martha Woolley, vice oracle; Mattie Pierce, recorder; Frank V. Avery, treasurer. In 1915 the camp had a membership of forty-one. Its officers: Flora Weller, past oracle; Anna George, oracle; Tillie Thomas, vice oracle; Pauline Little, chancellor; Carrie M. Marsh, recorder; Eliza B. Huett, receiver.

G. K. WARREN POST NO. 113, G. A. R.

G. K. Warren Post No. 113, Grand Army of the Republic, was organized August 12, 1882, with the following as charter members: M. V. B. Chapman, H. H. Haven, James H. Davis, U. A. Day, S. A. Berry, S. C. Bassett, D. Tague, T. J. Mahoney, Simon Uhrig, A. Watenpugh, Dr. Josiah Slick, James Mills, Nelson Schooley, Col. W. T. Beatty, Wm. H. Kelly, Stephen Jones, W. B. Southwell, John Stern, Abram Thompson. Commander of post, M. V. B. Chapman; adjutant, S. C. Bassett.

During the life of the post the membership reached fifty. The post owns a burial lot in Riverside Cemetery. In the year 1915 the membership of the post was five. Sixty-nine soldiers are buried in Riverside Cemetery, each grave marked with a headstone and each grave cared for at the expense of the Town of Gibbon.

Officers, 1915: S. C. Bassett, commander; Chester Holloway, adjutant.

G. K. WARREN W. R. C. NO. 159

G. K. Warren W. R. C. No. 159 was instituted August 13, 1892, with a charter membership of twenty-eight. Officers: President, Mary E. Mahoney; S. V., Lucia M. Bassett; J. V., Kate Blanchard; secretary, Frances Sturdevant; treasurer, Mary Robb.

In the year 1915 the corps had a membership of eighty. Officers: President, Blanche McConaughy; S. V., Louise Gibson; J. V., Lizzie Foxworthy; secretary, Jennie Rodgers; treasurer, June Bassett.

The corps under the leadership of its first president, Mary E. Mahoney, and later under the presidency of Mrs. Ellen Holloway was largely instrumental in having erected, during the years 1894-96, at an expense of approximately \$1,500, a soldiers' granite monument in Riverside Cemetery.

GIBBON LODGE NO. 35, A. O. U. W.

Gibbon Lodge No. 35, A. O. U. W., was organized March 28, 1884. Charter members: D. P. Ashburn, L. J. Babcock, S. C. Bassett, H. H. Clark, H. J. Dunkin, George E. Evans, H. F. Flint, J. O. Filer, J. W. Harrel, H. H. Haven, L. B. Hill, D. F. Ingles, Stephen Jones, M. D. Marsh, A. F. Ring, M. W. Winchester, A. Watenpugh. Officers: P. M. W., S. C. Bassett; M. W., D. P. Ashburn; recorder, M. D. Marsh; financier, L. J. Babcock.

In the year 1915 the membership is 132. Officers: E. E. Thompson, M. W.; R. S. Woolley, recorder; M. D. Marsh, financier.



Photo by S. D. Butcher

DECORATION DAY AT RIVERSIDE CEMETERY, GIBBON, 1912

Members of G. K. Warren Post, G. A. R., from left to right: Post Commander P. E. Foxworthy; Past Post Commander James Holloway (supporting the flag); W. C. Rizer; Past Post Commander Emory Wyman; Post Chaplain D. G. Sturdevant; Post Adjutant S. C. Bassett; kneeling, A. Watenpugh; W. L. Randall, marshal of the day. Following the post are the members of the G. K. Warren W. R. C. In rear of the procession 140 boys and girls bearing wreaths and flowers with which to decorate the graves of seventy soldiers of the Civil war buried in the cemetery. More than one thousand people of the community were in attendance on the occasion.



FRONT STREET, LOOKING EAST, GIBBON



MARY TATE LODGE NO. 52, D. OF H.

Mary Tate Lodge No. 52, Degree of Honor, was instituted March 28, 1893, with a charter membership of eighty-seven. Officers: P. C. of H., Minnie Smith; C. of H., Lucia M. Bassett; L. of H., Metella Dean; C. of C., Emily Ashburn; Rec., Mattie Davis; Fin., Emma Ring; Treas., Mary Reddy.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of ninety-two, and insurance certificates in force amounting to \$90,000. Officers: P. C., Metella Dean; C. of H., Blanche McConnaughey; L. of H., Love Winchester; C. of C., Pauline Little; Rec., Flora Fay; Fin., Jessie McComb; Treas., Robbie Dunkin.

EXCALIBUR LODGE NO. 138, K. OF P.

Excalibur Lodge No. 138, Knights of Pythias, was organized at Gibbon, March 24, 1892. The charter members and first officers were: S. D. Frederick, C. C.; G. W. Cherrington, V. C.; Dr. E. L. Robinson, prelate; E. M. Prouty, M. of A.; B. E. Vesey, M. of E.; James A. Brady, M. of F.; C. C. Holloway, K. of R.; C. S. Steere, I. G.; A. Bigelow, O. G.; C. W. Preston, C. W. McMullen, B. E. Seaver, W. L. Fox, Fred H. Cosgrove, J. D. Drury, H. W. Brayton.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of fifty, its officers being: E. S. Harte, C. C.; George Hibberd, V. C.; C. S. Grow, P.; C. A. Webster, M. A.; L. C. Holloway, M. of E.; R. H. Webster, M. of R.; J. D. Drury, K. of R.; Frank Leonard, I. G.; Roscoe Lunger, O. G.

FAITHFUL REBEKAH LODGE NO. 89, I. O. O. F.

Faithful Rebekah Lodge No. 89, I. O. O. F., was instituted July 20, 1893, with a charter membership of twenty-seven. The first officers were: Mary E. Mahoney, N. G.; Phoebe Wiggins, V. G.; Franke Avery, Cor. Sec.; Blanche McConnaughey, Rec. Sec.; Mary Robinson, Treas. In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of fifty-four. The officers were: Emma Taylor, N. G.; Lillian Jones, V. G.; Lyllian Webster, Sec.; Mae Strong, Treas.; Olive Miller, Past N. G.

CHAPTER XXXV

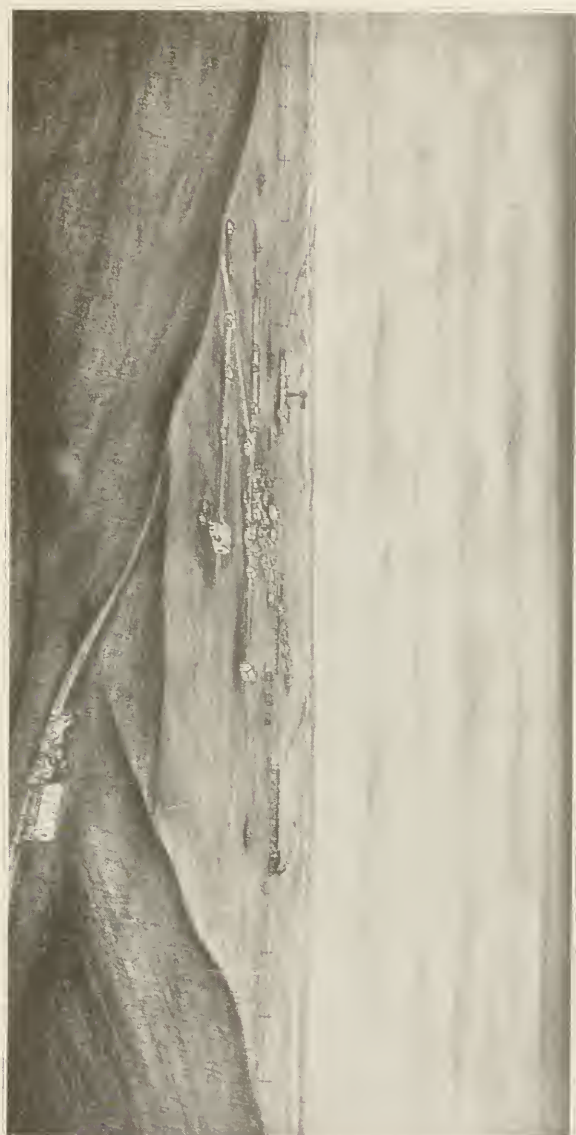
KEARNEY—KEARNEY JUNCTION TIMES—CENTRAL NEBRASKA PRESS—KEARNEY HUB—KEARNEY DEMOCRAT—KEARNEY ENTERPRISE—NEW ERA STANDARD—KEARNEY MORNING TIMES—WATSON RANCH—CITIZENS WHO HAVE GAINED OFFICIAL STATE DISTINCTION—FOUNDING OF KEARNEY—INCORPORATION OF TOWN OF KEARNEY—NEWSPAPERS—EARLY REMINISCENCES—SCHOOL ESTABLISHED—SOCIETIES—CHURCHES—BANKS—ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7, KEARNEY—ORGANIZATION OF FIRST CHURCH IN COUNTY—ORGANIZATION OF W. C. T. U. IN COUNTY—VISIT OF MISS FRANCIS E. WILLARD, NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF W. C. T. U.—ORGANIZATION OF WOMAN'S HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY—PRESENTED WITH A DEED OF FIRST LOT DISPOSED OF IN ORIGINAL TOWN OF KEARNEY JUNCTION.

KEARNEY

Of the history of the City of Kearney mention is made in various ways in this volume. Because the founding of the city was unique, no other city in the state founded under like conditions, a quite lengthy history is herein given under the title, "Founding the City of Kearney." To the student of history it seems most unfortunate that promoters and boomers should have so largely had control in the development of the city in the years of its early history.

The reaction which followed the boom period was most disastrous in a financial sense and for a considerable period retarded the further growth of the city. The extent to which promoters and speculators boomed the city and the reaction following is perhaps best made plain by the relation of the following bit of history bearing on the point. In the '90s, following the boom period, Capt. L. D. Forehand was employed to take the enumeration of school children in School District No. 7, and in this district is embraced the City of Kearney. It was required that the enumerator visit each dwelling house in the district. Mr. Forehand relates that for his own information he made note of the number of dwelling houses and the number vacant. He found 1,400 dwelling houses in the city and 700 vacant. Of these vacant houses hundreds were moved out on the farms of Buffalo County, some of them quite twenty miles from the city. As a matter of history it might be added that few if any of the promoters remained as citizens of the city. Like birds of prey, when the bones were picked clean (when the bubble burst), they departed for fresh fields, greener pastures.

It is well to state that some of the buildings erected during the boom period have been of lasting benefit. The Opera House Block, built at an expense of about ninety thousand dollars, still remains a landmark, its hall a source of much pleasure and usefulness to the people of the city and surrounding country



VIEW OF KEAMNEY IN 1873

The City of Kearney of today (1915), the county seat town of Buffalo County, with a population of 6,202, as recorded in the 1910 United States census, is a substantial city, well supported by the country tributary thereto, assured of future growth and prosperity by reason of its location in the midst of a country having a soil of great fertility and abounding in agricultural resources as yet largely undeveloped. While certain features of the life and activities of the city and its people are treated elsewhere somewhat in detail, it may be said, that it is a city of homes, wide streets bordered with ornamental trees, miles of sidewalks and beginning in the year 1913 its principal streets and avenues are being paved.

Through the center of the city runs the Lincoln Highway, a great national highway extending across the continent from coast to coast and in the year 1915 a "seedling" mile of pavement was laid leading westward from the city.

The city owns a public waterworks system, with direct pressure, the mains extending to all parts of the city and to the cemetery, furnishing pure water for domestic purposes and the best of fire protection.

There is a privately owned gas plant and electric light and power plant, a history of which is elsewhere given. A city sewerage system was installed in the year 1888 at an expense of \$70,000, city bonds for that purpose having been voted. The city cemetery is beautifully located on the bluffs overlooking the city and Platte Valley, title to the Kearney cemetery grounds having been acquired June 28, 1876.

A city library, conveniently located, on valuable lots generously donated by Mrs. C. O. Norton, and under the efficient management of Mrs. Pauline Frank as librarian, is a strong educational force in the city and also reaches out to school districts and smaller towns adjacent to the city. An interesting history of Kearney's public library achievements is elsewhere given by Mrs. C. V. D. Basten.

The public schools of the city are the pride and boast of its people and in the matter of school buildings, school equipment, the educational advantages offered are fully up-to-date in all particulars. The postoffice of the city is housed in a Government building, beautiful in design and finish, an ornament to the locality. In a beautiful park, conveniently located, there has been maintained a Chautauqua course for several years. There are two hospitals with up-to-date equipment and managed in accordance with scientific methods. The Buffalo County bar has numbered among its members men eminent in their profession and of recognized ability. The medical profession in the city is represented by men of ability, large experience and extensive practice. In the nature of things, in the history of the city, there have been bank failures, but to relate the history of such failures can serve, in a history way, no good purpose. The banks of the county seat town of 1915 are conservatively managed, fully serve the financial interests of the city and county, and are safe depositories of public and private funds, the last reports for the year 1915 showing a total of capital stock, \$125,000; surplus, \$108,041; deposits, \$1,631,725.

Since the year 1876 there has been maintained, at Kearney, a company of state militia but whether continuously or not history does not disclose. In the beginning the company was known as "The Kearney Guards" with E. C. Calkins as captain, R. A. Julian, first lieutenant, James Jenkins, second lieutenant.

In the year 1915 it was known as Nebraska National Guard, Company L, Fourth Infantry, "Norris Brown Guards." Captain, Lyn J. Butcher; first lieutenant, W. E. Harper; second lieutenant, F. G. Tracy.

A woman's club organized in 1888 was among the first of such clubs organized in the state and has proven a helpful factor in the social and educational life of the city.

In a newspaper way the city from the beginning has been well and abundantly served. The Kearney Junction Times, L. B. Cunningham editor, was established in October, 1872, before the Town of Kearney Junction was incorporated. Later the name was changed to Buffalo County Journal and enjoyed a county wide circulation and exerted a strong and helpful influence through the county.

In February, 1873, The Central Nebraska Press was established by Webster and Rice H. Eaton, the latter managing editor. It was understood that "Web" Eaton received, as subsidy to induce the publication of a daily at Kearney Junction, lots donated by promoters interested in the sale of city lots. This publication, daily and weekly, served in an efficient manner, the interests of the city and surrounding country, taking rank as one of the leading papers of the state. The Press (weekly) passed into the hands of W. C. Holden and in a large sense became the personal organ of its editor, used too often to "get even," as it might be termed, rather than in the dissemination of news and the upbuilding of the community. In the history of the press of Buffalo County, W. C. Holden, as an editor, is in a class by himself as one given to what in later days was termed "muck raking;" he seemed to take pleasure and delight in personal attacks on individuals, through the columns of his publication, and it would have occasioned little surprise had he been killed by some whom he thus attacked. It is true, that in some cases the provocation was great, and the parties guilty as publicly charged, but the Press under Mr. Holden's management lost public favor, public influence and public support.

In the year 1888, M. A. Brown, R. H. Eaton and others organized the Hub Printing Company and began the publication of The Daily Hub and also continued the publication of the original Central Nebraska Press, whose publication began in the year 1873. The Press was at first issued as a weekly but later as the Semi-Weekly Hub.

Mr. Eaton soon retired from editorial connection with the Hub, to become postmaster of Kearney, and M. A. Brown became publisher and editor.

The Hub in the twenty-five years of its publication has been the leading paper published in the county both in general circulation and as a mold of public opinion. In local news it covers both the city and county. The Hub carries a strong editorial page. As an editorial writer Mr. Brown shows wide reading and acquaintance with the thought of the day; his editorials are brief, timely, never dull or out of date and are widely quoted in the press of the state.

The Kearney Hub and The Kearney Hub Publishing Company represent in large measure the life work of M. A. Brown; a work useful and helpful to mankind.

From the silver anniversary edition of The Kearney Daily Hub, 1913:

"The Hub was founded upon the rather shaky foundations of the old Central Nebraska Press, established in 1873, by Webster and Rice Eaton. In the fall

of 1888 the present editor and manager of the Hub came to Kearney upon the solicitation of a then Kearney citizen who had been visiting in Beatrice. The writer had a few months before disposed of the Beatrice Express, was comfortably situated in Beatrice and was not looking for a new location; but he visited Kearney, was pleased with what he saw, and impressed with the possibilities of the newspaper field in Central Nebraska. Rice Eaton and J. P. Johnson owned the plant of the Central Nebraska Press, which they had just revived. The writer bought the Johnson interest, retained Mr. Eaton, and organized the Hub Publishing Company. The writer was business manager and managing editor. Mr. Eaton for a short time conducted the editorial column. The name was changed to the Hub at the writer's suggestion, in harmony with the then greatly advertised fact that Kearney was the 'hub' of the continent, 1,733 miles from Boston and 1,733 miles from San Francisco.

"Then trouble began. Immediately followed the Kearney Daily Enterprise, subsidized with money and land by the 'boom' interests rampant at that time. The Kearney Journal was then printed as a daily but ceased publication long ago. The New Era was a weekly printed by Rhone Brothers, who disposed of the plant; it became the New Era-Standard, and the last publishers dropped the name and substituted the Times. Other newspapers have started up meantime. The Democrat, weekly, survives. But no other newspaper printed in Kearney twenty-five years ago, except the Hub, is now living. The boom went up the flume and caused many wrecks. Drouth came and the country was poverty stricken. Came also the panic and widespread insolvency. Nothing, barring pestilence, was lacking. The experience of those years, looked back upon, seems now like a frightful dream.

"So far as the Hub was concerned it had ceased to hope. There was nothing left except 'grit' and the determination to hang on. In 1896 the Hub was down in the lowest financial depths. In 1897 the writer effected a turn by means of which he secured entire personal control. The editor, his wife, and two daughters, went to work to rebuild the paper's fallen fortunes."

THE KEARNEY DEMOCRAT

In the year 1891, The Kearney Democrat was established with F. L. Wheedon as editor and publisher. The Democrat has steadily grown in excellence and influence and its editor has achieved much in experience and wisdom. The Democrat has been a helpful factor in the development of our civilization towards higher ideals and has been the leading newspaper in the county in support of temperance legislation, the abolition of the open saloon.

As a local, county seat newspaper it has won an enviable rank.

While its editorial page shows study, investigation and a deep interest in matters relating to conditions affecting the City of Kearney, the state and the nation, its editor has seemed to have little interest in the development of the agricultural resources of the county the most vital of our interests in a material way.

One feature in the history of the Democrat is of special interest to a historian, and possibly has a bearing on both the success and influence of the Democrat as

a newspaper and that is, that payments of subscription are acknowledged in its columns by a notice so skillfully and diplomatically worded as to give pleasure and, as he saying is, "leave a pleasant taste in the mouth."

THE KEARNEY ENTERPRISE

During the "boom" period there was started a daily known as The Kearney Enterprise. It was a subsidized publication, advertised to publish dispatches of the press association, and as a disseminator of world-wide news of the day, to equal dailies published in the metropolitan cities.

As a newspaper publication it might appropriately be described as a "hummer" a "sky rocket." It was short-lived.

NEW ERA-STANDARD

About the year 1884 was established The New Era Standard, Rhone Brothers editors and publishers. It was understood it was established in the interests of George W. E. Dorsey, who was a candidate for Congress in the then "Big Third" District, and later elected. The Rhone Brothers were job printers by trade and by preference, and the Standard was, with them, a secondary consideration.

For a time it enjoyed a considerable circulation, but did not win favor as a disseminator of local news or a strong, convincing force in the shaping of public opinion.

The Kearney Morning Times was established in 1906. Its publisher, T. B. Garrison, Sr.; editor, Martin F. Blank. The several changes which have occurred in both the ownership and editorial management of the Times, have not had a tendency to establish a fixed policy or to develop force and strength as a molder of public opinion, which should be the ideal, the goal, striven for by every newspaper publication and in the realization of which time is an important factor. The editor of the Times in 1915 was F. W. Brown.

THE WATSON RANCH

During the boom period in the life of the city, there was established, within the incorporated limits of the city what was known as The Watson Ranch. It embraced several hundred acres of land devoted to farming, along certain lines, on an extensive scale. The ranch was largely a promotion scheme and was featured extensively in advertising sent out from Kearney. It attracted more than state-wide notice and was given much space in not only the daily press but in agricultural journals. The value and importance of the alfalfa plant was just beginning to be recognized in the state and on the Watson Ranch, about one thousand acres were devoted to alfalfa growing and with marked success. Unusual efforts were being put forth to encourage and develop the dairy business in the state and on the Watson Ranch, was kept one hundred or more dairy cows, a large dairy barn built, a creamery established, and R. K. Emily, an experienced creamery man who had won high honors in a national competition of butter exhibited was employed to manage the creamery. The poultry yards



PAROCHIAL SCHOOL, KEARNEY



REAR VIEW OF STATE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, KEARNEY

were extensive. As recalled, some two thousand cherry trees were planted and for years furnished fruit in great abundance.

While the Watson Ranch is, in 1915, but a memory, it served, in its day a useful purpose, demonstrating, as Secretary R. W. Furnas used to say of exhibits at a state fair or exposition, "possibilities in agriculture." Of H. D. Watson's activities at Watson Ranch, one remains to bless his memory and for long years to come will stand as a living monument to his foresight and wisdom: along the right of way of the Union Pacific Railway running through Watson Ranch, and along the public highway leading to the city he planted trees and cared for them, and a century hence these trees which Mr. Watson planted and cared for will still add to the beauty of the landscape, and give pleasure to those who travel the great Overland Trail across the continent.

In recognition of Mr. Watson's worth and worthiness, the Commercial Club of Kearney adopted a set of resolutions asking that the seedling mile on the Lincoln Highway be named the H. D. Watson Boulevard. The city council acted on the request on November 16, 1915, and passed a city ordinance whereby the west part of Twenty-fourth Street was named "The H. D. Watson Boulevard," as a token in appreciation of the public services of Mr. Watson. Mr. Watson has planted or caused to be planted ten miles of trees in and adjacent to the City of Kearney, nine miles of which are still (1915) living. The H. D. Watson Boulevard is that part of Twenty-fourth Street lying west of the Kearney Canal tail-race and extending to the southeast corner of the State Industrial School grounds.

CITIZENS GAIN DISTINCTION

Of citizens of Kearney who have gained recognition as state officials the following named are recalled: Joseph Scott, commissioner of public lands and buildings; E. C. Calkins, Supreme Court Commissioner and regent of the university; W. D. Oldham, deputy attorney general and Supreme Court Commissioner; Norris Brown, deputy attorney general, attorney general, United States senator; L. B. Fifield and John T. Mallalieu, regents of the university; R. R. Greer, president of the State Board of Agriculture; Francis G. Hamer, justice of the Supreme Court; John T. Shahan, deputy state auditor; A. O. Thomas, state superintendent; C. H. Gregg, N. P. McDonald and Dan Morris, members of the board of education, state normal schools; J. N. Dryden, trustee of Nebraska Wesleyan University and president of Nebraska State Bar Association, 1916.

The churches of the city, its schools, public and sectarian, its lodges, social, fraternal, beneficial, are treated elsewhere somewhat in detail.

The activities of the city are best represented by its commercial club, composed of the business men of the city. The commercial club of the city, organized at an early date, has been a strong and directing force in the upbuilding of the city's business interests. At this date and for some years previous the club has maintained a salaried secretary with rooms in the city hall.

Located at Kearney are three state institutions: The State Industrial School for Boys, established in 1881; the State Normal School, established in 1905; the State Tuberculosis Hospital, established in 1911.

The City of Kearney, for its municipal government, is divided into four wards, electing two councilmen from each ward, these with the mayor constitute the city council.

The officers of the city in 1915 were: Mayor, C. W. Kibler; city clerk, T. N. Hartzell; city treasurer, H. A. Webbert; police judge, John Wilson; city attorney, Warren Pratt; chief of police, T. A. Pickrell; night police, ———; merchants' police, V. V. Smith; chief of fire department, H. H. Porter; assistant chief, Elmer Rhoades; street commissioner and building inspector, E. H. Morey; water commissioner and sewer inspector, J. A. Cleary; janitor city hall, driver auto fire truck, D. H. Sitorius; sexton of cemetery, Hampton S. Bell; city teamster, T. J. Waller; city engineer, E. H. Morey; city librarian, Mrs. Pauline Frank; city physician, Dr. L. M. Stearns; president of council, J. D. Loewenstein.

Councilmen—S. E. Hawley, J. C. Mercer, First Ward; J. D. Loewenstein, R. M. Barney, Second Ward; T. H. Bolte, A. J. Mercer, Third Ward; F. M. Arbuckle, E. A. Miller, Fourth Ward.

FOUNDING THE CITY OF KEARNEY

The conditions which led to the founding of the City of Kearney were unusual; the methods employed are a matter of history.

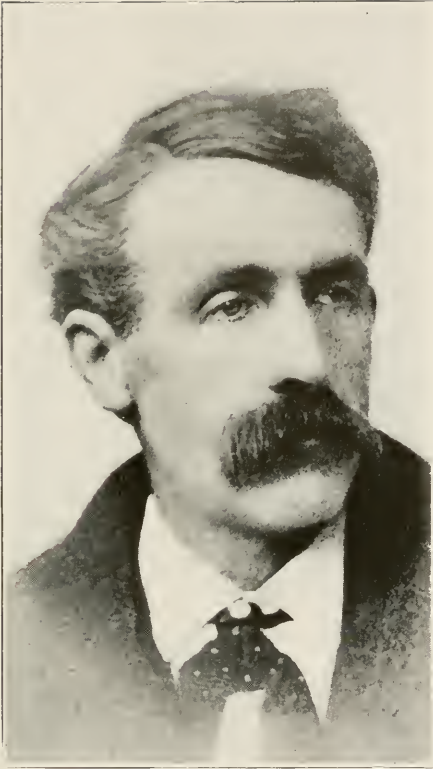
Both the Union Pacific and Burlington and Missouri River railways were land grant roads, the charter of the latter, from the general government, requiring that it make junction with the Union Pacific at a point east of the one hundredth meridian.

LOCATING THE JUNCTION POINT

April 11, 1871, D. N. Smith, agent for the town-site department of the Burlington Railway, in company with Moses Syndenham and Rev. Ashbury Collins, visited Buffalo County and located the junction point of the two roads. The records disclose that on May 3, 1871, D. N. Smith purchased of the Union Pacific Railway Company all of section one (1) and part of eleven (11), township 8, range 16 in Buffalo County—in all 993.10 acres for the sum of \$2,979.30, an average price of \$3 per acre. On April 21, 1871, friendly parties filed pre-emption claims on the north one-half of section two (2) town 8, range 16 and at the earliest possible date pre-emption proof was made on these claims and on November 21, 1871, D. N. Smith purchased these two claims, 300 acres in all, for the sum of \$500 each. In February, 1872, another quarter section of Section No. 2 was purchased by Mr. Smith, agent for the South Platte Land Company. Thus it will be seen that nearly a year before the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad made junction with the Union Pacific, the South Platte Land Company, by its agent, D. N. Smith, had secured in a body, covering the junction point, 1,473.10 acres of land at a total expense of approximately \$4,419.00.

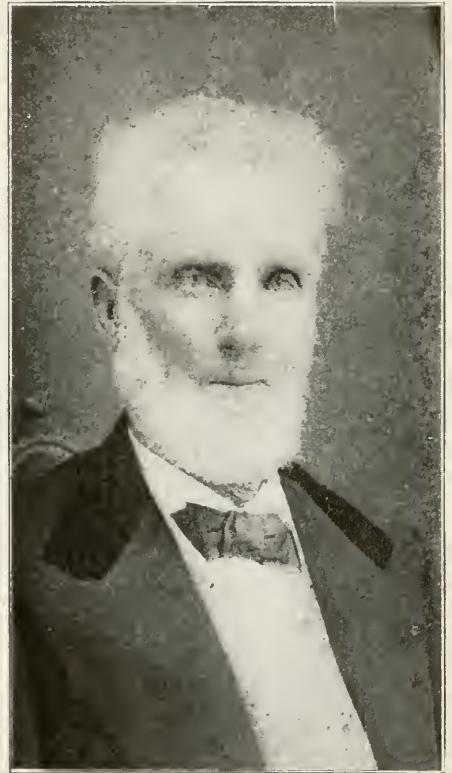
SCHOOL SECTION NUMBER 36

It was doubtless the intention of the South Platte Land Company to secure possession of school section No. 36, adjoining, on the north, the town-site, the



L. R. MORE

Located at Kearney Junction in 1872. Organized first bank and was president and owner. One of the first board of trustees of the Town of Kearney Junction.



D. N. SMITH

Agent for Townsite Company for B. & M. Railway. Located the Junction point—Kearney Junction—April 11, 1871.

minimum price for such lands being \$7 per acre, some \$4,480 for the section. At that date school lands were in charge of the county board and the county commissioners of Buffalo County would not permit the sale. C. Putnam was employed to survey this section into lots and acreage property. In June, 1873, the county board appointed F. S. Trew, D. Allen Crowell and J. Marsh Grant to appraise the value of these lots; the appraised value as reported was \$49,108.00.

At a later date—1874—these lots were sold at public auction by the treasurer of Buffalo County, the state realizing, from this sale, approximately \$67,000 for the lots in school section No. 36.

SURVEYING THE TOWN-SITE OF KEARNEY

During the summer of 1871 Anselmo B. Smith surveyed, into city lots, the original town-site of Kearney Junction and the original plat was filed for record in the county clerk's office October 27, 1871.

This survey and plat comprised all of section one (1) as aforesaid.

COMPLETION OF THE BURLINGTON

The Burlington was completed and made junction with the Union Pacific at Kearney, September 1, 1872. The Burlington built a union station at the junction point but the Union Pacific refused to stop its trains at the union station and continued to make its stop at the Junction House station on section No. 2, about a mile to the west; the Union Pacific demanded an interest in the town-site, and on September 14, 1872, title to one-half of the lots in the original town-site of Kearney Junction was conveyed to John Duff, trustee for the Union Pacific Railway Company, the consideration being \$1,075.18.

A DREAM OF THE FUTURE

Let us consider briefly the period between the completion of the B. & M. Railway to Kearney, September 1, 1872, and the incorporation of the Town of Kearney Junction, November 30, 1872, three months of time.

The spirit of the West, the accomplishment of results regardless of obstacles, legal and otherwise; regardless of customs or well established precedents of older communities was forcibly illustrated in the founding of the Town of Kearney Junction and more especially in the incorporation thereof. Their optimism, like the prairies about them seemed without limit, their faith in the ultimate success of their plans unbounded. In old and well established communities it is customary for a stranger or new comer into such a community, if he does not bring with him credentials or letters of introduction, to at least seek introduction and to generally take an interest and an active part in public affairs. Not so the early settler in Buffalo County, those who helped found the City of Kearney Junction; they "arrived," possibly in a prairie schooner, possibly on the evening train of the Union Pacific or the B. & M. and the next morning we find them full-fledged citizens, coat off, sleeves rolled up, not only taking part in public affairs but taking a leading part, originating new plans, directing what shall be done.

These pioneers confidently believed that at the junction point of these two great railway systems there would grow and develop one of the largest cities on the plains west of the Missouri River and firm in such faith and belief those on the ground floor planned the foundations accordingly.

Their "Dream of the Future" was rosy with promise,
 The prospect alluring—To doubt was a crime;
 Though we question their judgment and smile at their boasting,
 We all must admit that their faith was sublime.

POPULATION AT DATE OF INCORPORATION

It would be a quite natural conclusion that at the date of incorporating the Town of Kearney Junction there was a town, or a village at least, of considerable size, many houses and a few hundreds of population necessitating incorporation in order that its affairs might be properly regulated and controlled, but this appears not to have been the case; there seems to be the best of evidence to warrant the statement that at the date, November 30, 1872, when was incorporated the Town of Kearney Junction, the population of the incorporated area was not to exceed one hundred souls. During this period Jasper L. Walker and Paul Moore, living in the eastern portion of the county, while en route for a buffalo hunt south of the Platte River, visited the junction and Mr. Walker states that he took pains to count the buildings erected or nearing completion and that the number was fourteen (14); these buildings were all located on either the Perkins and Harford addition on section 35 or on school section No. 36. He recalls that workmen were engaged in excavating and laying the foundation for the Burlington round house.

In Vol. 1, Number 1, of the Kearney Junction Times (L. B. Cunningham, editor), under date of October 12, 1872, in an editorial describing conditions, mention is made as follows: "Kearney Junction has two hotels (Harrold House, S. & J. Murphy, Depot House, E. E. Clark); one dry goods store (J. S. Chandler); one meat market; one painters shop; one blacksmith shop (John Mahon); four lumber yards (one More and Sutherland); one furniture store (N. H. Hemiup & Allison); one tin and hardware store; about twenty dwelling houses. Personal mention is made of Frank Perkins, — Hartford, — King, Capt. I. B. Wambaugh, — Porter, Rev. Wm. Morse, J. M. Grant, Mr. (H. M.) Elliott, who had residences on Greeley Avenue; Col. W. W. Patterson was agent for railroad city lots; the death of Miss Sarah Richardson; Hamer and Connor attorneys at law; H. H. Achey, carpenter and builder; J. B. Randall, plasterer; Nightengale and Keens (F. G.), druggists; also that Kearney has three preachers, Rev. Wm. Morse, Rev. Asbury Collins, Rev. Nahum Gould; four doctors (Dr. E. S. Perkins)."

LIST OF TAXPAYERS

The only unit of assessment for taxation purposes to which reference can be made at that date is school district No. 7, which was organized March 8, 1872. This school district had an area of more than one hundred and twenty square



FIRST STORE BUILDING ERECTED IN KEARNEY

Built by F. N. Dart in 1872, on southwest corner of school section No. 36.
Moved to Central Avenue, where photo was taken in 1910



(Photo taken in 1910)

FIRST HOTEL BUILDING IN KEARNEY

Erected in 1872 by S. and J. Murphy and called the "Harrold House." In later years it was known as the "Beckett House."

miles and embraced within its limits all of area incorporated in the Town of Kearney Junction. The tax list of the county for the year 1872 discloses that in school district No. 7, there were in that year nineteen (19) persons against whom personal taxes were levied; it also appears that of the nineteen named, seven did not pay the tax levied, also against seven only a poll tax was levied.

The names of these persons against which said personal tax was levied were: John Bugler, Asbury Collins, M. M. Collins, Fred and E. Cuddebeck, F. N. Dart, Edward Delhanty, George Enderly, Jacob Enderly, M. F. Fagly, Wilson Hewett, E. T. Jay, John Mahon, W. F. Marsh, Joseph McClure, W. W. Patterson, James A. Smith, F. R. Wood, T. J. Walker. The original town-site of Kearney Junction, platted and recorded in 1871, was, in the year 1872, valued for assessment purposes at \$4,375, or at the rate of about \$7 per acre.

The enumeration of school children, taken in April, 1873, gave a total of 467 for the county, making the population of the county at that date approximately one thousand six hundred and fifteen; this enumeration of school children in district No. 7 (as above) disclosed forty-five children of school age, making the total population in the district approximately one hundred and fifty-five; this population for school district No. 7 in which was embraced the incorporated Town of Kearney Junction.

Of the nineteen taxpayers herein named, the records disclose that twelve of the number had, at that date, filed upon homestead or pre-emption claims: J. A. Smith, W. F. Marsh, Asbury Collins, Fred Cuddebeck, J. Cuddebeck, F. N. Dart, E. T. Jay and W. W. Patterson, within the limits of what is now (1915) Riverdale Township, and that George Enderly, Jacob Enderly, John Mahon and Jacob McClure had filed on like Government claims in what is now Center Township.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS TO INCORPORATE A TOWN OR VILLAGE

At the date in mind (November 30, 1872), the statutes of Nebraska required in order to incorporate a town or village, "That whenever a majority of the inhabitants of any town or village within this state shall present a petition to the board of county commissioners of the county in which said town or village is situated, setting forth the metes and bounds of their town or village, and the commons belonging thereto, and praying that they be incorporated, * * * and the county commissioners shall be satisfied that a majority of the taxable male inhabitants of such town or village have signed such petition, and that the prayer of the same is reasonable, the board of county commissioners may declare such town or village incorporated * * *."

While the legal requirements to incorporate a town or village were not difficult to comply with it will be well for students of history to question whether "The prayer of the petitioners was *reasonable*."

INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF KEARNEY JUNCTION

At a meeting of the board of county commissioners, November 30, 1872, W. F. McClure, Patrick Walsh and Dan A. Crowell, commissioners, the records

disclose that: "A petition was presented by citizens of Kearney Junction praying to be incorporated into a town to be known as 'Town of Kearney Junction,' to include the following described lands, viz: sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12, town No. 8, range No. 16; sections 24, 25, 26, 27, 34, 35 and 36, town No. 9, range No. 16; and sections 6 and 7, town No. 8, range No. 16; sections 30, 31, town No. 9, range No. 15, and also the territory extending southward from the mainland in front of said sections 10, 11 and 12, town No. 8, range No. 16, and section No. 7, town No. 8, range No. 15, and of the same width to the channel of the Platte River, was received and on motion agreed to, and the appointment of the following trustees ratified: John Mahon, D. B. Marsh, L. R. More, E. B. Carter and J. S. Chandler." The records do not give the names of the petitioners, neither does a prolonged search disclose that such a petition is on file in the office of the county clerk. The records do not disclose the number of petitioners, whether the petitioners were a majority of the inhabitants or whether a majority of the taxable inhabitants had signed the petition. Thus on November 30, 1872, not to exceed one hundred inhabitants (men, women, and children), a majority of the men not legal voters, less than a score of the men listed as taxable even to the extent of a poll tax, incorporated an area of more than eighteen sections of land and named it Town of Kearney Junction.

COMPARISONS

In the light of today (1915), in the effort to comprehend and make plain the sublime faith, the magnificent dream of the future, which inspired a mere handful of pioneers to incorporate, on the treeless and wind-swept prairies of Nebraska, where yet blanket Indians, carrying bows and arrows, hunted the wild game, a town having an area exceeding eighteen sections of land, whereon were living, of white people, less than one hundred souls, let us consider and compare conditions, requirements as to population and incorporated area in the cities of Lincoln and Omaha in the census year 1910:

	Year.	Population	Incorporated Area
Lincoln	1910	43,973	4,799.5 acres
Omaha	1910	124,096	15,680 acres
Town of Kearney Junction.	1872	100	11,900 acres

PERSONNEL OF THE TRUSTEES

In the absence of official record or published accounts giving the names of individuals who were chiefly instrumental in the incorporation of the Town of Kearney Junction, it seems fair to presume that the men named as its first trustees were among the prime movers, the leading spirits in the matter. This being assumed, as a matter of history, it seems pertinent to inquire, what manner of men were these whose visions of growth and development are marvelous to contemplate? Who among them might be termed leading spirits, enthusing and directing all with whom they came in contact?



HON. JOHN D. SEAMAN

Pioneer settler in Odessa Township. First grain buyer in Kearney, 1873. Served as state senator.



MRS. HADASSAH J. SEAMAN

First librarian in the City of Kearney



MR. AND MRS. JOHN MAHON

Mr. Mahon was a member of the first board of trustees of Kearney. First settler on the site of the city.



JOSEPH OWEN

Pioneer settler of Buffalo County in 1860. Elected treasurer of School District No. 1 when first organized in 1871 and has held the office continuously to date—1915.

E. B. CARTER

The chairman of the board of trustees, E. B. Carter, engaged in the jewelry business, but after a few years moved to Omaha. He was a man pleasing in address and manner, prominent in Masonic circles, popular in the community, but lacking in originality of thought and force of character necessary in leaving a lasting impress even in the early history and establishment of a community.

J. S. CHANDLER

J. S. Chandler erected a frame store building, engaged in the mercantile business for a brief period of time, disposing of his interests to R. R. Greer in 1873.

D. B. MARSH

D. B. Marsh was a carpenter by trade and took a Government claim in Center Township (town 9, range 15) in the year 1872. He served for a short time as deputy sheriff of the county in the year 1876.

JOHN MAHON

John Mahon enjoys the distinction—in this connection—of being the only member of the board of trustees, who, when appointed, was on the list of taxpayers in the county; in fact, of all persons of which mention is made in the official records of the Town of Kearney Junction during the incorporation period and until March 3, 1873. John Mahon is the only one whose name appears as a taxpayer in the county. Mr. Mahon was of Irish descent, born in Delaware County, N. Y., in 1824. In 1846 he enlisted, at Brooklyn, N. Y., in the navy and served on board the Trenton in the Mexican war. In the year 1848 he went, by water, to California, where he engaged in mining and other enterprises. In his published biography it is stated: "He came to Buffalo County in October, 1871, and was the first settler on the site where now stands the magnificent City of Kearney. He built the first house and helped to lay out the townsite. He had charge of the real estate belonging to the Union Pacific and B. & M. companies for about two years." Later he moved to Custer County and engaged in stock raising for about ten years and in 1889 was living on a farm near Armada, in Buffalo County.

L. R. MORE

It is believed that L. R. More was the leading spirit in the incorporation of the Town of Kearney Junction as well as a directing force for more than a score of years in its early history. L. R. More, of Scotch descent, was born in Delaware County, N. Y., in 1839. In a published biography of Mr. More it states that he was a cousin of Jay Gould, the railroad king. That he came to Buffalo County in 1871, having accumulated the sum of \$25,000. That he established the first lumber yard, built the first brick building, the upper story being the only opera house in town; he also established the first bank, in 1872,

known as More's Bank; he owned the first hotel, Grand Central, and was partner of John D. Seaman, the first wheat buyer in Kearney; that in 1873 he was appointed captain of the Kearney Guards by Governor Furnas and under his leadership the cowboy's "reign of terror" came to an end, they losing two of their number in a running fight. That in 1884 he sold what was known as More's Bank and the brick store adjacent for \$22,000, taking \$16,000 in stock in the Kearney National Bank and becoming its first president.

When Kearney had a beginning, Mr. More was thirty-three years of age; he had already been engaged in business and accumulated \$25,000 as before noted. His subsequent career demonstrated that in business matters he was far-seeing and while always conservative was not adverse to making a venture when there was a reasonable prospect of success. There seems no question that on arrival Mr. More at once determined to make here his future home and to engage in business; a hasty and somewhat superficial search of the deed record of the county seems to disclose that the first deed of record for a lot in the Town of Kearney Junction was to Rev. Wm. Morse, lot 16, block 57, Perkins and Harford Addition, date September 20, 1872, consideration, \$200. October 1, 1872, to L. R. More, lots 11 and 12, block 29, Perkins and Harford Addition, consideration, \$200.

The first lots of record, sold in the original townsite, bear date May 15, 1873, to L. R. More, lots 535, 536, 467, 468, consideration, \$950.

The proceedings of the town trustees, January 20, 1873, disclose that on motion of Mr. More the ordinances were so amended as to permit Mr. More's business partner to be appointed town treasurer and an additional office created, town collector (to which office Attorney F. G. Hamer was appointed); at a later date the business partner of Mr. More served as deputy county treasurer. From an early date the L. R. More Bank had for many years—at first a monopoly—and at all times a large per cent of deposits both county and city and Mr. More exerted much influence in the politics of both the city and county. As illustrating some of the methods by which county business was conducted at that date and of Mr. More's influence in county affairs, it can be stated: First in explanation, that to furnish material for numerous bridges needed and demanded by early settlers was one of the most perplexing problems which confronted the county commissioners and very many requests for material for bridges, even where the parties offered to build the bridge without expense to the county for labor, were refused for lack of means to pay for material. Instances are recalled where, failing to secure lumber for a bridge from the county commissioners, parties of some prominence and influence in their locality went direct to Mr. More with the result that the lumber firm of More & Sunderland furnished the material for the bridge, Mr. More remarking, "We'll take our chances in getting pay from the county."

In the long drawn out and expensive fight in the courts, over the awarding of the contract to build a bridge across the Platte, south of Kearney, the real "bone of contention" was whether the lumber firm of More & Sunderland should furnish the lumber for the structure.

Of the immediate period of which this article treats, Mr. More was the wealthiest man in the county and as he had the ready money to put into his

ventures, he directed and controlled them and many others as well; he was aggressive but not popular and while he aspired to official positions such as state treasurer, lieutenant governor, and state senator, he failed in securing a nomination in the case of the first two named and was defeated for the office of state senator by Gen. A. H. Connor, yet he was quite successful in securing the election of local candidates whom he favored.

F. G. HAMER—A. H. CONNOR

An active force in the founding of the Town of Kearney Junction and the City of Kearney was Attorney F. G. Hamer. The first store building erected in the town was that of F. N. Dart, on the Perkins and Harford Addition. (This building was moved to Central Avenue, on the East Side and of late years has been used by A. H. Boltin in his fruit business.)

In Mr. Dart's store Attorney Hamer had his office, the furniture a table, a nail keg with an undressed sheepskin for a chair.

In these days of beginning, Attorney Hamer was regularly employed by L. R. More to look after the legal features of his business and of much of public business as well. In the fall of 1872 Mr. Hamer was the preferred candidate of the Kearney faction for the Legislature but was defeated for the nomination by D. P. Ashburn. Mr. Ashburn was the nominee of the republican party and W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) of the democratic, Mr. Ashburn being elected. At this period, an effort was made to divide Buffalo County by creating a new county out of portions of Buffalo and Dawson counties, the real object being to retain the county seat at Gibbon. The Kearney Junction people bitterly opposed such a division and Mr. Hamer spent much time during the legislative session of 1872-3 in securing the defeat of this measure. While Mr. Hamer took an active part in the founding of the city and in its development, his greatest efforts have been along legal lines in which he has won both a name and fame. His partner for long years, Gen. A. H. Connor, also took an active part in these early struggles to found a city. General Connor was a man of striking personality, charming in manner and address, yet while the law firm of Hamer & Connor had a state wide reputation, General Connor seemingly trusted more to the inspiration of the moment, to his strength as an advocate, his skill as an orator, rather than as a student of law and familiar with all the details of the case at bar.

MEETINGS OF THE TOWN TRUSTEES

The incorporation of the Town of Kearney Junction completed, the trustees proceeded to the business of providing ordinances for the government of its municipal affairs. At the first meeting, January 16, 1873, E. B. Carter was chosen chairman and Sylvester S. St. John clerk.

On January 18th at a meeting, propositions for a place of meeting for the trustees was submitted by L. B. Cunningham, (L. B.) Fifield and L. R. More, the proposition of L. R. More being accepted. On January 20th, a committee appointed to submit nominations for town officers, submitted a report as follows:

Town treasurer and collector, H. V. Hoagland, David Anderson, Walter Colby, and W. C. Sunderland; for marshal, George E. Evans, A. I. Aitken, J. H. Mitchell, and David Anderson; for assessor, J. W. Leland. The officers appointed were: Assessor, J. W. Leland; collector, David Anderson; treasurer, W. C. Sunderland; marshal, George E. Evans; town attorney, A. H. Connor.

On January 28th, before Simon Murphy, notary public, the town officers took the oath of office. At the February 3d meeting it appears the marshal had resigned and the following named persons received votes for the office: John Bradley, W. P. P. St. Clair, J. H. Mitchell, and on third ballot, Samuel Wenzell was chosen marshal. At this meeting town ordinances were adopted in which the license fee for the sale of liquors was fixed at \$50, and the bond of saloon keepers at from \$1,000 to \$5,000; also the license for billiard table and ball alleys \$3 per month. The board of county commissioners had fixed the license fee for the sale of liquors at \$300, and on January 18, 1873, had granted to W. H. H. Fogg a license to sell liquors at Kearney Junction and it appears that Fogg had paid the fee of \$300. While the fee for license to sell liquors had been fixed by the trustees at \$50, it appears from the record of the proceedings of the board that saloons were openly in operation, the proprietors refusing to take out license and that more difficulty was experienced by the trustees in their efforts to control the liquor business than with any other or all other branches of business in the town.

PROVIDE FOR PAVEMENTS

Among the ordinances adopted at this February 3d meeting of the trustees, was one relative to the construction of pavements in the town. Doubtless had anyone suggested that it was hardly necessary to pass such an ordinance at that date, he would have been termed a knocker, and had he further ventured to prophesy that forty years would come and go ere any pavement was laid on a street in the city (which was the case) he certainly would have been stigmatized as an "undesirable citizen."

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

At the February 7, 1873, meeting, Samuel Wenzell having resigned as marshal, John Bradley was appointed, and T. J. Murphy engineer. On February 10th, the Central Nebraska Press (Webster and R. H. Eaton, editors), was made the official organ for the publication of town ordinances. Felt and Coffman made application for liquor license; their bond was fixed at \$1,000, and license granted February 17th. This appears to have been the first liquor license granted by the town trustees. This saloon appears to have been located on Nebraska Avenue, Perkins and Harford Addition. At this meeting the first dray license was issued to John Dermody. On March 3d, the office of marshal being vacant and on petition of numerous citizens, William Thomas was appointed. Among the ordinances adopted was one imposing a yearly tax of \$1 on each dog owned or harbored by a resident of the town; licenses to keep a dog were issued to Jas. A. Smith, F. N. Dart, A. H. Connor, Nathan Campbell,

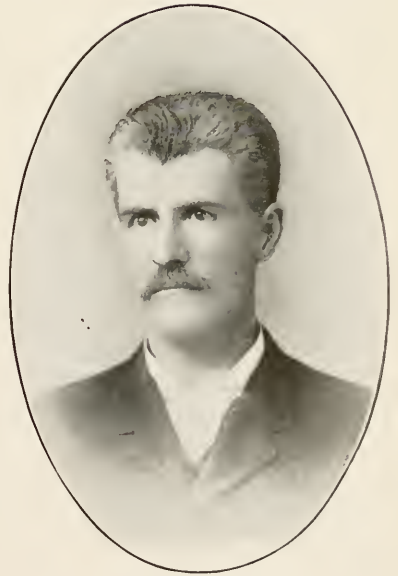


NATHAN CAMPBELL
First elected mayor of Kearney, 1874



JAMES O'KANE

Elected a member of the city council of Kearney, 1873. Believed to be the first settler in Buffalo County to buy and sow alfalfa seed.



JOSEPH SCOTT

A homestead settler in Center Township, 1873. Served as county clerk, county treasurer and for two terms as state commissioner of public lands and buildings. Was a soldier of the Civil war.

Charles Wakefield, H. M. Elliott, C. T. Weldin, A. H. Barlow, T. Billesbach, J. C. Fifield, L. R. More, W. S. Holt, Max Boetscher and F. G. Hamer.

FIRST TOWN ELECTION

On May 5, 1873, was held the first election of the Town of Kearney Junction, at which the trustees chosen were: E. B. Carter, L. R. More, J. N. Keller, H. H. Achey and James O'Kane. Mr. Keller was station agent for the Union Pacific, Mr. Achey a contractor and builder and Mr. O'Kane a grocery and restaurant keeper south of the railroad. Mr. O'Kane was very popular with farmers and for some years enjoyed a large patronage until failing health necessitated his giving up the business.

At the May 19th meeting of the trustees, I. D. Bishop was appointed marshal, J. C. McAdams clerk, W. C. Sunderland treasurer, P. W. Wilson assessor, F. G. Hamer collector and A. H. Connor town attorney.

THE TOWN PRINTING

At the June 3d meeting, Mendel, Clapp and Cunningham submitted bids to do the town printing in the Kearney Junction Times at 25 cents per hundred words; Webster Eaton submitted a like bid of 9 cents in the Central Nebraska Weekly Press and 18 cents in the daily Press; the bid of Mr. Eaton was accepted in both the weekly and daily.

LICENSES ISSUED

On June 23d dray licenses were issued to Charles Christensen, John Dermody, John T. Wright and J. S. Harrington. Liquor licenses to James Kelly, Stimpson and Decker, H. H. Achey and A. J. Spaulding. Mention is made of the Grand Central Hotel.

A KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS ORGANIZATION

On June 22d, arrangements were made with the Knights of Pythias to use their hall as a place of meeting for the town trustees. August 12th Thomas S. Nightengale was appointed town clerk; on October 12, 1873, an opinion was asked of Judge N. H. Hemiup as to best method to pursue to organize a city. November 3d, Wm. R. Firlong appointed town engineer and D. B. Clark, assessor; Attorney Sam L. Savidge employed to look over the town ordinances with a view to corrections and revision. Samuel Wenzell took oath of office as marshal; the chairman reported small success in obtaining the names of responsible parties who would become security for the cost of a fire engine if purchased by the town.

TAKING A CENSUS OF THE TOWN

The statutes of the state provided, "Section 1. All cities and towns of the State of Nebraska, containing more than five hundred and less than fifteen thousand inhabitants, shall be cities of the second class."

October 12, 1873, J. W. Leland was appointed to take a census of the Town of Kearney Junction with a view of organizing a city of the second class. In a published biography of Mr. Leland it is stated, "He took a census of Kearney in 1873, when the population numbered only 245." There seems no question that this was the census ordered by the trustees of the Town of Kearney Junction with a view of organizing a city of the second class, the returns of this census disclosing a population of 245.

INCORPORATING THE CITY OF KEARNEY

On December 3, 1873, the "Town of Kearney Junction," one year and one month old, ceased to have a legal existence and "Kearney," a city of the second class, with a population of approximately three hundred was incorporated, the officials of the Town of Kearney Junction serving as like officials of the City of Kearney until a regular election was held. Hence it was that E. B. Carter, L. R. More, J. N. Keller, H. H. Achey and James O'Kane were the members of the first city council; E. B. Carter the first mayor, Thomas S. Nightengale city clerk and Samuel Wenzell chief of police or marshal. In this brief history of the Town of Kearney Junction, is given, as appears in the record and in published proceedings available, the name of every person mentioned (about one hundred in all), because, having no other records of those who took part in the foundation and life of the town, from these we may learn and record the names of a portion of the residents and of those who took a more or less prominent part in public affairs.

THE FIRST POSTOFFICE

On February 9, 1872, a postoffice named Kearney Junction was established with Asbury Collins as postmaster. It is understood that at that date Mr. Collins and family were residing in the Junction House, located on section 2, and that the postoffice was kept there.

PERKINS AND HARFORD'S ADDITION TO KEARNEY JUNCTION

In the month of September, 1872, Asbury Collins had C. W. Colt and James MacGonegal, surveyors residing at Lowell, Neb., survey South Kearney as an addition to Kearney Junction, the same being on the northwest quarter of section 12, town 8, range 16. In July, 1872, D. N. Smith bought of the Union Pacific Railway Company the east half of section 35, town 9, range 16, for a consideration of \$960, and sold the same to Perkins and Harford for a consideration of \$16,000. In volumes No. 1 and No. 3, issue of the Buffalo County Beacon, published at Gibbon and dated July 27, 1872, appears the following item: "Esquire Collins of Kearney Junction made us a pleasant call a few days ago. He informs us that real estate at that point is on the rise in price. Mr. Smith (D. N. Smith) sold to parties from Minnesota (Minneapolis), (Perkins and Harford), a short time since the east half of section 35, town 9, range 16, for the snug sum of \$50 per acre." In the month of August, 1872, Perkins

and Harford had Anselmo B. Smith survey and plat into city lots Perkins and Harford's first and second additions to Kearney Junction, being the east half of section 35, town 9, range 16. Thus it will be noted that before the Burlington had made junction with the Union Pacific there had been surveyed and platted into city lots and such plats made a matter of record, 960 acres of land in a solid body.

It is a matter of tradition that because of the unfair advantage taken by the townsite company in obtaining possession, in advance, of the townsite and because of the extravagant prices asked for city lots, the first buildings erected were on school section No. 36 and the Perkins and Harford Addition. The county records show that on April 2, 1872, A. Collins was appointed agent for the county to notify all parties not to occupy or erect any buildings on section 36, town 9, range 16, the same being school lands. In March, 1872, F. N. Dart erected a store building on the school section. An advertisement of Mr. Dart's business appeared in issues of the Buffalo County Beacon in the year 1872. Rev. Wm. Morse also erected a building on a lot in Perkins and Harford's Addition, purchased in September, 1872. As before noted, the first lots sold in the original townsite was to L. R. More in May, 1873. The building erected by Rev. Wm. Morse was occupied by James Jenkins as a shoe store, Mr. Jenkins being a shoemaker by trade. The first saloon opened at Kearney Junction was either on section 35 or section 36.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

School district No. 7, embracing 120 square miles of territory, was organized March 8, 1872; the place of organizing was at the "Hotel Collins" (known also as the Junction House), James Smith being chosen director. The first district report discloses thirty-six children of school age in the district. An enumeration of school children made in April, 1873, shows forty-five children of school age.

The first term of school taught in this district (No. 7—Kearney) was by Miss Fannie Nevius, who was first licensed as a teacher in the county in the year 1873. Dan A. Crowell, county superintendent, under date January 24th, records: "Visited school in district No. 7, taught by Miss Nevius. Owing to some disagreement between the school officers and citizens relative to the selection of a site, no house has yet been built and the school is at present domiciled in a room rented to suit the emergency. It is, however, poorly furnished and but illy adapted to the purposes of a school." On January 24, 1874, J. J. W. Place, county superintendent, records: "Visited district No. 7, found two schools in session taught by O. E. Hansen and Miss Fannie Nevius."

FIRST COUNTY TEACHERS' INSTITUTE

The first county teachers' institute was held at Kearney, November 25, 1875, J. J. W. Place superintendent. The teachers in attendance were entertained by the people of Kearney. State Superintendent J. M. McKenzie was in attendance and delivered two lectures. Prof. D. B. Worley had charge of

the music. There were twelve teachers from the county in attendance. A county teachers' organization was formed with O. E. Hansen, chairman; J. S. Zerbe, secretary; Miss Bunnell, treasurer; and Miss Fannie Nevius, critic. Dan A. Crowell was one of the teachers in the Kearney school at that date.

KEARNEY JUNCTION TIMES

As the writer understands the Kearney Junction Times, established by Mendel, Clapp and Cunningham (L. B. Cunningham, editor) was the first newspaper published at Kearney Junction. Its first issue was October 12, 1872. The Times was ever loyal to the best interests of Kearney Junction, and the City of Kearney and exceedingly helpful in the upbuilding of the town and community; in the discussion of public affairs it maintained a high moral standard, its editor having no sympathy with the belief of many that open saloons and dens of vice were essential to the up-building of the city and hence the Times was not in close touch and fellowship with certain elements which exerted a powerful influence in the early history of Kearney Junction and Buffalo County, influences which at times largely controlled in the distribution of public printing and public patronage. In later years the Times became the Buffalo County Journal, having a general circulation throughout the county and exerting a large influence.

CENTRAL NEBRASKA PRESS

The exact date of the establishment of the Central Nebraska Press at Kearney Junction is, to the writer, not known. Official records disclose that February 10, 1873, the Press was made the official organ for publication of ordinances of the Town of Kearney Junction, and that on June 3, 1873, there was being published both the daily and weekly Press. In the days of the founding of the Town of Kearney Junction it was generally understood that the owners of the townsite and the promoters of the town donated to "Web" Eaton a considerable number of city lots as an inducement to establish a newspaper, daily and weekly; in March, 1873, Mr. Eaton secured the subscription list and good will of the Buffalo County Beacon being published at Gibbon. "Web" Eaton had a love for politics and was a very shrewd politician; he secured, by appointment, political preferment and left the management of the Press largely in the hands of his brother, R. H. Eaton. Rice Eaton, as he was familiarly called, was born in Rochester, N. Y., in 1838; by profession and training he was a printer and newspaper man. He was a soldier of the Civil war, had traveled somewhat and was a keen observer of mankind. He was of a lovable disposition, witty, original in thought and expression, a versatile and apt writer.

He had a liking for politics and a nose for news of a political nature.

Under his management the Press soon secured a state wide reputation, was widely quoted, and exerted a large influence. Of the days of which this article treats, the Central Nebraska Press easily took first rank among the newspapers published in the county. In the year 1879 Mr. Eaton disposed of the Press to W. C. Holden.

CENTRAL NEBRASKA STAR

The Central Nebraska Star was established (as recalled) in the year 1871 by Moses H. Sydenham; its publication was not regular and no files of its issues are known to exist. Its date line hailed from "Centoria," a paper-boom town in Kearney County, a few miles west of Fort Kearney. Centoria was surveyed and platted by Mr. Sydenham but had no existence except on paper. The Star advocated the removal of the national capitol to the Fort Kearney military reservation, the geographical center of the nation, urging that by surveying the reservation (ten miles square) into city lots the sale of the lots would provide for all expense of erecting Government buildings and the removal of the national capitol. While the Star had a considerable circulation in Buffalo and Kearney counties in the years 1871-2-3, it can not be said to have exerted much influence in the settlement and development of Central Nebraska; it was the personal organ of its editor who was without experience in public affairs and seemingly not in touch or sympathy with the development of the agricultural resources of this portion of the state. Mr. Sydenham was an Englishman by birth, served first at Fort Kearney as a sutler's clerk and later as postmaster at the fort; he also served a term as county commissioner when Kearney County was organized in 1872. Fort Kearney was abandoned as a fort in 1871.

EARLY REMINISCENCES OF KEARNEY

L. B. Cunningham

August 18, 1872, I arrived at Lowell, the then terminal point of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad in Nebraska, about 5 P. M. One other man beside myself desired to get to Kearney and a third desired to reach the Union Pacific Railroad as soon as possible.

Lowell was then a flourishing railway station, crowds coming and going, business lively, hotels full, cow boys, whiskey and roustabouts galore. We three hired a livery rig and driver to take us to the south and east terminal of the Burlington Railway bridge across the Platte River. We had learned that the main pillars of the bridge were laid across and that one could walk over. We arrived at the bridge about dark. The night was starlight but no moon. The third man proved to be well acquainted with directions and locations; he knew about where Kearney Station (now Buda) was and we gladly permitted him to lead the way. The meadows north of the river were luxuriant with grass, some of which was higher than our heads. After wading the high grass and over buffalo grass sod, carrying our grips, we arrived at the station and found a lodging house conducted by Mrs. Johnson and her son, Wm. C., the latter a lad of about fourteen, who died in Kearney about four years ago. His mother later married M. W. Benschoter. The traveling man rose at 3 A. M. and boarded a passenger train for Omaha. Years after I met him in Iowa, only once.

My remaining companion and self took a tie-path late Sunday morning for Kearney. When about half the distance a brother of Jacob Gabriel drove up with a wagon and team and asked us to ride, which kind invitation we gladly accepted. We were directed to the Smith Hotel (sometimes called Junction

House—sometimes Hotel Collins) then located in the center of section 2-8-16, later removed to south part of town and used as a hotel. We found there James A. and George E. Smith, also Frank Woods, each of whom, with a fourth man we now disremember his name, each a homesteader (pre-emptor) holding down a quarter of that section. The house was four big rooms below and also above, one room by survey on each quarter of the section, thus questionably complying with the law. James A. Smith and wife kept public house for the accommodation of travelers.

CHURCH SERVICES HELD

We were surprised to see almost immediately on our arrival, homesteaders coming in for church services and two gray haired preachers present, Rev. Wm. Morse, a pioneer, Methodist, and Rev. Nahum Gould, likewise a pioneer, Presbyterian, both homesteaders. Then there was Asbury Collins whom we subsequently learned was a minister also, and his good wife, Mrs. Louisa Collins, whom I believe is still living.

We had church services, preaching and singing; James A. Smith and wife, and James Jenkins were each fair singers, and they with others and an organist made the building ring with melody. C. S. Greenman and wife, also daughter and son, the daughter now Mrs. T. N. Hartzell, then a pretty young girl blooming into womanhood, Herbert the son, then five years of age. Roswell Gould was present, a prominent figure then, and I believe still living. Judge and Mrs. F. G. Hamer were there, which was, of course, my first sight of them. I went to Kearney with the intention of starting a newspaper, and had not thought of taking land, but on Monday most all were taking land, homesteads, and Frank Woods saddled two ponies and induced me, I having taken the homestead fever, to mount one of the ponies and accompany him on a hunt for a claim. He took me out to where is now Riverdale—the Fort Kearney reservation not then being open for settlement—where I selected the northwest quarter section 6-9-16 and filed upon the same the next day at the Grand Island land office. J. R. King, C. Sisco, Peter Calhoun, and Wm. Stevenson had already settled on section 8. Jake Bunnell had located on the east half of section 6; Cosmo Hill, and father, Charles Porter and W. F. Piercy were further east and John Sammons, John Henning, Fred Cuddebeck, Wilson Hewitt, J. F. Chase, James Carson and others were settled in the neighborhood of where now is Glenwood Station. On returning to Kearney Frank Woods refused to accept a cent of pay for his time and trouble in assisting me to select a claim; he said, at the time, it was the best claim then untaken within twelve miles of Kearney and thereafter I proved by my crops that he prophesied truly.

F. G. Hamer, Rev. N. Gould and Roswell Gould were located north of the present electric light plant, Rev. Wm. Morse, James Jenkins and others two miles north of the hamlet called Kearney, while Wm. Schram, L. D. Forehand, and George N. Smith were six or seven miles northeast. Of these early homesteaders the following named have passed to their rewards, Rev. N. Gould, Rev. Wm. Morse, C. Sisco, J. R. King, C. Hill, Sr., W. F. Piercy, J. F. Chase, and James Carson, but I believe the others are still living. Aside from the Smith House,



MOSES H. SYDENHAM

Editor of the Central Nebraska Star published in 1871-72-73.
Postmaster at Fort Kearney. County commissioner, Kearney
County, 1872-73.

which was in reality westward from the town site, there were six houses in Kearney. John Mahon, the oldest settler, had a cottage and blacksmith shop on the south of the Union Pacific track. Simon and Dr. J. T. Murphy were constructing the Harrold House which still stands. David Anderson, later sheriff of the county, lived with his family in a little cottage upon what is now West Twenty-fourth Street, then or soon after, known as Smith Avenue. F. N. Dart and brother-in-law, W. H. McClure, had a shanty well filled with a general stock of goods located on almost the extreme southwest corner of section No. 36. Charley Christenson was the drayman of that day and lived with his horses in an adjoining stall.

After filing on my claim in Grand Island, on Tuesday, August 21st, I returned to Iowa, arranging my affairs, and again landed in Kearney on a Burlington freight at midnight September 6, 1872, the passenger train not yet running. During my two weeks' absence Kearney hamlet had moved some, almost to the character of a village. Union Pacific trains did not stop at the town proper but would let off passengers and mail at the Smith House. Freight had to be hauled from Kearney Station (now Buda). D. N. Smith, of Burlington, Iowa, a Burlington Railway right-of-way man and construction agent, had played snap judgment upon the Union Pacific Railway Company and had slipped in and purchased as a private citizen, several sections of railroad lands in that vicinity, of the Union Pacific Company, knowing that the Burlington would form a junction with the Union Pacific at some point very near, hence the Union Pacific would not stop its trains at the new hamlet (Kearney Junction) until some satisfactory arrangement could be made about lands and lots. This logger-head business went on for some weeks while the new comers suffered inconveniences.

L. R. MORE STARTS A BANK

L. R. More and Will C. Sunderland started lumber and coal yards. L. R. More soon started a little bank, first doing business in his coal and lumber office and later erected a small frame on a corner on Main Street, then called Colorado Avenue and Twenty-first Street, where now stands the opera house. This corner has practically been the foundation and support of a banking house ever since. Charles W. Dake removed his family from Mount Ayr, Iowa, and soon started another bank in the north part of town, later known as the Buffalo County National Bank. Owing to grasshopper depredations, drouth and general hard times this bank failed some years later and Mr. Dake went to Denver.

Mr. St. Clair started a bank, he having moved from Schuyler, Nebr.; he failed inside of a year, but he proved strictly honorable and paid every cent of indebtedness. L. D. Grant came from Schuyler about August 25th and removed his wife and daughter the following January. S. S. St. John came in October from Wisconsin. Peter W. Wilson from Mount Ayr, Iowa; Samuel Wenzell accompanied the latter, each with their families. H. C. Andrews came the following December from the same place as the latter two. V. B. Clark soon started a hardware store in October; T. J. Parish and Byron Marsh came some months later as did C. J. Burke, the latter the tinner, the former two clerks for Mr. Clark. Mr. Williams came from Lincoln, built a frame building on Smith Avenue and

placed therein a stock of groceries. James O'Kane built on the south side just north of the Harold House and kept groceries and produce. J. S. Chandler of St. Joe built in the corner where the Presbyterian Church now stands; Doctors D. A. Vance and C. T. Dildine came in June, 1873. Doctor Bolton came from Illinois and started a drug store and practiced some and had a partner in the store, the firm known as Bolton and Barlow.

I built a two story building on Smith Avenue for a printing office and under the firm name of Mendel, Clapp and Cunningham started the Kearney Junction Times, the first issue being dated October 12, 1872, and the first paper in Kearney. Messrs. L. D. Gant, L. D. Forehand and perhaps Judge F. G. Hamer, each has a copy of the first issue. For a couple of months the paper was printed at the Union office in Albia, Iowa, until we could establish our material in the upper rooms of the building above referred to. Webster Eaton, of Red Oak, Iowa, started the Daily Press in January or February following (1873), and in a few months was joined by his brother, Rice Eaton.

A SCHOOL ESTABLISHED

Families of children came and a school was in demand. I leased the lower room of the Times Building to James A. Smith, director of the newly organized school district for a term of six months school and Miss Fannie Nevius, now deceased, was employed as the first teacher in Kearney, who immediately started in to teach the young hopefuls.

This room in the Times Building was also leased to the Methodist and Presbyterian Church people, a few of each, who held union services during the winter (1872-73), and to a literary society organized, called the "Philomathean," at the instigation of F. N. Colwell, J. C. McAdams, Walter Colby, S. S. St. John and the writer and we held weekly debating societies therein on Saturday evenings. The Methodist people had a preliminary church organization. Rev. L. B. Fifield built Walworth Hall on corner of Smith Avenue and Colorado Street (now Central and Twenty-fourth) in which he continued to preach and later organized a Congregational Church. The Baptist people organized the following summer (1873) with V. B. Clark and family as principal force.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ORGANIZED

About March 7th (1873) the synodical missionary with Rev. Nahum Gould organized the first Presbyterian Church of Kearney in the Times Building with a membership of eight beside the minister, as follows: Dr. J. T. Brown, Roswell B. Gould, Eddy Lloyd, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. George E. Smith, Emma Greenman, Mrs. C. S. Greenman, and L. B. Cunningham, and the former two named were elected elders.

A SOUVENIR OF EARLY DAYS

E. B. Carter came in the fall of 1872 and started a jewelry store in a small building near where the Downing-Bartlett Block now is. We have in our home

a pleasant reminder of my old friend Carter. In June, 1873, I bought a plain walnut case eight-day alarm clock of him for which I paid \$7. We still have this clock in good condition, keeps perfect time and it will awaken you at any hour if you but set the alarm right. It now times our cook in egg boiling and biscuit making. E. B. Carter was a veritable yankee, sharp and shrewd, always active in the upbuilding of the town. He was a member of the early town council and third mayor, Marsh (D. B.) being the first and Nathan Campbell, a settler coming in June, 1872, being the second. (Note—The records disclose that E. B. Carter was chairman of the board of trustees of the Town of Kearney Junction when organized in November, 1872, was elected a member of the board of trustees May 5, 1873, and served as chairman of the board when the City of Kearney was incorporated in December, 1873, and served as mayor of the City of Kearney until the first election held in the city when Nathan Campbell was elected mayor.)

NAMING THE NEW TOWN

At a meeting in the lumber office of More and Sunderland, it was voted to lay out (incorporate) the town four miles square—sixteen square miles—thus putting down on paper a big foundation for a big city. On account of there being so many places and things called "Kearney," such as, Kearney County, Kearney City (in Kearney County), Fort Kearney and Kearney Station (now Buda), it was seriously discussed to change the name of the new town. I do not recall all of half a dozen names proposed, but one gentleman (Commercial Hotel proprietor) very much desired to name it "Inter Ocean"—half way between the oceans—thus you see that "Midway City" was thought of as early as October, 1872. I remember distinctly that I wanted "Permanence," as I believed we were laying the foundation for a permanent city, and how surely my early ideas are coming true, you citizens of Kearney best know. But there were too many present, of whom L. R. More, a very positive sort of man, who had the Kearney fever very badly, and they outvoted us and Kearney it is and no doubt Kearney it will remain while time lasts.

Attorneys E. C. Calkins and Warren Pratt came, if I mistake not, in June, 1873. These gentlemen were partners in law for a number of years and now still living, and as separate attorneys, are prosperous. James Harron and Thomas C. Roberts came from St. Joseph, Mo., and conducted a store for a while; the former branched off into farming and the latter returned to St. Joseph; both have passed to the unknown. F. J. Switz came from Ohio and established a furniture store and is still a very prominent figure in Kearney. W. J. Perkins was a '72 recruit. A. H. Connor with F. G. Hamer made a strong law firm. Nightengale and F. G. Keens opened the first drug store. J. P. Johnson, the "inevitable" as I used to advertise him, came from Mount Pleasant and Red Oak, Iowa; he engaged in various occupations, among them, hardware and also a general stock of clothing and dry goods. Hiram Randall should not be overlooked nor Robert Haines now an honored councilman. John J. Bartlett, W. A. and R. L. Downing, all time-honored early pushers for Kearney. Doctor Hull, Joseph, Samuel and Charles Black, C. B. and E. B. Finch and Jack Crocker were

on the ground a little later, as were Wm. H. Roe, John H. and Dan W. Roe. Col. John H. Roe did a nice thing for Kearney, which deserves a special mention: as agent for Union Pacific lands and lots he secured the handsome block of lots where the Kearney High School now stands as a permanent school ground for the city.

Misses Libbie Wilson and Ella Grant were the first, or among the first, young ladies of the place. Charles W. Porter and Miss Osterhiel were the first to get married in Kearney although George E. Smith and Miss Clemm were married in Logansport, Ind., and came to Kearney before the Porter-Osterhiel wedding.

Frank Kearney Clark, son of Mr. and Mrs. V. B. Clark, was the first child born in the city. I was married September 3, 1872, to Mary E. Clapp at Fairfield, Iowa, and arrived home in Kearney, September 30th. But I must find a stopping place; from hamlet to village, Kearney grew rapidly, having three hundred or four hundred people by Christmas, 1872, and one thousand within twelve months from that time, and her magnificent growth has been, in the main, gradual, steady, and permanent ever since.

Having a fire in my newspaper office in 1890, all my newspaper files were burned and now I have not the record of a single issue from which to copy, and neither have I a line or word anywhere with which to refresh my memory in gathering together these events of long ago days, but if any old or new friend or neighbor becomes interested in what I have here contributed of early events, early history of Kearney I will feel amply repaid for the time and trouble.

(Note—Mr. Cunningham and son are in the newspaper business at Glenwood, Iowa, and in the year 1911, at the request of the writer (S. C. Bassett) contributed this very interesting and valuable history of the founding of Kearney Junction and reminiscences of those early days.)

SEDGWICK POST NO. 1, G. A. R.

Sedgwick Post No. 1, Department of Nebraska, Grand Army of the Republic, has the distinction of being the first G. A. R. post organized in Nebraska.

Past Post Commander A. H. Boltin furnishes the following history of the post: Sedgwick Post was organized at Fort Kearney in the year 1870, under jurisdiction of the Department of Illinois. In 1874, at Kearney, the post was reorganized under jurisdiction of the Department of Iowa. On December 1, 1879, the post was again reorganized and chartered as Sedgwick Post No. 1, Department of Nebraska.

In the life of this post thirty-three comrades have served as post commanders in order as follows: E. C. Calkins, J. W. Wilson, Joseph Black, Robert La Fountain, James Jenkins, A. H. Boltin, J. W. Parker, W. J. Perkins, R. M. Grimes, J. M. Tisdell, W. Smith, D. A. Dorsey, I. A. Arnold, I. B. Wambaugh, John Barnd, Dr. H. S. Bell, Dwight Phelps, Henry Seaman, W. W. Dye, J. C. McKeene, Phil Bessor, B. H. Goulding, John Hoge, J. C. Beswick, E. W. Thomas, George N. Smith, George C. Ray, Freeman Merryman, J. A. Larimer, Rev. Henry Wood, Simon Landis, A. D. Rice, Lorenzo Smith.

In the year 1915 the post was in a flourishing condition, with seventy members. There are buried in the cemetery at Kearney 162 soldiers of the Civil war.

SEDGWICK WOMAN'S RELIEF CORPS NO. 1, G. A. R.

Sedgwick Woman's Relief Corps No. 1, Department of Nebraska, G. A. R., was organized at Kearney in January, 1884, with the following charter members: Josephine Gillespie, president; Julia McKelvey, Mary La Fountain, Maria Miles, Mrs. Lacy, Laura Perkins, Sarah Parker, Mrs. Fields, Mrs. Fitch, Mrs. Vanhorn, Mary Lotterman, Mrs. Harding, Sarah Hoge, Mrs. R. M. Grimes, Mrs. Shiers, Mrs. William Hunt, Martha Goulding, Mrs. J. W. Wilson, Mary Jenkins, Mrs. Bicknell, Harriet Worley, Mrs. Wilks.

In the year 1915 the corps had a membership of thirty-five. Its officers: Grace Hardy, president; Lucinda Ball, S. V. P.; Melissa Wiley, J. V. P.; Effie Boltin, chaplain; Phoebe J. Lancaster, secretary; Aurelia Whitney, treasurer; Anna Kilgore, conductor; Louisa Lowe, A. C.; Louisa Haase, guard; Mary Bailey, A. G.; Effie Boltin, patriotic instructor; Anna Kilgore, press correspondent; color bearers, Elizabeth Smith, Jennie Shiers, Maria Reed, Mary Harper.

This was the first corps organized in the Department of Nebraska.

SMITH GAVITT POST NO. 299, G. A. R.

Smith Gavitt Post No. 299, G. A. R., of Kearney, received its charter March 4, 1890, with the following charter members: John Tottersman, L. O. Hyatt, James P. Tucker, James M. Duley, Franklin W. Nichols, John Larimer, Stewart W. Calhoun, Joseph McKain, William M. Woodruff, H. H. Wade, Benedict Streigel, Joseph Worsley, J. A. Larimer, William B. Ray, John H. Boatwright, Andrew J. Snow, John R. Mote.

The officers elected and installed were: John W. Totterman, commander; James M. Duley, S. V.; John Larimer, J. V.; Andrew J. Snow, Q. M.; Franklin W. Nichols, surgeon; William M. Boatwright, chaplain; H. H. Wade, O. D.; J. J. Boatwright, O. G.; Joseph Worsley, adjutant; S. A. Hyatt, S. M.; W. B. Ray, Q. M. Sergt.

In 1915 the post had a membership of fifty-three. Its officers: M. Hopkins, commander; S. Bell, S. V.; J. S. Wiley, J. V.; W. H. Marshall, O. D.; Robert Haines, chaplain; J. A. Larimer, Q. M.; F. J. Switz, adjutant; D. T. Hostetter, O. G.

SMITH GAVITT WOMAN'S RELIEF CORPS NO. 106, G. A. R.

Smith Gavitt Woman's Relief Corps No. 106 at Kearney received its charter March 18, 1890, and was instituted with the following officers and charter members: Marie Y. Miles, president; Mary J. Tottersman, S. V.; Hattie J. Worsley, J. V.; Lucy A. Willoughby, secretary; Estelle Rogers, treasurer; Maggie McKain, chaplain; Frances Woodruff, conductor; Sarah A. Seaman, G.; Kate A. Tucker, A. G.; Nancy Murphy, A. G.; May Demar, Jennie Coleman, Mary A. Webbert, Mary J. Triggs, Hannah N. Hyatt, Mattie O'Kane, Jennie Wood, Martha E. Tague, Eva Uhrig, Lucy Willoughby, Jennie Calhoun, Victoria Brundage, Marion Steigle, Cleronne Ray, Eleanor Hawk, Ada Caswell. In the year 1915 the corps had a membership of twenty-five. Its officers: Mrs. Barbara Scheiling,

president; Liddie Bonser, S. V.; Elizabeth Marshall, J. V.; Emma L. Hostetter, treasurer; Nellie M. Stimpson, secretary; Mary M. Page, conductor; Celia Talbert, chaplain; Olie Springer, G.; Amanda Green, Emily McKinney, Henrietta Pickerel and Costelia Rogers, color bearers; Emma L. Hostetter, patriotic instructor; Melissa Hemmingway, press correspondent.

PHIL KEARNEY CIRCLE NO. 4, LADIES OF THE G. A. R.

Phil Kearney Circle No. 4, Department of Nebraska, Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, was organized at Kearney, May 12, 1904, with ten charter members. The first officers were: Lizzie Trimble, president; Christie Hoge, S. V. P.; Lizzie Wambaugh, J. V. P.; Josephine Stephenson, secretary; Jane Larimer, treasurer; Mary J. Stear, chaplain.

In 1915 the membership of the circle was seventy-five. The officers: Flora Rawell, president; Fannie Wilson, S. V. P.; Mary Webbert, J. V. P.; Effie Sullivan, secretary; Anna Warren, treasurer; Lillie Rahn, chaplain; patriotic instructor, Emily Stark; Sophia Brown, guard.

FORT KEARNEY CHAPTER, D. A. R.

Fort Kearney Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, was organized at the home of Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton, Kearney, May 16, 1908, with the following charter members and first officers: Mrs. Lottie Gove Norton, chapter regent; Mrs. Florence Valentine Miller, vice regent; Mrs. Henrietta Bearce Roby, historian; Miss Isabel Amanda Tabor, secretary; Mrs. Maybelle Nye Miller, treasurer; Mrs. Anna V. A. Peterson, registrar; Mrs. Irene Holbrook Clark, chaplain; Mrs. Elijah Atwood Gove, Mrs. Frederick R. Kingsley, Miss Arathusa Calkins, Mrs. Leroy V. Patch, Mrs. Harry J. Reed, Mrs. E. St. Claire Snyder, Miss Agnes M. Tabor, Mrs. Henry Gibbons, Miss Catherine A. Nye, Mrs. Robert A. Moore, Miss Alice Ruth Miller, Mrs. Burton Lothrop, Mrs. Joseph Plumb.

Since organization 150 members have been admitted to the chapter, which now (1916) is the third in size in the state.

Among the patriotic work accomplished by the Fort Kearney Chapter has been the placing in the Union Pacific Park in Kearney of a granite monument to mark the "Oregon Trail," which had its beginning in the Valley of the Platte River in the year 1811, this monument being the first stone to mark this historic trail erected in the State of Nebraska.

BUFFALO LODGE NO. 38, I. O. O. F.

Buffalo Lodge No. 38, I. O. O. F., was instituted at Kearney, May 31, 1873, by Grand Secretary John Evans, with the following charter members: N. H. Hemiup, Henry W. Morse, James P. Johnson, I. B. Wambaugh, D. B. Marsh, Philip H. Allison, W. F. Marsh, Hugh Stotler, H. A. Wakefield.

In the year 1915 I. B. Wambaugh, a soldier of the Civil war, is the only one of the charter members living.

In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of 275. Its officers: T. A.

Pickerell, N. G.; A. G. Barlow, V. G.; J. A. Larimer, secretary; W. A. Miller, treasurer.

In the year 1907 the lodge erected, on a lot owned by the lodge, a substantial brick building at a cost of \$15,000, the upper rooms of the building being used for lodge purposes.

KEARNEY ENCAMPMENT NO. 18, I. O. O. F.

Kearney Encampment No. 18, I. O. O. F., was instituted at Kearney, September 3, 1881, by Grand Patriarch J. W. Walters and Grand Secretary D. A. Cline, with the following charter members: A. T. Cannon, Swan J. Johnson, L. L. Ketchum, William Schram, W. F. Pickering, James Wallace, H. C. Andrews, W. H. Bushell, C. R. Clapp, L. D. Forehand, C. D. Ayres, H. W. Morse, Theodore Wilhelmy, C. J. Burke, I. B. Wambaugh, W. H. Hunt, Thomas H. Ayres.

In the year 1915 the encampment had a membership of seventy-five. Its officers: T. J. Scott, chief patriarch; E. E. Gardner, senior warden; E. A. Miller, scribe; M. N. Troupe, treasurer.

NAOMI REBEKAH LODGE NO. 12, I. O. O. F.

Naomi Rebekah Lodge No. 12, I. O. O. F., was instituted June 26, 1887, with a charter membership of twenty. G. H. Cutting, N. G.; Emma Haines, treasurer.

In the year 1915 the membership of the lodge was 203. Officers: Margaret Webbert, N. G.; Nellie Wilkins, V. G.; Aurelia Whitney, secretary; Frances Whitney, treasurer.

ROBERT MORRIS LODGE NO. 46, A. F. & A. M.

Robert Morris Lodge No. 46, A. F. & A. M., of Kearney, was organized at Gibbon soon after the completion of the courthouse, the lodge meetings being held in the courtroom of the building. The preliminary organization was early in the year 1873, the date of the charter June 26, 1874. The charter members were: A. H. Brundage, Frank S. Trew, L. Worthington, Christopher Putnam, George S. Thomas, Benjamin Sartoria, Michael Coady, Rollin L. Downing, Simon C. Ayer, Alva G. H. White. Officers: Christopher Putnam, W. M.; Frank S. Trew, S. W.; Simon C. Ayer, J. W.

On the removal of the county seat from Gibbon the lodge was removed to Kearney.

In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of 215. Officers: Daniel Quinton, W. M.; J. D. Hawthorne, secretary.

KEARNEY CHAPTER NO. 23, R. A. M.

Kearney Chapter No. 23, R. A. M., was organized September 13, 1881. The charter members were: H. P., A. L. Webb; K., James H. Davis; S., H. L. Strong; treasurer, F. J. Switz; secretary, T. N. Hartzell; Ross Gamble, Reuben E. Barney, Paul Kalmuk, Charles B. Finch, Lawrence Ketchum.

In the year 1915 the chapter had 130 members. Officers: J. O. Pierce, E. H. P.; J. D. Hawthorne, secretary.

MOUNT HEBRON COMMANDERY NO. 12.

Mount Hebron Commandery No. 12 was organized in January, 1882. The charter membership: Henry Gibbons, E. C.; Reuben E. Barney, Gen.; Sylvester S. St. John, C. G.; Frederick J. Switz, prelate; Paul Kalmuk, S. W.; Lawrence Ketchum, J. W.; A. L. Webb, warden; James H. Davis, Sent.; William C. Villson, Rec.

In the year 1915 the commandery had 117 members: Officers: John Wilson, E. C.; G. E. Haase, recorder.

TUSCAN CHAPTER NO. 35, O. E. S.

Tuscan Chapter No. 35, O. E. S., was organized June 12, 1890, with a charter membership of twenty-five. The officers: W. M., Francis B. Burkhead; W. P., George W. Kern; secretary, A. S. Potter; treasurer, R. M. Rankin.

In 1915 the membership of the chapter was 160. The officers: W. M., Mrs. Dorothy Clifton; W. P., C. B. Manuel; secretary, Bessie Manuel; treasurer, Mrs. Minter Todd.

KEARNEY LODGE NO. 984, B. P. O. E.

Kearney Lodge No. 984 of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was instituted on June 30, 1905 by the initiation of a class of ninety. At this same meeting the following officers were elected:

L. M. Welsh, Exalted Ruler.
N. P. Hansen, Esteemed Leading Knight.
K. R. Andrews, Loyal Knight.
G. E. Haase, Lecturing Knight.
E. S. Chadwick, Secretary.
J. A. Miller, Treasurer.

On July 21st of the same year the lodge secured the top floor of the City National Bank Building for lodge rooms and have held them ever since. In connection with the lodge room a fine suite of club rooms are maintained for the convenience and comfort of the members. Under the supervision of a steward these rooms are always open to members and visiting brothers.

The following men have served as exalted ruler and secretary of the lodge since its inception:

1905-06—L. M. Welsh; E. S. Chadwick.
1906-07—E. S. Chadwick; T. B. Garrison, Jr.
1907-08—K. R. Andrews; A. E. Faidler, T. W. Maus.
1908-09—J. A. Miller; Chas. O. Swan.
1909-10—J. A. Miller; Chas. O. Swan.
1910-11—Arthur A. Scutt; Chas. O. Swan.
1911-12—Warren Pratt; Chas. O. Swan.

1912-13—Clyde W. Norton; Chas. O. Swan.

1913-14—H. B. Watson; Chas. O. Swan.

1914-15—H. B. Sammis; Chas. O. Swan.

1915-16—Clark Thomas, Chas. O. Swan; H. B. Watson.

KEARNEY COMMERCIAL CLUB

H. B. Watson

On Saturday evening, April 2, 1881, a delegation of citizens met in Mores' Hall and organized the first business men's association in Kearney and gave it the name of the Kearney Board of Trade. Mr. J. N. High was chosen chairman of the meeting and Mr. J. H. Roe was chosen secretary. The following gentlemen were elected to form an executive committee: H. C. Andrews, C. F. Bodinson, N. Campbell, E. C. Calkins, R. L. Downing, R. R. Greer, J. N. High, F. G. Keens, J. H. Roe, J. D. Seaman, F. J. Switz, G. R. Sherwood, S. L. Savidge, J. J. Saville and J. Fred Wiley.

On the following Thursday, April 7, 1881, the above committee met in the Nonpareil office and organized by electing E. C. Calkins president and J. J. Saville secretary. At this meeting Mr. J. N. High presented suggestions for a plan to organize a company and raise funds for the purpose of building a canal from the Platte River to supply water to the City of Kearney and water power for manufacturing purposes. After a careful discussion of the subject a committee was appointed to procure an estimate of the cost of the work, and another committee to draft a plan for forming a company and devise a method to be used in raising money for the project.

At this meeting Mr. Hodges, a citizen of Sweetwater, appeared before the executive committee and made a statement regarding the bridges over Cedar Creek and the Loup River. It seemed that the bridges were in very poor condition and would require piling and lumber to repair them and the people in the vicinity were not in a financial position to buy the material. A committee of five was appointed to raise the needed funds and the results of their efforts were explained at the following meeting held on April 9, when Mr. Andrews reported that the committee had obtained five piles from the B. & M. Railroad Company and had telegraphed the agent of the Union Pacific Company requesting a donation of five piles from them, and by circulating a subscription paper had secured from the citizens of Kearney cash subscriptions amounting to \$113.95 with which to purchase lumber.

On April 11, 1881, the Board of Trade met again and at this meeting J. J. Saville reported that the estimated cost of the canal was: Dam, \$1,000; excavation, \$14,448; flumes, \$3,000; bridges, \$1,500; survey and right-of-way, \$1,500, making a total cost of \$21,448.

At this meeting a committee was appointed consisting of Messrs. Calkins, Savidge and Roe, which secured the co-operation of Mr. F. G. Hamer, with instructions to correspond with the Nebraska delegation in Congress, with the secretary of the interior and the law department at Washington and procure from them charter, department regulations and laws relating to subsidised railroads

and especially those relating to the St. Joe and Denver and the obligation of that company to build their road to Kearney.

This meeting was adjourned to meet Thursday evening, April 14, 1881, when the canal subject would again be discussed. Of this meeting there are no records, neither of any subsequent meetings. However the Board of Trade remained in existence for some time after this date and was directly responsible for the initial work on the Kearney Canal.

Several years passed by before another organization of this nature was perfected in the city. On March 21, 1887, the second Kearney Board of Trade was launched with the following officers: President, C. B. Finch; first vice president, Homer J. Allen; second vice president, F. J. Switz; treasurer, E. C. Calkins; secretary, K. O. Holmes. This organization was perfected in the third story of the Buffalo County Bank Building, now known as the Porterfield Building. Afterwards rooms were taken in B. D. Smith's office in a building near where V. C. Chase's store now stands.

The records and minutes of this organization have been destroyed and the actual progress of the association as revealed by substantial records is not known. Several members of this organization are still in Kearney and many of these will be found among our leading merchants. Upon their recollection and upon the newspaper files of that epoch I must rely for data of its activities.

At that time Kearney was in a transitory period. She was expanding very rapidly and growing from a small town of the plains into a city of business and a mart of trade. Eastern capital was flowing into the town in large quantity and expansion was the watchword. Business became rushing, money was easy and the spirit of enterprise filled the air. With these conditions it was natural that the newly organized Board of Trade found much to do. The business men represented on its directorate worked until the early hours of the morning planning new methods to attract capital and to advertise Kearney. There was no lack of funds flowing into the treasury and with these, alluring literature telling of "Kearney's Gait" was prepared and mailed broadcast over the land. Committees were appointed to follow up every tangible prospect and money was spent freely but judiciously in interesting such prospects.

This organization during 1887 and 1888, under the leadership of C. B. Finch and K. O. Holmes accomplished much good and was instrumental in securing many enterprises for the city. At that time Mr. Finch was mayor of the city and much of the success of the Board of Trade was due to the harmony that existed between it and the city council.

During the summer of 1888 many real estate promoters from the east formed a combination in Kearney and in March, 1889, secured control of the organization when a reorganization was effected under the name of the Kearney Chamber of Commerce. The officers elected were: President, O. S. Marden; first vice president, George W. Frank; second vice president, Homer J. Allen; treasurer, E. M. Judd; secretary, K. O. Holmes. The membership of the new organization was 108 and the meetings were held in room 11 of the old Midway Hotel.

By this time Kearney had developed a portentous boom and the men at the head of the Chamber of Commerce were directly interested in the boom, consequently the efforts of the association were directed to that end. The cotton mill

was built, factories of various kinds and on an elaborate scale were secured, subsidised and built, street railways were constructed, steam railroads were projected and bonds voted to assist them in building. Men of affairs had wonderful visions; they saw Kearney a second Chicago, the big city of Nebraska. Times were feverish. The people became aquiver with expectation, a wonderful city was in the making and then the crash came. The Chamber of Commerce was forgotten, its officers moved to other parts and at last the organization passed into history. Later on an effort was made to resuscitate the association, but the move failed and it went the way of the boom.

The present Commercial Club was organized during 1907, but the first minutes of its meetings now available are dated March 3, 1908. At this meeting Mr. Henry Gibbons served as chairman and W. W. Barney was elected temporary secretary.

The organization of this Commercial Club, like the inception of the others, was demanded through an exigency arising that effected the people of Kearney. The first club was organized to build the Kearney Canal and thus furnish Kearney with a water supply, the second club was an outgrowth of a necessity that furnished a medium through which the boosting of the city could better be accomplished, while the organization of this present association was demanded to furnish a co-operation of the business men in a struggle to secure just and equitable freight rates into and out of the city.

Mr. J. W. Patterson was elected its first president and Mr. J. G. Lowe was chosen secretary of the newly organized club. During the succeeding years the following men have served as president and secretary:

1908—J. W. Patterson; J. G. Lowe.

1909—J. W. Patterson; W. F. Bailey.

1910—W. H. Roe; W. F. Bailey.

1911—C. W. Kibler; C. E. Oehler.

1912—Warren Pratt; C. E. Oehler.

1913—J. W. Patterson; W. F. Bailey.

1914—J. W. Patterson; F. W. Brown, H. B. Watson.

1915—A. C. Killian; H. B. Watson.

1916—C. B. Manuel (elected); H. B. Watson.

During these years the club has been actively engaged in the fight for better freight rates for the city. It launched the Buffalo County Fair, it has consistently advocated better roads, it has promoted street paving, and during the last three years its scope of action has broadened until it has developed into the community forum. Every question effecting the city and its environs is brought to the club for discussion. Its attitude on public questions is eagerly sought.

For several years the club has maintained a Monday noon lunch for its members, which service has become very popular. The meeting of its board of directors is held weekly, directly after the Monday lunch.

The original board of directors was composed of fifteen members. This number was soon increased to twenty-five and at the annual election of 1916 was raised to fifty. This allows a large percentage of the membership a voice in the weekly deliberations of the directors and creates added interest in the activities of the club.

The club's activities are rapidly multiplying and instead of being an organization working alone for the interest of the merchants it is striving to become a community builder, a city builder, where the farmer, the city dweller and the business man can meet on mutual footing and work harmoniously for the advancement of the entire community.

KEARNEY AERIE NO. 1489, F. O. E.

Kearney Aerie No. 1489, F. O. E., meets every Wednesday at Eagles Hall. Its officers in 1914 were: A. M. Franks, president; Joseph Kauer, secretary; J. F. Ackerman, treasurer.

LOYAL LODGE NO. 14, K. OF P.

Loyal Lodge No. 14, K. of P., history seems to disclose, was the first fraternal lodge instituted in Kearney, in the winter of 1872-73.

Its officers in 1914 were: G. E. Haase, C. C.; M. A. Moody, V. C.; E. P. Hamilton, P.; P. T. Lambert, M. of W.; C. D. Ayers, M. of E. and K. of R. and S.; W. H. Bettinger, M. of F.; A. P. Paulson, M. of A.

FORMAN LODGE NO. 12, A. O. U. W.

Forman Lodge No. 12, A. O. U. W., was organized August 13, 1883, with a charter membership of twenty-five. Officers: Byron D. Smith, P. W. M.; J. A. Regnell, M. W.; W. H. Hurst, foreman; W. M. Knutzen, overseer; S. M. Nevius, Rec.; H. Fred Wiley, Fin.; J. C. Philbrick, Treas.; P. Lindgren, guide; G. A. Olson, I. W.

In the year 1915 the lodge had 350 members. Officers: C. E. Bloomfield, P. W. M.; T. A. Pickrell, M. W.; C. Lancaster, foreman; E. A. Miller, Fin.; John Frasier, overseer; E. F. Winn, Rec.; A. T. Olson, Treas.; George Clark, guide; A. M. Sherman, inside watch.

KEARNEY LODGE NO. 43, DEGREE OF HONOR, A. O. U. W.

Kearney Lodge No. 43, Degree of Honor, A. O. U. W., was instituted March 16, 1893, with a charter membership of sixty-eight. The names of its first officers could not be obtained.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of 103. Its officers were: Ella Killgore, P. C. of H.; Maggie Dority, C. of H.; Lena Olson, L. of H.; Carrie Richard, C. of C.; Mary LaCornn, R'dr.; Ida Haynes, Fin.; Emma M. Hibberd, Rec.; Phoebe Lancaster, usher; the minor officers being Fern Lancaster, Ada Holmes, Nellie Fenton, Lucy Hall, Etta Temple, Rilla Flannery, Elsie LaCornn.

HOPE CAMP NO. 316, M. W. A.

Hope Camp No. 316, M. W. A., was instituted at Kearney in April, 1887, with seventy-six charter members. Its first officers were: W. A. Howard, V. C.;

J. R. Churchill, W. A.; C. H. Henderson, clerk; Ira Johnson, banker; C. A. Bartz, escort; C. O. Jackson, W.; W. Wilson, S.; A. L. Fitch, B. F. East and W. C. Holdem, board of managers.

In the year 1915 the camp had 220 members. Its officers: J. A. Allhands, V. C.; Roy Jacobs, W. A.; Charles Shahan, banker; G. E. Haase, clerk; T. A. Tollefson, escort; John Mannins, W.; C. Knorig, S.; T. J. Scott, William Lantz, James Cleary, trustees.

KEARNEY COUNCIL NO. 12, LOYAL MYSTIC LEGION

Kearney Council No. 12, Loyal Mystic Legion, is located at Kearney. Its officers, elected for the year 1916, are: Rachel Jenkins, W. C.; Olive R. Springer, W. V. C.; H. T. Clark, secretary; J. N. Jenkins, W. P.; F. E. Hutchinson, W. P. C.; Dr. M. A. Hoover, J. N. Jenkins, P. E. Hutchinson, trustees.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

St. James Council No. 1728, Knights of Columbus, was organized with a charter membership of ninety, April 21, 1914. The first officers: Dr. E. A. Watson, G. K.; Prof. B. H. Patterson, R. S.

The object of the order as stated: "To perpetuate and keep alive the memory of Columbus by fitting and appropriate ceremonies on October 12th of each year."

Membership, 1915, 120. Officers: R. B. Daugherty, G. K.; A. H. Berbig, F. S.

TRIBE OF BEN HUR

Kearney Court No. 108, Tribe of Ben Hur, was instituted September 16, 1903, with a charter membership of thirty-five, the officers being: Dr. M. A. Hoover, chief; E. A. Miller, scribe.

In the year 1915 the membership was ninety-five. The officers: E. E. Gardner, chief; Laura M. Berbig, scribe.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF KEARNEY, NEB.

John N. Dryden

The first official reference to this church is contained in the report of A. G. White, presiding elder of the Omaha District, made at the annual session of the Nebraska Conference, held at Plattsmouth, April 18, 1873. The Nebraska Conference then comprised the entire state. Kearney Junction Circuit was at that time a part of the Grand Island Mission. The report referred to contains the following:

"The Grand Island Mission was an extensive field, requiring the labor of two men. Brother J. S. Smith, the pastor, preferred to confine his operations to the east part of the work, and he consented voluntarily to divide the missionary appropriation with another man, if he would take charge of the western part of

the circuit. I therefore employed Rev. William Morse, a supernumerary of Wisconsin Conference, appointed him to the western portion, and called it Kearney Junction Circuit. Brother Morse has labored very efficiently, and reports a large increase of membership."

This indicates that the work at this point began after the preceding annual conference, which met at Nebraska City on the 20th of March, 1872, at which conference the records disclose that J. S. Smith was appointed to Grand Island. The membership at Kearney at the end of Reverend Morse's first year was forty-five. At the Plattsmouth conference, of 1873 the Kearney District was formed, with A. G. White presiding elder. The report of the elder for the succeeding conference year, from 1873 to 1874 (the time of holding the conference had in the meantime been changed, and that of 1874 was held October 1st of that year, making an interim of eighteen months between the conferences of 1873 and 1874) states:

"Kearney Circuit in Buffalo County was left to be supplied, and Rev. D. A. Crowell, a supernumerary of Erie Conference, was appointed pastor. The success of his labor is evidence that he is a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. A neat church has been built, 30 by 50 feet in size, with a projecting tower and bell, at a cost of \$4,000, and the membership has been increased by the addition of nearly 100."

In the report of the district superintendents at the conference of 1875, held at Lincoln September 15th, the outlook at Kearney was discouraging. The record says:

"When the church at Kearney was dedicated last year, pledges were taken sufficient to cover the indebtedness, but the grasshopper plague swept away the resources of the people and they were unable to meet their obligations. The indebtedness amounted to \$1,246, and an execution was issued for the sale of the premises. We obtained half this amount in the East, including \$300 from the Board of Church Extension, and the whole debt was paid."

The charge at the conference of 1874 was left to be supplied, and Rev. William Morse was appointed to the place.

The local history of the church differs somewhat from that reflected by the official records above. The manuscript, written probably in 1874, by the minister in charge, is as follows:

"The territory now included in Kearney Circuit has been mostly settled in the last three years. The first religious organization made took place at Gibbon in October, 1871. Rev. A. G. White, presiding elder of Omaha District, preached in La Barre Hall on that occasion and organized a class of twelve persons and appointed Brother Aaron Ward leader. Two days later Brother White visited the family of Judge A. Collins, living at what has since become Kearney Junction. Notice was immediately circulated among the few settlers of the vicinity that religious service would be held in the house of Judge Collins. In the evening a congregation of thirty persons was assembled in the parlor, and Brother White preached to them, and Brother Collins assisted in the service. A class was then organized, composed of Asbury Collins, Louisa E. Collins, H. E. A. Sydenham (wife of Moses H. Sydenham), Alfred M. Gay and Hannah Jay. A. Collins was appointed leader. Brother Collins is a local elder, formerly a member of

Iowa Conference, but disabled by protracted sickness and compelled to desist from public speaking on account of ill health. But his efficient co-operation both here and elsewhere has contributed largely to the prosperity of the church.

"These classes were then attached to Grand Island Circuit, and Rev. M. A. Fairchild, the preacher in charge, was instructed to give them preaching and pastoral care as he had opportunity. At a quarterly conference held at Wood River Station, on the Union Pacific Railroad, December 31, 1871, a board of trustees was appointed for Kearney Junction, composed of A. Collins, A. M. Gay and H. E. A. Sydenham. In February, 1872, Judge Collins organized a Methodist Episcopal Sunday school at Kearney Junction and held it in his own parlor.

"At the annual conference held at Nebraska City, March 20, 1872, this part of the work was retained with and formed part of the Grand Island Circuit. But the demands for ministerial labor were so great that the pastor could not supply them, and the presiding elder, by the request of the people and the consent of the pastor at Grand Island, divided the work June 15, 1872, and called the western part Kearney Junction Circuit and appointed Rev. William Morse pastor. The new circuit included at this time forty-five members, divided into three classes, and located respectively at Wood River, Gibbon and Kearney Junction. Also a Sabbath school at the latter place. Brother Morse labored faithfully the remainder of the year and enjoyed some prosperity. And at the close of the conference year, April 18, 1873, he reported a membership of seventy-five. At this conference the charge was renamed Kearney Circuit, and left to be supplied, and Rev. D. Allen Crowell, a supernumerary of Erie Conference, was appointed pastor.

"During the conference year just closed (1874), covering a period of nearly eighteen months" (owing to the change of time of holding the sessions of the annual conference from April to October), "this charge has enjoyed some prosperity. The membership, including probationers, has increased during the year from 75 to 157, and owing to the increase of population and the growth of the church, the number of preaching places have increased from three to six. At Kearney a neat church has been built, 30 by 50 feet in size, with a protecting tower and bell, at a cost of nearly \$4,000. At the conference held in Omaha October 1, 1874, the charge was again divided, Gibbon and Erie being set off, and Kearney Circuit was left to be supplied."

If the local record is correct, the first trustees were A. Collins, A. M. Gay and H. E. A. Sydenham; the charter members, Asbury Collins, Louisa E. Collins, H. E. A. Sydenham, Alfred M. Gay and Hannah Jay. The only surviving member of the original charter members is Mrs. Louisa E. Collins, widow of Rev. Asbury Collins, deceased, who still resides in Kearney. In 1877 the church was moved from its original location to its present situation on the corner of Twenty-second Street and Avenue A. It was enlarged during the pastorate of D. K. Tindall in 1887, and further additions were made during the pastorate of David D. Forsyth in 1898, and the present beautiful structure, costing \$40,000, finished in 1908.

Official records give as the ministers who have served this church: Rev. William Morse, 1872-73; Rev. D. A. Crowell, 1873-74; Rev. William Morse,

1874-75; Rev. E. J. Willis, 1875-76; Rev. C. G. Lathrop, 1876-77; Rev. J. C. Armstrong, 1877-78; Rev. J. M. Richards, 1878-79; Rev. Joseph Gray, 1879-80; Rev. Z. S. Rhone, 1880-81; Rev. A. H. Summers, 1881-83; Rev. G. W. Martin, 1883-84; Rev. W. C. Wilson, 1884-86; Rev. D. K. Tindall, 1886-89; Rev. G. L. Haight, 1889-90; Rev. D. C. Ridgway, 1890-92; Rev. R. D. Black, 1892-94; Rev. C. A. Mastin, 1894-95; Rev. B. W. Marsh, 1895-98; Rev. D. D. Forsyth, 1898-1901; Rev. C. A. Mastin, 1901-05; Rev. G. W. Abbott, 1905-09; Rev. R. P. Hammons, 1909-12; Rev. R. H. Thompson, 1912-15; Rev. E. M. Furman, 1915-.

Local historians, in giving the roster of ministers, give the name of Rev. Asbury Collins as the pastor from March, 1871, to October, 1871, and Rev. M. A. Fairchild, 1871-72, and Mrs. Louisa E. Collins corroborates this version of the history. But the conference records as printed, and now existing in the archives of the conference, give the record as hereinbefore stated.

The first presiding elder, Rev. A. G. White, must have been a man of strong character, and was sustained in his discouraging efforts by a fine sense of humor. In speaking of the experience of one of his ministers, he says:

"He expected but little from the people in the way of salary, and he has not been disappointed."

His judgment as to the outcome of the territory in which he worked was prophetic. In his report for 1874 he says, referring to his district:

"The climate is salubrious, the soil unsurpassed in fertility. The people are intelligent and enterprising, but generally poor. Here are the elements of great physical and spiritual prosperity, to be realized in the near future."

And in his report for the preceding year he said:

"Nebraska is becoming known in the distance. We number among our thriving citizens representatives from every state in the Union, and from nearly every nation on earth. Doubts no longer exist as to the richness of the soil, the healthfulness of the climate and the prominence of the state in the near future. There is more gold in Nebraska than in Colorado, more fortunes to be made on these fertile plains than can be found in the mines of the mountains. Industry and enterprise and capital and intelligence are flowing in upon us, and these elements of power must be met by the leaven of the gospel, and won for Christ."

The church suffered, together with every other enterprise, by reason of the grasshoppers. Mr. White, in his report in 1875, says:

"One year ago Kearney District was financially prostrate, for the destruction that wasteth at noonday had come upon the whole land in the shape of prairie locusts. Crops were consumed and people left destitute and helpless. They could not carry forward their church enterprises, or support preachers, or even obtain for themselves the necessities of life."

This man in 1875 collected for the families of his preachers \$2,850 in cash, and \$10,460 in other supplies.

The history of the Kearney Church would not be complete without special reference to its one surviving charter member, Mrs. Louisa E. Collins, and her estimable husband, Rev. Asbury Collins. They together wrought largely and most successfully in developing and building up the great commonwealth of Western Nebraska, and built churches at many different points. Mrs. Collins



Episcopal Church



Catholic Church



First Christian Church



New Methodist Episcopal Church



First Baptist Church

A GROUP OF KEARNEY CHURCHES

organized the work of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, and was its president for many years. The first Sunday school was organized in the parlor of the Collins home, and the scholars came from a distance of many miles, and were always welcomed when it must have caused great inconvenience to the home-keeper. She is still spared and mingles with a host of appreciative friends, new and old. Her latest act of devotion to the church for which she has given her life was the conveyance of her home to the Preachers' Aid Society of the West Nebraska Conference, to be used as a home for the ministers and their families after their retirement, and at the death of the donor.

The membership of the church at this time, January 1, 1916, is 650. Membership of Sunday school, 400. Officers: District superintendent, George W. Isham, D. D.; minister, Edgar M. Furman, D. D.; superintendent Sunday school, George Burgert; trustee Nebraska Wesleyan University, John N. Dryden; trustees, Dan Morris, N. P. McDonald, C. J. Burke, A. G. Bower, B. F. Rogers, W. F. Crossley, W. L. Stickel, I. F. Henline and G. S. Dick. One of the most active members in recent years, and especially during the period of the construction of the new church, was the late Walter W. Barney, whose strong constructive influence upon this church will be felt for many years to come.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Congregational Church at Kearney was organized about January 8, 1873; Rev. Libbins B. Fifield its first pastor.

Writing as to the organization of the church, F. G. Keens states it is from memory and adds: "But there were additional members present at the organization whose names I do not recall." Mr. Keens gives as the charter members: Jennie Grant, Ella J. Grant, William H. Green, Douglas Westervelt, David B. Clark, Francis G. Keens and Mrs. L. B. Fifield. The approximate cost of the church building is given as \$8,000. In 1915 the church had a membership of fifty, the pastor, Rev. Wm. Spire.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The First Presbyterian Church of Kearney was organized in the year 1873. Of the organization, L. B. Cunningham, a charter member, writes as follows: "About March 7, 1873, the synodical missionary, with Rev. Nahum Gould, organized the First Presbyterian Church of Kearney in the Times Building, with a membership of eight beside the minister: Dr. J. T. Brown, Roswell D. Gould, Mrs. Anna Smith, Edward M. Lord, Mrs. George E. Smith, Emma Greenman, Mrs. C. S. Greenman, and L. B. Cunningham. Roswell D. Gould and Dr. J. T. Brown were elected elders. The first pastor was Rev. Nahum Gould.

The present (1915) church building was erected at a cost of approximately \$12,000. The present pastor, Rev. John E. Spencer. The present membership, 320.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The First Christian Church of Kearney was organized in October, 1874, this also being the organization of the first church of the Christian denomination

in the county. The charter members were: Robert Haines and wife, Emma I, E. A. Hartman and wife, Sarah, J. M. Thomas and wife, Eunice, and George Hoge and wife, Sarah Ann. At the date of the organization the charter members were living on homestead claims in Center Township. The first pastor was Evan A. Hartman.

In the year 1912 a church building was erected in Kearney at a cost of \$27,500.

In 1915 the membership of the church was 295; its pastor, Manson E. Miller.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ZION'S CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Zion's Church was organized at Kearney, September 14, 1914; the charter members: Herm Petersen, Otto Wiednanders, H. A. Meyer, W. Baumann, R. Nuttleman, H. M. Kanzler, George Bautel. The first pastor was Rev. A. C. Baumann. In the fall of 1914 a church building was provided at an approximate cost of \$3,000. In 1915 the church had a membership of 130; its pastor, Rev. W. Jiede.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Roman Catholic Church was organized at Kearney in 1885. A fine church building has been erected; also in the year 1915 there was completed a beautiful, substantial building for the use of the parochial school.

This church, in the year 1914, was reported to have a membership of 800. Bishop of the diocese, Rt. Rev. James A. Duffy. Rector, Henry Muenstermann.

FIRST UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

The First United Brethren Church was organized, at Kearney, November 5, 1887; the first pastor, Rev. C. M. Brooke. Charter members: Mr. and Mrs. F. F. Scott, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Hartman, Mr. and Mrs. Perry E. Moler, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Iddings, Mr. and Mrs. George W. Snyder, Mrs. Abbie George, Mrs. Minnie Snyder, Mrs. Rosana White, Mrs. Elizabeth Channell, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Graham, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Moler, Mrs. Eliza Smith, Mrs. Matilda Campbell, Mrs. Mary A. Webert, Thomas Scott, Mrs. Mary Brice, Mrs. Matilda Wire, Mrs. Lou Koogler, Mr. and Mrs. Harper Campbell.

The approximate cost of the church building as dedicated in 1896, was \$13,000. In 1915 the church had a membership of 136; the pastor, Rev. A. P. Vannice. Of the history of this church Rev. Mr. Vannice writes:

"The beginning of the work of the United Brethren Church in Kearney dates back to July 12, 1871, at which time Rev. D. K. Flickinger, missionary secretary of the United Brethren Church, preached in the home of Rev. Asbury Collins, who lived then at the four corners just west of the present site of the city. This is supposed to have been the first sermon ever preached in Kearney. No effort was made at that time to continue the work. Sometime in the year 1886, Rev. J. J. Smith came to Kearney with the purpose of organizing a church, but only remained a short time. He was followed in the fall of the same year by Rev. C. M. Brooke, who effected the first organization. He rented what is now a part

of the present United Brethren Church, of the Swedish-Lutheran brethren and there held services. Articles of incorporation were filed November 5, 1887, with J. M. Eads, a presiding elder, and the following persons as trustees: F. F. Scott, Wm. Bankson, S. S. Hartman, Wm. Moler, J. P. Hartman, Sr."

Rev. H. W. Trueblood took charge of the work under the auspices of the missionary board of the United Brethren Church, October 20, 1890. He purchased and dedicated a small chapel located at the corner of Twenty-fifth and D Avenue. In 1896, under the pastorate of Rev. H. H. Spracklen, the present (1915) site was purchased and with the addition to the original building was dedicated October 4, 1896.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

The First Baptist Church of Kearney was organized in the year 1874, with the following charter members: Mrs. E. Carey, C. B. Carey, Mrs. Anna Carey, Mrs. Ellen Sizer, Mrs. Emily Aitken, Mrs. Mary Keys, Mrs. Opie Poland and Mr. Poland. The first pastor was Rev. O. A. Buzzell. In 1890 a church building was erected at an approximate cost of \$25,000. In 1915 the church had a membership of 175. Its pastor, Rev. H. J. Walker. The Sunday School had an enrollment of 150; Carl G. Sward, superintendent; Miss Alice James, secretary.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST

A history of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, at Kearney, as related, may be said to date from the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bunnell in the late '80s. They were practitioners who had just completed a course of study with the discoverer and founder of the movement in Boston.

Mrs. Bunnell gave the first treatment and Mrs. W. S. Freeman received the treatment. As related, it was found helpful and profitable for the beneficiaries of this science to meet together for study and mutual interchange of helpful thoughts and accordingly a church was organized in 1890 and incorporated in 1891.

Ezra M. Buswell of Beatrice, Nebraska, taught the first class in Kearney in Christian Science healing, and was prominent in the affairs of the church. The following members were among the most active during the early years of the church when founded in Buffalo county: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bunnell, Mr. and Mrs. S. S. St. John, H. A. Kennedy, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. McDonald, Mrs. Mary W. Haynes, Mrs. Sarah E. Bennie, Miss Della McDonald, John H. Roe, Miss Jennie Pearson, Mr. and Mrs. S. T. Adams, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Benedict, Miss Lettie Overmise, E. J. Woolworth, Mr. and Mrs. F. Armstrong, Mr. and Mrs. D. N. Wells, Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Freeman, Mrs. Eliza Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wilson, Mrs. Nenta L. Maddox, Mrs. Harriet McClintock, Mrs. Estella I. Ayres, Miss Ella Mae Smith.

In 1915 the church owned a fine building site at the corner of First Avenue and Twenty-third Street worth approximately \$6,000 and clear of incumbrance and on which the church planned to erect a church building which would be a credit to the cause and the community.

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Kearney, organized in 1892, Rev. R. D. Oliver, D. D., its first pastor.

At an approximate cost of forty thousand dollars a fine church building has been erected. In the year 1915, the membership of the church was two hundred (200); the pastor on that date, Rev. George G. Ware, archdeacon.

ST. GEORGE SYRIAN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

The St. George Syrian Greek Church was organized at Kearney, June 3, 1903, Rev. Nicola E. Yanney its first pastor.

The church building erected cost approximately two thousand dollars.

In the year 1915 the church had a membership of 180. Of this church its present pastor, Rev. Nicola E. Yanney, writes: "It is the second oldest church of its kind in the American hemisphere—second to that of New York City. The only church (of its kind) west of the Missouri River. A bishop, located in New York City, superintends the affairs of the church and the forty others of its kind in the United States."

GRACE UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The Grace United Evangelical Church at Kearney was instituted March 9, 1893, Rev. L. G. Brooker its first pastor.

The church building erected cost approximately five thousand dollars.

In 1915 the church had a membership of 165.

Rev. B. Hillier, its pastor at that date writes, "The church has a splendid opportunity for service, and is filling a real need in the community. We have in the Sunday school an average attendance of 150, and a splendid bunch of young people."

WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

An organization of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was instituted in Kearney in 1878, through the efforts of Mrs. Louisa E. Collins. In the year 1915 the union had twenty members, its officers: Mrs. S. S. O'Brien, president; Mrs. Irene Merriott, vice president; Mrs. Nellie Treadway, secretary; Mrs. H. C. Holt, treasurer.

Mrs. S. S. O'Brien writes that the W. C. T. U. Hospital or the Mother Hull Hospital as it was also called, was established about the year 1885 by Mrs. Nancy Hull, who served as president until her death in 1911.

FIRST SCHOOL IN KEARNEY

By Helen H. Hartzell, Student at State Normal School

When Kearney was first settled very few settlers brought their families with them, so few in fact that one woman, living here today, tells that when she walked



(Photo taken in 1910)

FIRST SCHOOL BUILDING ERECTED IN DISTRICT NUMBER 7, KEARNEY, IN 1873

First County Teachers' Institute held here November 25, 1875



STORE BUILDING OF R. R. GREER ERECTED AT KEARNEY IN 1873

down the road early in 1870, a gang of men working on the road laid down their tools and watched her out of sight; but by the winter of 1872, there were at least twenty children of various sizes and ages.

The only building to be found suitable for school purposes was one occupied as a printing office—the Kearney Times—used by L. B. Cunningham, editor, now of Glenwood, Iowa. This building was located on Smith Avenue, now called Twenty-fourth Street and about Sixth Avenue; this building was the farthest one to the west, the town stretching eastward.

The printing office with all its machinery and noise and bustle, was upstairs, the school in the lower room. There was but one desk, loaned to the school by Mr. Cunningham; the pupils sat on long benches or rather planks laid on boxes; there were no blackboards, shingles were used instead. As for books, each pupil brought such text-books as their family possessed; Miss Fannie Nevius was teacher.

In 1873, a school building was built, its estimated cost being twenty-two hundred dollars. This building still stands on Twenty-third Street and Avenue A, now used as a rooming house. In this building were four rooms; (at that date there were four grades in the Kearney School) Oscar Hansen was principal and Miss Fannie Nevius the primary teacher, but Miss Nevius also taught algebra to half a dozen of the older pupils.

Later the Whittier School Building was erected at a cost of \$25,000.

One interesting bit of history in connection with the Times Building, is that not only was the first school organized and kept here, but also the first Presbyterian Church was organized in this building with only seven charter members.

(Note—It is worthy of mention that in the early history of Kearney, the Times Building served a most useful purpose in the educational and religious life of the town; a newspaper was published here, whose editor was a man of high ideals, earnestness of purpose, a desire to be useful in the world; here was organized and kept the first term of school; here was organized one of the first churches in the town; here were held religious services conducted by ministers of different denominations; here was organized and met a literary society, where were debated questions of public importance; the foundations here laid, the early influence here exerted, has been felt in the life of the city, has been for the best interests of the people of the city down to this day and generation and will continue for long years in the future.—Editor.)

THE KEARNEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

From the Silver Anniversary edition (1913) of The Kearney Daily Hub is taken the following well written and most valuable history of the public schools of the city:

Kearney may be justly proud of her educational advantages, for no city of its size in the entire state can boast of superior facilities for preparing the boys and girls for their life work. The system is thoroughly up-to-date in methods and equipment. It has commercial, domestic science and manual training courses as complete as any in the state—the first branch introduced last year and the second this year. It has a very large library, a fully equipped gymnasium, eight pianos,

and the entire school is accredited by the state university and the Central Association of Colleges and High Schools, and there is no school in the land but accepts Kearney High's credits. It has its own official publication in "The Echo," which is strictly a high school product ranking well with similar school papers, in fact there are none better or brighter. And there are other features creditable to the school too numerous to mention in an article of the limited scope of this one which tend to facilitate efforts along the lines of higher education. The handsome new building completed last year and dedicated last autumn signally enlarged the facilities for generally effective school work, and gave opportunity for the better equipment of boys and girls in the way of efficiency and practical work, upon leaving school.

A business undertaking of ponderous proportions is the management of the Kearney High School District which, since the establishment of the first school in the city, has grown from a very small beginning into an investment of \$205,850, including in its property list, besides its thorough equipment of all kinds, eight blocks of ground and seven fine buildings all constructed of brick and stone, and named as follows: Longfellow High School, Whittier, Emerson, Bryant, Hawthorne, Alcott, Kenwood; all but the latter named for the poets.

The sum of money required last year to carry on the work of this vast educational system was \$47,066.83. The number of pupils was 2,087, and teachers forty-four from superintendent down.

This splendid school system of Kearney is under the supervision of six members of the board of education as follows:

F. J. Everett, president.

Clyde W. Norton, vice president.

Dr. M. A. Hoover, secretary.

Messrs. J. A. Miller, Gilbert E. Haase, Fred A. Nye.

BEAUTIFUL ENVIRONMENTS

The beautiful surroundings of the different school buildings are an incentive to the student body to do the best and most thorough work, and instil a keener insight into the advantages of a good education. The school grounds have capacious campuses and all appliances for the enjoyment of outdoor sports during respites from study, with see-saws, swings, teeter-boards, turning poles, basket ball, football, all of which go to make school life enjoyable for the pupil.

It can be truthfully said that Kearney High is one of the best "balanced" schools in the country.

While no general system of study as laid out by educational publications is followed in the Kearney schools there is, however, a much closer supervision of teachers than is observed in most cities. The class room work is carefully planned and laid out in the office of the superintendent so that, practically, the same method and interpretation of the work is followed so perfectly in all the rooms of the grade schools that it has been said that the observer can visit the classes in one of the grade schools in one part of the city then go to another building and pick up the work just where he left it in the first school.

Six courses are followed in the high school—Latin, English, German, com-



LONGFELLOW AND WHITTIER SCHOOLS, KEARNEY



STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, KEARNEY

mercial, normal training and domestic science. The normal training course for teachers is said to be one of the best for the purpose intended of that of any high school in the state.

BY WAY OF REMINISCENCE

One of the first, if not the very first, buildings used for school purposes in the City of Kearney is the two-story frame building standing at the southwest corner of Twenty-fourth Street and A Avenue, owned by one of the Nyes and fitted up now for a boarding and rooming house. The construction of this building was commenced in 1872, and owing to a mistake in the location of the lot lines it stood in the middle of Twenty-fourth Street. There was strong opposition to the building's location there and at one time there were three petitions out to have the structure located elsewhere. Finally, but before the building was anywhere near completed it was decided to move it to what is now the northwest part of the city, and near the present sites of the Hamer and Keens residences. Shortly after the removal to that location the elements took a hand in the campaign and one night sent along a wind of such force that the structure was razed to the ground and scattered about the prairie. What fragments of the demolished building that were available were gathered up and a reconstruction of the building on its former site was begun. There it was built and there it stood until was discovered the error in the street lines when it was moved over on the lot where it now stands.

There was another frame structure used awhile as a school building which stood on the present site of the Whittier Building, formerly the high school building. This building was obliterated when plans had been laid for the construction of the Whittier School.

THE KEARNEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

By Mrs. Adah Basten (C. V. D.)

The Kearney Public Library was established in the summer of 1890. The first board appointed by the city council was: Dr. O. S. Marden, Ira D. Marston, Judge A. H. Connor, Rev. John Askin, Capt. Joseph Black, H. H. Seeley, Mrs. Nancy Hull, Mrs. Nora M. Jones and Mrs. Etta R. Holmes.

This board held its first meeting July 8, 1890. Judge Connor served as temporary chairman. Dr. John Askin was elected president, and Mrs. Holmes secretary. Mr. Marston drew up the rules and regulations: No. 2, provided that books should be drawn only on Tuesdays and Saturdays; the reading room to be open every day.

The purchasing committee, Doctor Marden, Mr. Marston and Mrs. Jones, bought the private circulating library of Wm. Skinner—1,400 volumes—with fixtures and list of publications. This purchase made it possible to open the library in the city hall with Mrs. Hadassah J. Seaman as librarian on September 1, 1890.

Judge Connor's place, at his death, was filled by the appointment of Mrs. B. S.

Smith, and that of Mrs. Nora M. Jones by Mr. Yost, who was succeeded by J. P. Johnson as a representative of the Fourth Ward.

The roster of the board of trustees for the ensuing twenty-five years includes well known names: Mrs. Holmes was trustee for nine years and acted as secretary for that time; this long service has not been exceeded except by Captain Black, who served nineteen years, 1890-1909, and by Mrs. Adah Basten, who was appointed in 1899 and is still (1916) a member of the board. In addition to those mentioned the following citizens have served as trustees: Rev. W. S. Barnes, Mrs. H. S. Robertson, George W. Frank, Jr., Marvin Trott, Wallace Bierce, Mary A. Squires, W. W. Barney, T. N. Hartzell, H. A. Webbert, John N. Dryden, Mrs. Hazelton, Miss M. I. Stewart, Rev. G. S. M. Montgomery, C. H. Gregg, Frank Varnes, E. Frank Brown, Mrs. V. E. Jakway, George Ray, W. S. Clapp, Mrs. C. V. D. Basten, Miss Blanche Finch, Mrs. J. F. Daniels, Carl O. Lund, Mrs. W. D. Oldham, Judge B. O. Hostetler, J. S. Adair, V. C. Chase, Jas. L. Tout, Rev. George Allen Beecher, Mrs. Walter Nye, Clarence A. Murch, A. O. Thomas, C. F. Bodinson, Dan Morris, Rev. M. McMinn, G. A. Burgert, H. N. Russell, Mrs. Henry C. Andrews, Mrs. T. J. Parish, W. A. Tarbell, Rev. M. L. Daly, Mrs. A. L. Bertig, Mrs. J. N. Dryden, George N. Porter, H. E. Bradford, Philip G. Snow, R. E. Cochran, N. P. McDonald, Mrs. F. F. Roby, John G. Lowe.

Mrs. Seaman was librarian for nine years. Miss Belle S. Earley succeeded her in October, 1899. The library was still in the city hall, occupying the former council chamber, a platform had been removed to increase floor-space, but the needs of the public were not adequately supplied by the meager facilities. Communication with Mr. Andrew Carnegie resulted in a gift of \$10,000, in January, 1903. The city council appointed a committee to decide on a site; this was not settled until June. The generosity of Mrs. Charles O. Norton, who gave a valuable lot on the corner of Twenty-first Street and First Avenue, finally decided the location. Its accessibility has made it a good location. The builders' and architects' bids were passed upon, the contract going to Knutzen and Isdell of Kearney and James Tyler and Son of Lincoln, on September 28, 1903. An additional gift of \$2,000 was asked from Mr. Carnegie, on the ground that the levy for library purposes would meet this requirement for maintenance. This request was graciously granted, and the library board were thus enabled to put the building into shape for occupancy. The books were removed from the city hall December 29, 1904, and the new building was ready for the public February 4, 1905.

1892		1915	
Number of books in circulation..	391	Number of books in circulation.	54,000
Number of books on shelves ..	2,000	Number of books on shelves...	10,800
Number of borrowers	1,263	Number of borrowers	4,427

The library has always been a depository for public documents, a highly valued asset.

In the twenty-five years of existence there have been four librarians: Mrs. Hadassah J. Seaman, 1890 to 1899; Miss Belle S. Earley, 1899 to 1904; Miss Mary Katherine Ray, 1904 to 1907; Mrs. Pauline Frank, 1907 to ——. These

women, alike competent, conscientious and ambitious for the success of the work, reflect credit upon the discrimination of the various boards of trustees who selected them to this responsible post. Mrs. Seaman, the first librarian, had the longest term of office.

From a published report of July 29, 1893, the following is quoted: "The affairs of the library and reading-room have been faithfully looked after by Mrs. Seaman, the librarian. Competent, attentive, and intelligent, with the experience of age and the instinct of a good mother, she is a wise advisor as to what our boys and girls should read." Mrs. Seaman went to Tulsa, Okla., in October, 1899, and died there May 30, 1911. Her interest in founding a library in her new home was recognized by a special memorial service to her at the laying of the cornerstone of a new Carnegie library in October, 1915. Her portrait will adorn its walls and a delivery desk, with her name carved above its panels will be placed there in her honor.

Mrs. Seaman was the wife of John D. Seaman, pioneer settlers in Crowellton Precinct (now Odessa), Buffalo County, in the year 1872.

Miss Belle S. Earley was born in Kennedy, N. Y.; she prepared for her work by a course in library science, then in its infancy, at Madison, Wis.; it was a sad circumstance that she did not live to see the new library building completed, but died after a short illness on the 29th of December, 1903.

An extract from the secretary's report at that time reads: "Everywhere were evidences of her busy hands, trying with the poor means at her disposal, to make her little domain come up to the ideal library which existed in her mind, planted there by instruction, study and an innate desire to do whatever she did well. She was away from her work one day less than a week, and was laid to her rest with tears and loving remembrances on the last day of the year 1903."

Miss Mary K. Ray was elected on April 18th, the post being filled in the interval by Miss Earley's sister, Mrs. Mary E. O'Brien.

Miss Ray attended a library summer school at Iowa City, Iowa, and assumed her duties on her return. She resigned May 6, 1907, to take a like position in the state library at Lincoln, Neb.

Mrs. Pauline Frank was elected to succeed Miss Ray and took up her work August 1, 1907. She was born in Madison, Wis., educated in a Chicago high school and in St. Xavier's, Chicago.

She has fitted herself for her work by numerous courses at library schools. It is owing to Mrs. Frank's genius for administration that the Kearney Public Library is one of the best in the state. It is third in point of distribution of books in the state: that is, it comes next to Omaha and Lincoln, though there are four other towns with greater population between Kearney and Lincoln. The board of trustees not infrequently receives letters asking for points in management as the "Kearney Library is known to be a model small library."

The activities of the library outside of the care and loaning of books are many. It is, in fact, in touch with whatever intellectual life there is in the city. It has study clubs, meetings in the reference room under the direction of the librarian, besides its relation to all the other clubs and schools. Mrs. Frank has also stimulated work in domestic science. A notable achievement was the observance of the Shakespeare tercentenary.

NINETEENTH CENTURY CLUB

Mrs. Etta R. Holmes (K. O.)

The history of Buffalo County would be incomplete without mention of the woman's "Nineteenth Century Club," of Kearney.

On June 15, 1888, Mrs. Elizabeth Lisle Saxon, vice president for Tennessee, of the National Suffrage Association, addressed the Clio Club of Kearney on "Equality of Women Before the Law." As a result of the lecture an organization was formed which was named, "The Nineteenth Century Club of Kearney."

The officers elected were: Mrs. F. G. Hamer, president; Mrs. F. Y. Robertson, vice president; Mrs. J. L. Tout, treasurer; Mrs. E. B. Jones, secretary.

The motto chosen was, "Interdependence not Independence," which certainly absolves the members from a militant suffrage policy.

The charter members were: Mesdames Rebecca Hamer, Eva Robertson, Martha Tout, Nora M. Jones, Amelia E. Pratt, Fanny M. Gilcrest, Etta R. Holmes, Mary C. Barnd, C. J. Raymond, S. M. P. Holmes. The last named three are deceased and five have moved from the city.

For twelve years this was a live culture club, limited to fifty members. In 1910 it was made a department club. The membership immediately doubled and the club joined the state federation and later the national federation. During all these years while annually pursuing a liberal course in study, the aim of the club has been service and a desire to assist in whatever tended toward an uplift in the community. The special days regularly observed are: Federation, Library, Civics and Education.

Mrs. A. O. Thomas, while acting as chairman of the educational committee of the state federation, became founder of educational day, which has since acquired state-wide observance.

Donations to the public library have included Poole's Index to Periodicals, several sets of fiction, juvenile works, and a valuable picture.

In educational work much more has been done than there is space to enumerate. Many lectures of great value have been secured from prominent educators. By special tax, a fund was raised to assist in sending a teacher for a much needed kindergarten in the South. The club once placed by special effort two efficient women on the school board. It worked and voted for a \$40,000 addition to the high school building; contributed \$25 to the Nebraska University scholarship fund, and to several other scholarship funds liberal contributions have been made from time to time. Two lectures on domestic science by Mrs. Harriet McMurphy have been supported by the club.

The following benefactions stand to their credit: A set of dining-room furniture to the City Hospital; \$200 in stock subscribed to the Chautauqua Association; \$5 monthly for one year to the Salvation Army rest room; \$5 monthly for one year to the Mother Hull Hospital; \$400 was given to the Community Club for boys and a committee from the club took active part in its management.

For several years the club has taken charge of the sale of Red Cross seals, and three public drinking fountains have been secured with a little addition from the club treasury.



MRS. REBECCA A. HAMER

Charter member and first president of the Nineteenth Century Club, organized at Kearney in 1888, the first woman's club organized in Buffalo County and among the first organized in the state.



(Photo taken in 1888)

MRS. JOHN H. HUGHES

The first school teacher in Ravenna



MISS MARY FRANCES NEVIUS

Taught the first term of school in Kearney, 1872

The club now numbers about eighty-seven members. It has three departments: Home Economics, Art and Literature, and History. The present (1915) officers are: Mrs. Emma Wort, president; Mrs. Nora L. Killian, vice president; Mrs. Alice Cavanee, recording secretary; Mrs. Huldah Saylor, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Elizabeth Troupe, treasurer; Mrs. Helen Dryden, historian.

Within a few weeks the Child's Conservation League has elected to join the club and this will greatly add to its strength and value to the public.

We have thus set forth the public work of the club and we may well add that it has all been done on the modest entrance fee of \$1 at first, increased later to \$1.50 and for the last two years to \$2.50 for admission and \$2 annually.

The subtle and more powerful influence on its members and their families cannot be estimated. One remarkable fact in the history of the club is the low death rate among its members. So far as I have knowledge of the hundreds who have been enrolled in the twenty-eight years, only eighteen have passed away, and two of these were octogenarians. Shall we not attribute the low per cent of death to intelligent, careful living and to the co-operative study and work which contribute to it?

The following have served as president of the club: Rebecca A. Hamer, three terms; S. M. P. Holmes, Eva R. Robertson, Etta R. Holmes, four terms; Mary W. Newman, Mary A. Ripley, Ida Brady, Margaret E. Fox, Helen H. Dryden, three terms; Cuddie L. Marston, Margaret B. Hostetler, two terms; Ethelwyn G. Brown, Mary T. W. Graves, Helen A. Packard, Ellamae C. Thomas, three terms; Cora D. Neale, Ella L. Bessie, two terms; Emma C. Wort, 1914-15.

The membership of the club for the year 1915 was as follows: Mrs. Mary Andrews (H. C.), Mrs. Anna Barney (W. W.), Mrs. Annie Bell (H. S.), Mrs. Laura Berbig (A. L.), Mrs. Elizabeth Barber (Emory), Mrs. Augusta Blanchard (J. S.), Mrs. Effie A. Boltin (A. H.), Mrs. Sarah Brindley, Mrs. Alice Beardsley (Chas.), Mrs. Darlen Burgert (G. H.), Mrs. Ella L. Bessie (C. D.), Mrs. Mabel Bower (A. G.), Mrs. Adah Basten (C. V. D.), Miss Anna Bishop, Miss Marie Berkman, Mrs. Alice M. Cavanee (J. N.), Mrs. Catherine Carrig (C. C.), Mrs. Irene Conklin (J. D.), Mrs. Susan A. Davies (C. K.), Mrs. Josephine Doherty (J. G.), Miss Katherine Dickerman, Mrs. Una Donnell (J. S.), Mrs. Helen Dryden (J. N.), Mrs. Mary F. Downing (W. F.), Mrs. Elliott (R. L.), Mrs. Viola Easterling (J. M.), Mrs. Elleen G. Fountain (L. D.), Mrs. Estelle Fowler (J. H.), Mrs. Pauline Frank (Agustus), Mrs. Rue Good (Chas.), Mrs. Winnie V. Giest (F. G.), Miss Sarah L. Garrett, Mrs. Flora Harrison, Mrs. Mary L. Haase (G. E.), Mrs. Mary E. Heasley (C. J.), Mrs. Lana H. Hecox (D. W.), Mrs. Bernice Hamer (T. F.), Mrs. Lavina Horn, Mrs. Grace Hardy (Ward), Mrs. Margaret Hostetler (B. O.), Mrs. Clarissa L. Huntley (F. C.), Mrs. Clara Hawthorne (J. D.), Mrs. Harriett Hendrys (L. D.), Mrs. Anna Hyatt (M.), Mrs. Etta R. Holmes (K. O.), Mrs. Etta K. Hallowell (F. M.), Mrs. Anna L. Halstead (George), Mrs. Nellie Henline (S. A. D.), Mrs. Leah Inks (Thos.), Mrs. Minnie A. Jones (H. N.), Mrs. Nora S. Killian (A. C.), Mrs. Minnie S. Keoppa (L. A.), Mrs. Elizabeth King (W. O.), Mrs. Gertrude Lambert (A. C.), Mrs. Phoebe J. Lancaster (Thos.), Mrs. Nellie Landis (S.), Mrs. Ella Lee (A. J.), Mrs. Clara E. Martin (L. D.), Mrs. Etta Manuel (C. B.), Mrs. Phoebe A. Miller (E. A.), Mrs. Alice Mocre (D. C.), Mrs. Anna Moore (C. H.), Mrs.

Ella M. Morris (Dan), Mrs. Helen Nye (F. A.), Mrs. Edith E. Ofil (A. V.), Mrs. Rebecca Ofil (M.), Mrs. Helen Packard (F. A.), Mrs. Henrietta Roby (F. F.), Mrs. Emma Robinson (F. L.), Mrs. Annie Scott (E. J.), Mrs. Anna Selleck (J. M.), Mrs. Ina Sammis (H. B.), Mrs. Grace Steadman (Jos.), Mrs. Irene Stuart, Mrs. Mattie Shafto (E.), Mrs. Louise Smith (L.), Mrs. Olive M. H. Strong (J. A.), Mrs. Frances Sumption (A. O.), Mrs. Esther Sward (C. G.), Mrs. Effie Sweeley (S. M.), Mrs. Huldah Saylor (J. C.), Mrs. Effie Sullivan (R.), Mrs. Maude Scoutt (W. J.), Mrs. Ruth Sowles (B. W.), Mrs. Sue G. Tarbell, Mrs. Louella Tolbert (L. W.), Mrs. Mary Tompkins (C. O.), Mrs. Sletta Turner (W. T.), Mrs. Elizabeth Trindle (J. F.), Mrs. Elizabeth Troupe (M. N.), Mrs. Hattie G. Webbert (H. A.), Mrs. Emma D. Whiteaker (G. W.), Mrs. Mary Whedon (F. L.), Mrs. Emma C. Wort (D.) and Mrs. Rosa Wilson (John).

THE KEARNEY POSTOFFICE

A postoffice was established at Kearney Junction February 9, 1872, with Rev. Asbury Collins as postmaster. It is understood the office was kept at first in the Junction House, located in the center of section No. 2. Later George E. Smith was appointed postmaster and moved the office to the business center of the city.

The silver anniversary edition of the Kearney Daily Hub, 1913, relates the following interesting account of those who have served as postmaster at Kearney following the term of George E. Smith:

"R. M. Grimes was appointed postmaster at Kearney by President Garfield, and that is as far back as this history need to go. Postmaster Grimes was removed by President Cleveland when the administration changed and J. C. Morgan was appointed, but was soon succeeded by E. R. Watson, who died while in office, and E. Fred Wiley was appointed during the latter part of Cleveland's administration, and was postmaster when the Hub was established twenty-five years ago.

"Rice H. Eaton, one of the founders of the Central Nebraska Press, which the Hub succeeded, and for a short time connected with the Hub after it succeeded the Press, was appointed postmaster soon after President Harrison was elected, and served four years.

"Four years later Cleveland again succeeded Harrison and J. C. Crocker was appointed, serving some months longer than his 4-year term because of delay in making an appointment after President McKinley was elected. His successor was Henry Gibbons, who served four years. Next in succession was K. O. Holmes, who also held the office during a 4-year term.

"M. A. Brown, the present incumbent, was appointed in January, 1906, and took possession of the office on February 19th following. The first appointment was made by President Roosevelt and the second by President Taft. The second term will expire on January 31, 1914.

"In 1888, when the Hub first did business with the postoffice, it was located on Central Avenue in what is now the Hazlett jewelry store. Soon after the appointment of Postmaster Eaton the office was removed to the Scott Block to



POSTOFFICE, KEARNEY



CITY HALL, KEARNEY

the room first occupied by the Hub, which was removed to another part of the block. The office remained in this small room until 1911, badly cramped for space, until removing to the new Federal Building in September, 1911."

Following M. A. Brown, C. C. Carrig was appointed postmaster by President Wilson in 1915. Phil Lambert served as deputy postmaster under M. A. Brown's administration, and was continuing to so serve in the year 1916, under Postmaster Carrig.

THE POSTOFFICE BUILDING AT KEARNEY

The following description of the postoffice building at Kearney is from the silver anniversary edition of the *Daily Hub*—1913:

"The finest postoffice building in any city of its class in the United States," is the general admission made by those who are informed, and so understood in the office of the supervising architect at Washington. The entire cost of the building and fixtures was approximately \$120,000. It is located at the corner of Central Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street, facing west, with a side entrance to the lock-box corridor on Twenty-fourth Street, facing south.

In general the style of the building is classic, with Corinthian details, although touches of Italian renaissance are discernible, especially on the interior, while many noticeable features of the American fireproof, steel-frame building were visible in the building in the course of its construction. The architect's drawings and plans were, indeed, intended to show a model office building of a new type which the supervising architect had in mind, and the Kearney building was one of the first and apparently is the best of this new type of building produced.

The building rests on foundations 93 feet long and 65 feet wide. Above ground, basement walls of New Hampshire granite blocks rise to 5 feet above the surface of the lawn, and above this the superstructure walls are of the best quality and a very beautiful tint of Bedford sandstone. The elevation from the basement to the roof is 52 feet, while the cornice extends 6 feet above the roof line, and the top of the flag-pole is 75 feet above the basement line.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR

Entering the lock-box corridor, entrance is through a commodious vestibule with revolving doors. Inside, you are confronted by the lock-box compartment, in bronze, with Yale and Towne locks. The postmaster's office is at the right. The surrounding woodwork is of quarter-sawed white oak. The walls are of solid white Vermont marble highly polished, and ceiling of the same in the lock-box corridor, making a very striking effect.

Turning to the left, there is a splendid view of the main corridor approached from the Central Avenue entrance, with wide, easy-rising granite steps. The vestibule here is very beautiful, and on either side are the writing desks topped with heavy plate glass. Facing this vestibule are the mailing openings, with the general delivery window at the farther end. On the angle at the left of the general delivery window are the stamp, registry, money order and postal savings windows.

The floor of the main rotunda and the lock-box corridor is composed of terrazza composed of white and sienna marble in cement, with pattern blocks of Tennessee marble interspersed. The walls and casings are all highly polished marble and the ceilings are a pure white stucco.

On this floor are a large, well lighted and perfectly ventilated workroom, the assistant and postmaster's room, and money order and postal savings clerk, in northwest corner; postmaster's room in southeast corner; ladies' toilet; and rear vestibule for forwarding and receiving mail.

The stairway is very beautiful, leading to the second story, which is allotted for office purposes. There are five of these rooms. The long corridor on this floor is chaste, simple and exquisite. Two toilet rooms are located in the northeast corner.

The basement is complete, with very large boiler room, janitor's storeroom, sitting room or waiting room for employes, and a capacious coal room. The steam plant is the best in the city. The building is lighted with electricity. Gas is used for emergency lighting and also for heating water in summer. Convenience and comfort are fully provided for.

Two employes have the entire care of the building. The postmaster is the custodian of the building.

Length of foundation, 93 feet.

Width of foundation, 65 feet.

Height of building, 58 feet.

Height of top of flag pole, 75 feet.

Number of rooms, exclusive of halls and lobby, seventeen.

Material of basement, New Hampshire granite.

Material of building, Bedford sandstone.

Material of floors, Terraza and Tennessee marble.

Material of walls of first floor, White Vermont granite.

Material of woodwork, quarter-sawed white oak.

Material of floors, maple.

FIRST FREE DELIVERY SERVICE

The first free delivery service was established in the early part of the term of Postmaster Eaton. There were four carriers, viz: Charles Mott, Alex Everson, Amos L. Graham and William Crawford. The first substitute carrier was E. S. Dorsey, who afterward became a carrier and died while in the service.

There are now five regular carriers where six could be used to advantage.

The work of the office now requires six clerks, as against four clerks eight years ago.

Rural free delivery has grown until there are six carriers, serving approximately one hundred families each.

The growth of the business has been steady but not phenomenal. Receipts in 1903 were \$10,214.34 annually. In 1913 they will be (estimated) \$23,000.

KEARNEY VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES

Dr. M. A. Hoover

In the year 1883, during Mayor Webb's administration, the Kearney Volunteer Fire Department was organized. On July 11, 1883, the Kearney Hook and Ladder Company was incorporated, and on November 7, 1883, was incorporated the Wide Awake Hose Company.

From this small beginning, over a third of a century ago, has developed the splendid organizations of today (1916) with their up-to-date equipments, second to none in the state under volunteer firemen.

Now, as at the time of its organization, it has the best young blood in the city in its ranks. Much property has been saved by its efficient work and deeds of valor beyond description have been performed.

This organization from its formation to the present time has had the support of the city officials, the moral, and frequently, the financial support of its citizens. Kearney is indeed proud of the records of her fire fighters.

BANKS.

The City National Bank was established in 1889 with a capital stock of \$100,000. Its first officers were F. G. Keens, president; J. S. Adair, cashier. Among the directors were J. S. Adair, W. R. Adair, H. C. Andrews, Henry Gibbons, K. O. Holmes.

Later the capital stock was reduced to \$50,000. In the year 1916 it had a capital stock of \$50,000; surplus, \$66,000; deposits \$1,100,000.

Its officers are: Dan Morris, president; George Burgert, vice president; C. W. Norton, cashier; F. W. Turner, assistant cashier; directors, K. O. Holmes, chairman; Dan Morris, George Burgert, C. W. Norton.

The Farmers Bank of Kearney was organized under the laws of Nebraska in 1890, with a capital stock of \$50,000, of which \$25,000 was paid in. Its officers were Lew Robertson, president; B. H. Goodell, vice president; James A. Boyd, cashier. In 1915 Mr. Boyd was still serving as cashier. In 1897 John G. Lowe succeeded to the presidency and W. O. King became vice president.

On its twenty-fifth anniversary, April 2, 1915, the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus, \$10,000; deposits, \$294,386.

The officers are: John G. Lowe, president; W. O. King, vice president; James A. Boyd, cashier; Leslie R. Prior, assistant cashier; directors, John G. Lowe, James A. Boyd, Wm. Schramm, W. O. King.

The Central National Bank of Kearney was organized in January, 1903, with a capital of \$50,000. The officers were W. T. Auld, president; A. U. Dann, cashier. In 1912 Mr. Dann retired and J. S. Donnell was elected cashier.

On May 1, 1915, the bank had a capital of \$50,000; surplus and profits, \$32,041; deposits, \$237,340. The officers were J. S. Donnell, president; D. T. McDonald, cashier; directors, John Lowenstien, W. L. Stickle, J. S. Donnell, D. T. McDonald. In the year 1912 the Central National Bank took over and absorbed the Commercial National Bank of Kearney. This latter bank was organized in 1897 with a capital of \$100,000. Its officers and directors were T. B. Garrison,

Sr., president; A. E. Waldron, vice president; R. D. Garrison, cashier; directors, R. F. Cruik, J. E. Lowenstien, J. F. Saup, D. Wort.

"The Commercial National Bank paid dollar for dollar and quit business with clean hands."

KEARNEY MILLING COMPANY

In the year 1886 a stock company was formed to erect a flouring mill at Kearney. James H. Davis was president of the company, and among the stockholders, as recalled from memory, were H. F. Flint, C. Putnam, W. C. Tillson, John J. Bartlett. C. Putnam superintended the erection of the mill, a sufficient guarantee that it was well built and all material and equipment first class and up-to-date for the times.

About the year 1898 Frank H. Roby purchased the property from the United States court, since which time the mill has several times been enlarged and made modern in every respect. When built the capacity of the mill was 150 barrels of flour per day. In 1915 the capacity was 500 barrels. Its grain storage capacity was 160,000 bushels and the approximate grain milled in the year 500,000 bushels.

The owner is Frank F. Roby.

THE KEARNEY ELECTRIC PLANT

The first plant of the Electric Company was constructed in 1887, in connection with the Kearney Canal, and was designed to use water from that canal for power purposes. The water wheels had a capacity of 366 horse power, and the electrical equipment consisted of a generator to develop current for arc lights to light the streets of Kearney, and a small direct-current generator for domestic lighting. This equipment was added to from time to time, and in 1894 additional water wheels, having approximately 800 horse power capacity, were installed. These wheels operated electrical generators to nearly their capacity, and the current was distributed about the city for light and power, as well as the operation of an electric street railway.

As the art of developing and transmitting electrical energy advanced all of the original equipment at the power house was abandoned and new machinery of the latest type replaced it. Before 1905 the character of the electrical equipment was twice changed, and the machinery then installed has again yielded to the advances made in constructing such apparatus, and now the equipment of the electric plant consists of the latest designed and most efficient water wheel generators ever produced, and a steam turbine of 2,000 horse power capacity, operating with quadruple steam expansion, condensing, furnishes a supplemental steam unit for use in case of emergency. This steam turbine generator set operates at 3,600 revolutions per minute. The boiler setting consists of three large Kewanee boilers, fire tube type, the boiler water being the condensed steam water, which is used over and over again, after first passing through feed-water heaters that bring the temperature to 204° before the water enters the boilers.

The water wheel generator equipment consists of a pair of Leffell wheels,

operating under a 56-foot head, having 1,350 horse power capacity, which are direct-connected to a general electric generator of 1,000 kilowatt capacity. The steam turbine set, and the water wheel generators can be operated either separately or together, and they develop an amount of electric energy largely in excess of the present requirements of the City of Kearney.

During the year 1916 the company will erect transmission lines to send electrical energy to the adjacent villages, and for use in the farming districts.

This property is owned by The Kearney Water & Electrical Powers Co., of which C. M. Scoult is president and Will J. Scoult secretary-treasurer.

(Note—Contributed by W. J. Scoult.)

THE KEARNEY GAS PLANT

In 1868 three brothers of the name of Maxwell, of Beatrice, Neb., erected a small gas plant and laid about four miles of gas mains.

This plant was operated in a small way and at a financial loss for many years, the plant changing hands a number of times, and the service was never very good.

In the year 1908 the Midway Gas Company acquired the property and entirely rebuilt it and extended the gas mains to all of the more densely populated districts of the city.

The plant now has complete duplicate settings, each with a capacity of approximately two million feet of gas per month, and a storage capacity of 75,000 cubic feet.

In 1915 there are thirteen miles of gas mains and nearly six hundred customers, and the yearly output of the company is about ten million cubic feet.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN BUFFALO COUNTY

Dr. M. A. Hoover

The records disclose that from 1875 to 1916, 115 doctors have registered in the county clerk's office. Of these twenty-six are dead.

As regards the class or school of medicine to which they belonged, the records disclose 26 as eclectic, 42 as regular, 6 as homeopathy, 8 as osteopath, 3 as midwives, 28 the school not given. Thirteen are now practicing in Kearney of the regular, homeopathy and eclectic, 4 osteopath, and 14 others in the county. Of the remaining 58, they are scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Canada to the gulf. There are no records available as to their present locations, and no way of finding out how many of these 58 have died since leaving the county.

The old doctors who served as pioneers and suffered the hardships and did the greater service to humanity are dead. All were great men in the upbuilding of the country. Drs. J. T. Brown, John C. Hull, Theo E. Webb, C. T. Dildine, Henry Baker, J. J. Saville, C. A. Jackson, M. Saville, E. Bodman, S. D. Steere, D. H. Hite, Josiah Slick and E. L. Smith in their day and generation were great men and endured physical suffering owing to the immense field covered by them. The storms of winter, hot blasts of summer, the wind and sand storms then prevalent, many times going from forty-eight to seventy-two hours without sleep,

very little to eat and drink, picking their way over the trackless prairie, for there were no roads, oftentimes lost for hours, exposed to all kinds of infections and contagions, very little to work with, entire families frequently living in sod houses with but one room, often as many as seven persons occupying this; no difference what the sickness or injury, these doctors had to and did meet the conditions and did noble work for humanity. All honor and praise be to each and all of these pioneer doctors.

DENTISTS

The records in the office of the county clerk disclose the registration of thirty-four dentists from 1887 to date (1916). Of this number seven are engaged in active practice in Kearney. These dentists are especially well qualified and equipped with up-to-date methods and instruments.

HOSPITALS

The Hospital Benefit Association at Kearney was incorporated October 24, 1902, the incorporators being A. J. Galentine, W. S. Clapp, H. A. Webbert, J. A. Boyd, J. S. Adair, F. F. Roby.

On March 9, 1912, through the efforts of Bishop Beecher, the hospital was taken over by the Episcopal Diocese, under the name of St. Luke's Hospital, the incorporators being Bishop G. A. Beecher, F. J. Everson, E. C. Calkins, since which time it has been in active operation, is fully modern in all its departments and is entitled to all the patronage tributary to it.

The W. C. T. U. or "Mother Hull" Hospital at Kearney was incorporated April 5, 1889, with Mrs. Nancy Hull as president. The board of trustees: Mrs. Mary C. Barnd, Mrs. Helen H. Dryden, Mrs. Nancy Hull. Mrs. L. M. Parish secretary.

This institution was doing good work long before the date of incorporation under the name of the W. C. T. U. The good it has done can not be measured by dollars and cents. It was an institution that admitted any and all, with or without price, and were given every care at the command of those in authority. Their spiritual illness was looked after as well as their physical. It is supported by charity or donations, and by what money the inmates are able to pay.

The names of this band of noble women will be remembered as long as the history of Nebraska endures, for their work was of and for love of humanity.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN KEARNEY

Recognizing the great services to humanity by members of the medical profession, an attempt was made to have prepared for this history a history of the medical profession in Buffalo County, but the brief period of time at disposal in the gathering, compiling and preparing of copy, and the further fact that those who could best prepare such a history are men busy in the practice of the profession, has not made this feature of the county history as complete as is to be desired.

For the following brief history of those who have practiced the profession of medicine in the City of Kearney the editor is largely indebted to the kindness and courtesy of Mrs. C. V. D. Basten.

The editor could learn of no official records to refer to, hence it is possible the names of practicing physicians have been omitted; if so, it has not been intentional. To the editor of this history it has been a source of great pleasure to record herein the name of every person, in so far as possible, who has rendered valuable service to the general public.

"Are you a doctor?" was the anxious question asked Mr. Frantz by a young woman, wife of the proprietor of the Commercial Hotel at Kearney. This was on the morning of February 13, 1873. Mr. Frantz had come with his family to start a drug store and the young woman was in dire need of a physician. This seems to establish the fact that the first doctor was E. S. Perkins, M. D., whose sojourn in the little pioneer town was short and inconspicuous. The recollections of him were that he had suffered a blight, and wore a crape sleeve band for a lost sweetheart. A mother used to write anxious letters to Rev. Nahum Gould and ask him to have a care for her boy. (In the first issue of the Kearney Junction Times, October 12, 1872, mention is made that Kearney has four doctors, only one of whom is named, Dr. E. S. Perkins.)

Dr. Noble Holton came to Kearney during the summer of 1873 and practiced his profession until 1877. His office was in the drug store of Holton and Barlow. Mr. Barlow was Doctor Holton's brother-in-law. Both ladies were sisters of Curtis A. Greenman. All of them came originally from Tiskilwa, Ill. Mrs. Holton was also a medical practitioner. Both families, Holton and Barlow, moved to Peoria, Ill., in 1877. Mrs. Holton died in 1887. Doctor Holton died in a soldiers' home in Illinois in 1901.

Dr. J. T. Brown came to Kearney in the summer of 1873. He was born in Berkshire County, Mass. Practiced his profession for seventeen years near Rochester, N. Y. He served as regimental surgeon of the Ninety-fourth New York Volunteer Infantry two years; served as staff surgeon to General Barnes two years; and practiced in Belvidere, Quincy and Galesburg, Ill., for six years. In the spring of 1874 Doctor Brown's horse ran away, throwing him under a culvert, where he lay unconscious for a long time. The weather was severely cold and his health was greatly impaired by his cruel experience. He continued to practice until 1886, when he moved to Belvidere, Ill. His daughter Minnie married James Harron of the firm of Roberts and Harron, who came to Kearney from St. Joseph, Mo.

An incident is recalled in which Doctor Brown was called to attend a patient living in the country twenty miles from Kearney. When Doctor Brown arrived he found the father of the family had died. Doctor Brown remained to comfort the family, read from the Bible and offered prayer, and did not leave until arrangements had been made for the funeral. Doctor Brown was a charter member of the Presbyterian Church, organized at Kearney in 1873, and chosen one of its elders. He was a lovable man, one of God's noblemen, of sainted memory to many of the early settlers of Buffalo County.

Charles T. Dildine, best known of the early physicians, was born at Dansville, N. Y., in 1849. He graduated from Buffalo Medical College in 1872. He married

Miss Flora Evers and after practicing at Almond and Dansville, N. Y., came to Kearney, April 1, 1874. He commanded a large practice and was successful and greatly respected. He died at the early age of thirty-seven years July 13, 1886, and is buried at Danville, N. Y.

Dr. John C. Hull was born in Mount Vernon, Ohio, in 1827. Graduated from Eclectic Medical Institute, Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1853. He married Miss Nancy Updegraff in 1855. He practiced for nineteen years in Henry County, Ohio, and came to Kearney in 1875, where he practiced until his death, November 14, 1900. His widow, of blessed memory, lived until March 16, 1911.

Dr. Henry Baker, active and prominent in the medical profession at Kearney for about ten years dating from 1876, was born in Northamptonshire, England, and was a graduate of the American Medical College of St. Louis, Mo.

Dr. Carl A. Jackson was born in Sweden and graduated from Carolmska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden. He practiced in Sweden, Chicago, and in towns in Nebraska, for eighteen years before coming to Kearney in 1878.

Dr. Maurice A. Hoover was born in Marion County, Ind. A graduate of the Medical College of Indiana. Practiced in Mount Jackson and Indianapolis, Ind., before coming to Kearney in April 1883, since which time he has been extensively engaged in the practice of his profession.

In addition to his professional duties, Doctor Hoover has interested himself in the various activities of city life, serving many years as a member of the board of education.

Dr. Cornelius Van Dyke Basten was born of Dutch-Revolutionary ancestry at Kingston, N. Y., May 25, 1859. Graduate of Kingston Academy. Studied medicine for three years in Philadelphia, and graduated from University of Iowa Medical College, Iowa City, in 1883. Settled in Kearney, April 31, 1883. Married Miss Adah Seamen November 24, 1885. Has practiced continuously since at Kearney, taking post-graduate work in New York, Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City and New Orleans.

Dr. George M. Hull, youngest son of Dr. John C. Hull, was born in Trenton, Iowa, in 1863. Graduated from Omaha Medical College in 1885. Settled in Kearney and began the practice of his profession in 1885. Married Miss Blanche Harrington, of Geneseo, Ill., in 1887. His death occurred in 1907.

Dr. George W. Kern, graduate of Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia, Pa., in 1878. Practiced in Newton, Elizabeth and McKeesport, Pa., and came to Kearney in 1886. Removed to McKeesport, where he now (1915) resides.

Dr. James Porter was born in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, in 1847. He graduated from the medical department of the University of Michigan. Began the practice of medicine at Trenton, Iowa. December 13, 1876, was married to Miss Martha A. Wilson. Settled in Kearney in 1887, where he practiced his profession until his death, which occurred February 14, 1897.

Dr. John James Cameron, born at Montreal, Canada. Graduated from McGill University, Montreal, in 1887. Practiced one year in Ontario and settled in Kearney December 29, 1888.

Dr. Frank E. Duckworth was born in Chariton County, Iowa, and graduated from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Chicago. Came to Kearney in

February, 1888. He was a partner for some time of Dr. M. A. Hoover. Is not living.

Dr. Benjamin Franklin Jones was born in Ohio. A graduate of Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, Pa. Settled in Kearney in 1888. Was a partner for some years of Dr. L. P. Woodworth.

Dr. Henry Slaughter Bell was born in Kentucky. Graduated from Bellevue Hospital Medical College, N. Y., in 1878. He practiced in Knox County, Ind., and at Paris, Ill., and in the year 1889 located at Kearney.

Dr. John L. Bennett was born at Howell, Mich. Graduate of Eclectic Medical Institute of Cincinnati in 1874. Practiced his profession in Iowa and settled in Kearney July 15, 1890.

Dr. Charles K. Gibbons was born in Kearney, December 13, 1876. He graduated from the Shattuck Military Academy, Fairbault, Minn., and entered Northwestern Medical College, Chicago, from which he graduated in 1902. He began his medical practice at Los Angeles, Cal., but removed to Kearney to engage in the practice of his profession in 1903. He married Miss Nellie J. Downing June 25, 1902.

Dr. F. L. Blanchard was born in Peacham, Vt., in 1857. He graduated from Ann Arbor Medical College, Mich., and served as acting dean of the medical college after the death of President Palmer. He practiced his profession both at Albion and Jackson, Mich., coming to Kearney in 1902. His death occurred March 27, 1915.

Dr. Judd Albertus Strong was born in Columbia City, Ind., in 1868. Graduated in 1892 from Fort Wayne Medical College. Practiced in Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska and Colorado, and settled in Kearney in January, 1912.

Among others who have practiced the profession of medicine in the city the following are called to mind, but the editor of this history is not further advised as to their life or services: Drs. Eliza B. Mills, George M. Mills, F. S. Packard, L. P. Woodworth, A. D. Cameron.

THE BUFFALO COUNTY BAR

Attorneys at law admitted to practice in our courts are termed "officers of our courts" and an effort was made to have prepared for this volume a "History of the Buffalo County Bar," but the brief time available in preparing the copy has not given opportunity to compile the desired history. From various sources and partly from memory the following list of attorneys at law has been compiled and if it is found names have been omitted it is not intentional, but because memory in matters historical is treacherous, can not fully be depended upon. Members of the Buffalo County bar have rendered valuable service to the state and have gained state-wide distinction. Herewith, partly from memory, a brief mention is made of services thus rendered in the county and state.

Henry C. Andrews served as member of the Legislature in 1887 and also as member of the board of county commissioners.

D. P. Ashburn served as member of the Legislature in 1873 and also as a member of the county board of supervisors.

Norris Brown served as county attorney, deputy attorney-general, attorney-general and United States senator.

E. Frank Brown served as county judge in 1898-99.

John Brand served as county judge in 1880-83.

E. C. Calkins served as state senator in 1877, as regent of the state university and as a member of the Supreme Court commission.

Thomas N. Cornett as county judge in 1890-93.

A. H. Connor as member of the constitutional convention in 1875, as state senator in 1883 and also in 1889.

J. M. Easterling served as member of the Legislature in 1889, as county judge in 1894-97 and as county attorney in 1906-10.

F. J. Everitt served as county judge in 1915-16.

George E. Evans served as county attorney in 1886-90.

J. E. Gillispie served as county judge, 1888-89.

W. L. Green served as judge of the District Court in 1896 and later as a member of Congress.

William Gaslin served several terms as judge of the District Court and was one of the most widely known judges in the state.

B. O. Hostetler served as judge of the District Court from 1904 to 1916.

F. M. Hallowell served as county judge, 1902-05, 1908-13, 1914.

Frank W. Hull served as county judge, 1884-87.

F. G. Hamer served as judge of the District Court, 1883-1890, also as justice of the Supreme Court, commencing 1912.

Thomas F. Hamer served as member of the State Legislature, 1907.

John T. Mallalieu served as regent of the university and as superintendent of schools, 1880-84, also as superintendent of the State Industrial School for a term of years.

Ira P. Marston served as county judge, 1906-07; as county attorney, 1890-92.

N. P. McDonald served as county superintendent, 1890-94, and as county attorney, 1900-1904.

J. E. Morrison served, by appointment, as county judge in 1913.

Edw. B. McDermott served as county attorney, 1910-14.

Fred A. Nye served as county attorney, 1896-1900.

W. D. Oldham served as deputy attorney-general and as a member of the Supreme Court commissioners.

H. M. Sinclair served as district attorney in 1884, and as district judge in 1896.

Sam L. Savidge served as district judge in 1883.

S. W. Switzer served as a member of the Legislature in 1877.

E. E. Squires served as county attorney, 1904-06.

A. B. Tollefsen serving as county attorney in 1915-16.

J. J. Whittier served as county judge, 1876-79.

D. Westervelt served as county judge, 1874-75.

Charles E. Yost served as county judge, 1900-01.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF BUFFALO COUNTY BAR

Andrews, H. C.	Brown, Frank E.	Burnett, E. P.
Ashburn, D. P.	Beeman, Frank E.	Boltin, A. H.
Brown, Norris	Barnd, John	Byrd, Frank J.

Barney, C. E.	Huston, F. L.	Parsons, C. B.
Calkins, E. C.	Hostetler, B. O.	Pratt, Warren
Calkins, H. V.	Hallowell, F. M.	Robinson, C. A.
Carr, T. B.	Hand, W. L.	Riley, Wm.
Cornett, T. H.	Hamer, F. G.	Roe, John H.
Collard, C. A.	Hamer, T. F.	Smith, James A.
Connor, A. H.	Hartman, J. P.	Sinclair, H. M.
Chapman, J. W.	Hemiup, N. H.	Savidge, Sam. L.
Cunningham, E. E.	Moore, R. A.	Shipman, J. E.
Dorsey, D. A.	Main, Lewis P.	Switzer, S. W.
Dryden, John N.	Mallalieu, John T.	Saylor, J. E. C.
Decker, John E.	Murphy, John S.	Smith, J. T.
Devisek, Frank O.	Marston, Ira P.	Squires, E. E.
Easterling, J. M.	Marston, Maud	Sterling, R. H.
Everitt, F. J.	Miller, John A.	Sydenham, H. H.
Evans, Geo. E.	Matson, Chas. E.	Thompson, Stanley
East, B. F.	Mellet, J. E.	Tollefsen, A. B.
Foristall, J. M.	McDonald, N. P.	Whittier, J. J.
Green, W. L.	Morrison, J. E.	Wenzell, Dea
Green, Omer L.	McDermott, Edw. B.	Woodworth, H. L.
Glanville, R. C.	Niles, Henry D.	Walker, Jasper
Gaslin, Wm.	Nevius, S. M.	Woodruff, J. J.
Groff, Lewis A.	Nye, Fred A.	Westervelt, D.
Gillispie, J. E.	Newcom, Gid. E.	Yost, Charles F.
Hull, Frank W.	Newcom, A.	
Hoge, John	Oldham, W. D.	

REV. ASBURY COLLINS AND WIFE LOUISA E. COLLINS

Rev. Asbury Collins and his family came to Buffalo County May 11, 1871, and established in the immediate vicinity of Kearney Junction their future home. On their homestead claim, 12-8-16, now within the corporate limits of the City of Kearney, they built a house which from the first became a center of social, religious and educational activity. In the early days this home was known locally as Hotel Collins, for in the organization of school district No. 7 (Kearney) the county superintendent concludes his official notice of the first meeting to organize this district as follows: "Sent notice of due form and import to A. Collins directing first meeting to be held at hotel of A. Collins in said district on the 23d day of March, A. D., 1872, at 2:00 P. M.—C. Putnam, superintendent."

At this first meeting to organize the district, Mr. Collins was elected one of the school district officers, and the records show that Mr. Collins was serving as director of this district July 1, 1874.

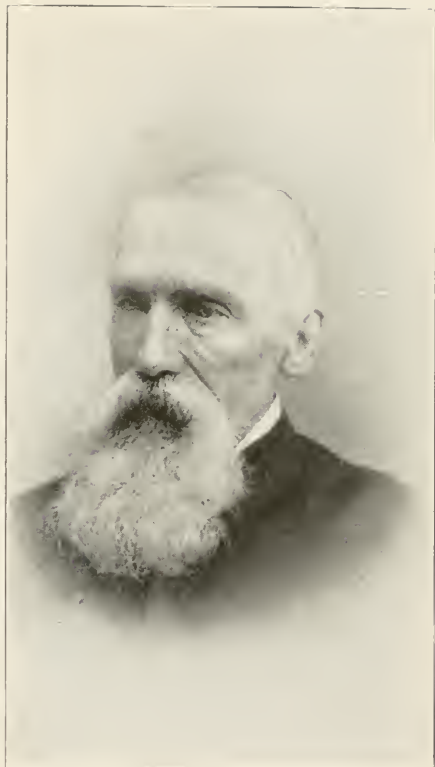
ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST CHURCH

It was at this home in October, 1871, that the first church was organized in Buffalo County. Rev. A. G. White was presiding elder of the Omaha District

of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the conference then embracing the entire State of Nebraska. On the evening of Elder White's arrival he preached at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Collins and at the close of the services the first Methodist Church was organized with the following as charter members: Asbury Collins, Louisa E. Collins, H. E. A. Sydenham, Alfred Gay and Hannah Jay. Rev. A. Collins was appointed pastor of the newly organized church. The board of trustees was appointed December 31, 1871, composed of Mrs. H. E. A. Sydenham, Alfred Gay and others. At the home of Mrs. Collins was organized the first Sabbath school in Kearney in February, 1872. Of this Sunday school Mrs. Collins says: "Every lady, excepting one, within ten miles of my home was a member of my Bible class." In 1872, Rev. Nahum Gould, a Presbyterian missionary, preached each alternate Sabbath in the parlor of Mrs. Collins' home. In 1875, at the home of Mrs. Collins, was organized the first W. C. T. U. Society in the county. The charter members were Mrs. Louisa E. Collins, Mrs. D. A. Dorsey, Miss Kate Dorsey, Mrs. C. W. Dake, Mrs. H. E. A. Sydenham and Mrs. Lena Hull. Honorary members were Asbury Collins, Moses Sydenham and Hiram Hull. The officers elect of the society were: President, Mrs. Louisa E. Collins; secretary, Mrs. C. W. Dake. At a meeting held in Lincoln in 1875 Mrs. Collins was elected first vice president of the Nebraska W. C. T. U. When at later dates the distinguished and talented Miss Francis E. Willard, president of the World's W. C. T. U., whose motto is "God and Home and Native Land," came to Kearney to speak in the cause of temperance, Mrs. Collins presided on both of these occasions, at each of which the largest audience room in the city was crowded to its utmost capacity, some of those in attendance driving twenty miles and home again the same night and feeling abundantly compensated in the privilege to see and hear the most talented and distinguished woman of the nineteenth century.

When the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Buffalo County was organized Mrs. Collins was elected president. In 1888 Mrs. Collins was elected president of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the West Nebraska conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church and in 1890 was chosen organizer for this society for the West Nebraska conference. It is not possible to mention, even in a brief manner, the many and varied efforts which Mrs. Collins has put forth in the past thirty-nine years for the best interests of the City of Kearney and its inhabitants, but it can be said that in all these years she has given freely, willingly, unselfishly of her time, talents and means toward the advancement of the social, religious and educational welfare of the city.

In 1875 the heavy hand of sorrow and affliction was laid on the family of Mr. and Mrs. Collins, the occasion being the unprovoked, cold blooded murder on September 11th of their son, Milton M. Collins, aged twenty-four years and married, by Jordan P. Smith, a drunken cowboy, the "boss" of a cattle herding outfit, who having delivered a large herd of Texas cattle to the Sioux Indians in South Dakota, was with his herd outfit returning to their homes in Texas. Again in 1882, May 13th, the hand of sore affliction came with sudden and crushing force to this worthy and much loved family in the death of their son, D. F. Collins, aged twenty-four years, a graduate of the law department of Iowa



REV. AND MRS. ASBURY COLLINS

Reverend Collins, a Methodist clergyman, located on a homestead near Kearney in 1871. He was the first postmaster at Kearney Junction in 1872. Mrs. Collins helped to organize the first church and Sunday school at Kearney and the first Woman's Christian Temperance Union organization in the county. She is familiarly called "The Mother of Kearney."

University, who while hunting with Professor Brown of the Kearney High School near Stephenson siding west of Kearney, was killed by the accidental discharge of a gun while sitting in the buggy. Professor Brown had left the buggy to hunt and a neighbor getting into the buggy caused the gun to be discharged, killing young Collins.

On March 9, 1890, occurred the death of Rev. Asbury Collins, who having regained his health after his removal from Iowa to Nebraska, again took up the work of the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the year 1871 and continued in this work until his death. Mr. Collins was buried in the cemetery at Kearney beside his two sons.

These great and sudden afflictions, sufficient to crush all life and ambition of an ordinary individual, seemed in the case of Mrs. Collins to cause her to be more solicitous for the welfare of her friends and neighbors and in 1910 we find her still the center and inspiration of a large circle of loving and loyal friends in her own home city. At the annual meeting of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of West Nebraska conference, held in September, 1909, Mrs. Collins gave up the active management of the work of that society and was made president emeritus, a very honorable title.

On September 23, 1872, Mrs. Collins was presented with a deed of the first lot disposed of in the original Town of Kearney Junction, the records in the register of deeds' office showing that the first lot entered of record as disclosed by deed index in this city (Kearney Junction) was executed September 23, 1872, by J. W. Brooks et al. (representing the townsite company) to Louisa E. Collins.

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REV. WILLIAM MORSE

Rev. William Morse, a Methodist minister, came from Ripon, Wis., to Buffalo County, Neb., in March, 1872, and took a homestead claim on section 24, township 9, range 16, and arranging to have a house built thereon returned to Wisconsin for his family. "Father" Morse, as he was lovingly called by all who knew him, returned to Buffalo County with his family in June, 1872. On his arrival "Father" Morse at once took up the work of the ministry and the upbuilding of the Methodist Church at Kearney and in Buffalo County; James Jenkins (a son-in-law of Reverend Mr. Morse) relates that on June 28, 1872, religious services were held at the home of "Father" Morse and of members of the church in attendance gives the names of the following: Rev. and Mrs. Wm. Morse, Rev. and Mrs. Asbury Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Smith, Miss Mary Smith, Joseph Fish, Mrs. Cuddebeck, Mrs. (Hannah) Jay, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. King, Mr. and Mrs. James Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins further relates that the first Methodist Episcopal Church services held in what is now the City of Kearney with Rev. Wm. Morse as pastor, was held in the Kearney Junction Times Building located on Smith Avenue, now Twenty-fourth Street. The coming of Rev. Wm. Morse greatly strengthened the cause of Methodism (the Methodist Church) and he may not inappropriately be called the "Father" of the Methodist Church in Buffalo County.

The beginning of the organization of the Methodist Church at Gibbon and in the eastern portion of Buffalo County may be said to have had its inspiration with the coming of "Father" Morse in the summer of 1872.

In the Buffalo County Beacon, published at Gibbon, under date of July 27, 1872, appears the following: "The schoolhouse was well filled last Sabbath, July 21st, by an appreciative audience who listened to a sermon by Rev. Wm. Morse, Methodist Episcopal preacher on this charge. Brother Morse is recently from Ripon, Wis., and will preach at Gibbon every other Sabbath at the school-house."

Also in the same issue of the Beacon appears the following:

"Rev. Wm. Morse, formerly of Ripon, Wis., and now of our county, in company with Judge (Rev.) Collins and others, took a hunt a few days since south of the Platte and succeeded in "bagging" four buffalo. The party could have killed almost any number but four beeves were all they required."

MRS. NANCY HULL—MOTHER HULL

Mrs. E. R. Holmes (K. O.)

Nancy Updegraff was born April 22, 1834, near Shelbyville, Ind. She married Dr. John C. Hull in 1855. In 1872 the family removed to Colorado Springs, Colo., and after remaining there one year they came to Kearney and spent the remainder of their lives.

Their children were Chas. M., once mayor of Kearney, Frank W., Howard J. ("Tom") and Dr. Geo. M. The eldest and the youngest died in Kearney.

In 1872 Mr. and Mrs. Asbury Collins and Mr. and Mrs. Moses H. Sydenham met at the home of Mr. Collins and organized a W. C. T. U. and Mrs. Hull soon became a member and for thirty-nine years her devotion to the temperance cause knew no bounds. Naturally in fighting intemperance and trying to mitigate its consequences she was brought into intimate knowledge of much poverty which she was always striving to relieve. As a solicitor for contributions she certainly was unexcelled. In her sweet motherly way she would present an appeal so pathetic that no one thought of refusing. Long years ago it was well understood that her home was a home for the homeless, a refuge for the unfortunate and a haven for the unemployed and she was seldom without one or more of these extras in her home. If one wanted a domestic or a maid wished a place all turned to her as naturally as a sunflower turns to the sun. Her beautiful altruistic life was so entirely given to others that she reserved none for herself.

November 9, 1893, a hospital was opened on First Avenue, Kearney, and in honor of its devoted patroness it was named, Mother Hull Hospital. As nearly as practicable with limited means this institution to this day exemplifies the principles of its founder in practical benevolence. The firemen and Mother Hull were always in close touch and their annual contribution to the hospital from the proceeds of their ball was handed over cheerfully.

Mother Hull passed from earth March 16, 1911, very suddenly. Her memory lives with the older citizens of Kearney as a blessed example of practical religion.

KEARNEY'S LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW

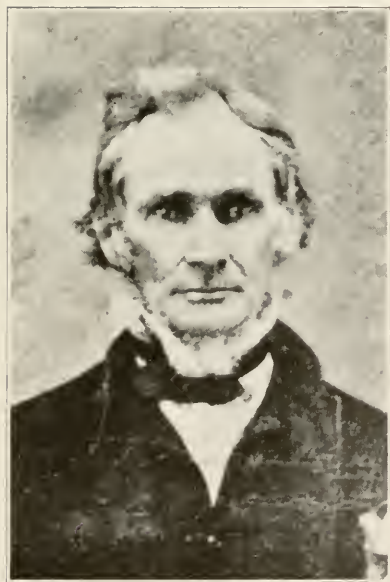
By Miss Lena Briggs—Student State Normal School

Just back of the lake, northwest of Kearney, lies a piece of ground, picturesque in its rough, uneven surface.



MRS. NANCY HULL

“Mother Hull”—loved and honored
for her good works



REV. NAHUM GOULD

A homestead settler of Center Township in 1871. Organized the first Presbyterian Church in Kearney in 1872. Organized a Presbytery and preached at the opening of the Synod of Nebraska, October 1, 1874.



REV. L. B. FIFIELD

Homestead settler and pastor of the First Congregational Church in Kearney in 1872. Served as regent of State University, 1876-83.

The lower part of this ground is covered by a portion of the lake and slopes up to the top of the hill. On this side-hill are a few evidences that a house had stood there. There are trees, shrubbery, a cedar tree, a place badly caved in, and just at the top of the hill a few bricks in the grass. Standing on this hill one looks down on the lake (Kearney), beyond to the power house, normal school buildings, City of Kearney, the Platte River and the view is lost in the prosperous farms with their fields of wheat, alfalfa and corn.

In 1871 Rev. Nahum Gould arrived in Kearney, sent as a missionary by the synodical board of the Presbyterian Church. There was no depot or postoffice. The railroad station was at "Fort Kearney Station," now Buda. There was (where Kearney now is) a grocery store (F. N. Dart) on Twenty-fourth Street, where the Catholic Church now stands, a blacksmith shop (John Mahon) on the south side of the Union Pacific tracks and one large house in the center of section No. 2 occupied by a Methodist minister—Rev. Asbury Collins—and his family. Rev. Nahum Gould purchased (homesteaded) the piece of ground, eighty acres, north and west of Kearney and including the ground described at the beginning.

Mr. Gould's family came in 1872. This year the Town of Kearney began and grew rapidly and the buffalo grass that covered all the landscape began to be dotted with houses. Mr. Gould selected the side-hill as the location of his house and barns, either as a sheltered spot from winds or to be less conspicuous to the straggling bands of Indians. He excavated into the bank to get a level space large enough to put up a house. The house was three stories, and one could walk out onto the ground from the third story on the west, from the second on the north and from the first on the east and south.

There were two rooms, dining and kitchen, on the first floor. The second floor had three rooms, the ground being excavated out of the side-hill for the third room. The third story had three rooms.

R. D. Gould, the son, started to dig a small cave near the kitchen door for the convenience of the women. He found the ground so well adapted to the construction of a cave that it grew until there was an excavation 4 by 6 feet and 40 feet long extending into the side-hill. Along each side of the cave were rooms 4 by 6 feet and extending the entire length. In these rooms were stored vegetables, grain, fuel, harness and stores of all kinds. At present (1913) the front has caved in, but by digging the cave could be found.

The stables were located south of the house and above both house and stables, almost at the brow of the hill, the family graves were placed. A vault was built of brick and in it were buried two children, and afterward Rev. Nahum Gould himself.

Mr. Gould began his religious work soon after coming. At first Presbyterian services alternated with the Methodist in the dining room of the Junction house, home of Rev. Asbury Collins. In 1872, when houses were springing up in the town, services were held in empty houses.

Often a service was announced to take place the next Sunday on a lot on which there was not a stick of timber. The next Sunday a house, all enclosed, with boards across nail kegs for pews, was ready for services. A necessary part of these services was the first organ in Kearney, brought here by Mr. Gould.

It had a rosewood case and cost \$250. Every Saturday night the organ was moved to the place of next day's services and Monday taken home again.

In time the Presbyterians bought, for church purposes, a wooden building, built and used for a saloon, and located north of Rodger's grocery store. When planning the furnishing for the new room several wished to purchase chandeliers that could be used when they built their church building. Mrs. L. B. Cunningham had spoken for the chandeliers. A member believed it better to buy lights in keeping with the room, and Mrs. Hurlburt, daughter of Rev. Mr. Gould, made the remark, "they better buy lights in keeping with the room for they might use electricity to light the church when built." At that date electricity for lighting purposes was unheard of, but when the (present) Presbyterian Church was built it had electric lights. It was Mr. Gould's ambition to make a beautiful place of his home on the hill. The view was magnificent and he surrounded his house by a series of terraces. He hoped his children would all settle on his land, but he died in 1875 leaving a very peculiar will. The land was divided into ten acre tracts, one for each of his eight children. The child building first could have the pick of the tracts. Mrs. Hurlburt had first choice and built a brick house on top of the hill, since burned. Mrs. Greenman had next choice, but none of the rest built, and they settled the division by agreement among themselves.

The old house and surrounding ten acres went to R. D. Gould, who lived there several years, but eventually the house was deserted.

In the meantime the canal was built, the lake constructed, covering the lower part of R. D. Gould's ten acres. The boom days came on, a pavilion was built on the lake, there was boating, and at night when the band played in the pavilion there was dancing.

Soon ghost stories concerning the vacant house began to be circulated. The lights from the pavilion shown upon the windows and made the house appear lighted. Investigation made these lights appear to move from room to room. The peculiar location and the burial vault above all gave strength to the stories. Some one stuffed a suit of clothes, making a dummy, and hung it in the house. Stories of suicide and murder were common topics of conversation and it was called "the haunted house."

One evening two men were boating on the lake and they began to discuss the haunted house and ghosts in general. The braver of the two decided to investigate and prove the reality or unreality of ghosts, but his companion feared molesting the spirits. So the brave one started for the house, his companion promising to wait for him in the boat. He went to the house and entered. His companion circled around the top of the hill and by hurrying entered the top story from the west. As the brave ghost-hunter entered one of the lower rooms there was groaning, moaning, shrieks and cries. The brave ghost-hunter did not stop for further investigation but jumped out of the window into the cedar tree that can still be seen on the hill. He had some trouble extricating himself and dropped to the ground, scratched, bleeding and thoroughly frightened. He ran back to the lake and found his companion sitting idly in the boat and told him his proof of the reality of ghosts while the author of the shrieks and groans chuckled inwardly.

At the time of the boom, when land near the city sold for enormous prices, all these ten acre tracts were sold for \$10,000 each. All except one were sold to or through the agency of H. D. Watson. About one-third was paid down and on some tracts small payments were afterward collected, but on none were paid much more than one-third of the selling price. In settling for one of the tracts Mr. Watson paid \$1,000 for one acre and the remaining nine acres went back to the original owner.

But the poorest tract of all, the one containing the haunted house, on which there was not a level spot, was bought by Marshall E. Hunter, who resided in the East, for which he paid in full \$10,000.

The bodies buried in the vault on the hill were removed. As the owner did not come immediately to claim his own by possession the house was torn down and taken away. When the owner finally came to see his beautiful terraced home with its three-story house he found a side-hill, a cedar tree, part of a lake, a few bricks and a number of ghost stories.

THE KEARNEY BOOM

By Miss Lena Briggs—Student at State Normal School

The Kearney Canal was started in 1882 by local pioneers of Kearney and carried forward to the extent of a cost of \$67,000, which amount was about all they could raise. In 1885 the stock of the Kearney Canal and Water Supply Company was taken over by George W. Frank of Corning, Ia. (who owned extensive real estate interests in and adjacent to Kearney), in consideration of his completing the canal for water power and irrigation purposes. The canal was finished and water turned into the ditch in the spring of 1886. The canal developed a fall of 62 feet at its lower terminus within the city limits of Kearney, where were planned extensive manufacturing properties to utilize the water power. Mr. Frank during the years 1886-87 negotiated with various persons and companies having in mind the erection here of extensive factories among whom were officers of the Burlington Railroad who came to Kearney, examined the situation and about completed negotiations for a half interest in all of the Frank property, including the canal and electric light plant that was operated by the water power and also including 2,000 acres of land within the city limits.

Through some inadvertent actions on the part of Mr. Frank the negotiations were abruptly terminated, the railroad officials withdrew and immediately established the large Burlington shops at Havelock, near Lincoln. The purpose of the negotiations had been the establishing of those shops at Kearney and the construction of a line to Holdrege, thus putting Kearney on the main line of the Burlington from Omaha to Denver. To further the plans for a sale of a part of the Frank interests and the inducing of large amounts of capital to come to Kearney for investment, Mr. Frank arranged with J. L. Keck to come to Kearney and erect the original Midway Hotel, for which a considerable subsidy was raised and donated to Mr. Keck.

Other plans having failed to secure capital to develop the water power and the Kearney situation generally in the summer of 1888 H. D. Watson, of Green-

field, Mass., met with Mr. Frank at Kearney and closed an option to purchase one-half of the Frank interests and which were incorporated into a company known as the G. W. Frank Improvement Company, which company took over the title to all the Frank real estate holdings, the Kearney Canal, and the electric plant.

About this time the Kearney men purchased the South Platte Land Company, which embraced the real estate holdings of the Burlington Railroad, about eight hundred acres of land immediately south and west of the Town of Kearney, and incorporated as the Kearney Land and Investment Company in order to take title to that property.

The company immediately subdivided and platted into city lots different portions of the property and offered those lots for sale at auction. This created a public interest in Kearney and aided in the development of the Kearney boom.

As soon as Mr. Watson had secured the option to purchase the half interest in the Frank properties he went to New England and brought to Kearney during the following ninety days three train loads of manufacturers and investors who, while in Kearney, became so impressed with the value of the water power and the opportunity to develop extensive manufacturing interests that they furnished the money to pay the Franks for the half interest in the properties and invested what was commonly estimated, at the time, a total sum of \$1,250,000. Various persons in the company were interested in cotton manufacturing in New England and on the suggestion of Mr. Watson were induced to organize a company and erect the Kearney cotton mills. These men demanded of the citizens of Kearney a subsidy, cash and real estate of the estimated value of \$250,000, which amount was raised by popular subscription and donation within the period of ninety days. At that date Kearney had an estimated population of five thousand (Dr. J. L. Bennett says the population at this time was over ten thousand) and this subsidy represented an average donation of \$50 from each person then living in Kearney.

During these months various other enterprises were launched, each one of which demanded and received a subsidy or donation to secure its location at this place, among which were a paper mill, woolen mill, oatmeal mill, plow factory, canning factory, cracker factory, pressed brick works, and machine shops. The exploitation of these various industries caused a furore of excitement accompanied by a rapid enhancement in the value of real estate in and adjacent to the city.

The cotton mill was constructed at a cost of nearly four hundred thousand dollars for building and equipment and was operated nine years. With the exception of the cotton mill none of the subsidised factories operated for a longer time than a few months.

The West Kearney Improvement Company owned and planned for the development of one square mile of ground adjoining the cotton mill location.

The Midway Land Company owned and developed a section of ground called "East Lawn," where is now located the Kearney Military Academy.

During the boom days various improvements were made, such as the construction of the city waterworks, city gas plant, system of sewerage, city hall, opera house block, and the electric street railway. The collapse of the boom

came in a single day and was caused by a personal quarrel between Mr. Frank and Mr. Watson.

As an indication of the great enhancement in market value of building lots in Kearney during the boom period mention is made as follows: Two lots on the corner of Second Avenue and Twenty-fifth Street that had been purchased by Mr. Frank for his niece at \$300 in the year 1886 were purchased by Mr. Frank of that niece for \$125,000. (The boom collapsed, the lots were never paid for and the niece still owns them.) Four acres, at present a part of the State Normal campus, the same a part of an original purchase by Mr. Frank at \$2.40 an acre in the '70s, was sold to John J. Bartlett in January, 1885, for \$2,400, and sold by Mr. Bartlett to H. D. Watson in the fall of 1888 for \$19,200, and by Mr. Watson subdivided into forty-five lots, each 25 by 140 feet, and sold by him, as lots, between December, 1888, and March, 1889, for \$29,200. The purchasers of these lots were almost entirely Kearney citizens who had known the history of that particular tract, among whom were George Downing and Dr. J. L. Bennett.

(The latter purchased eight lots where now stands the north wing of the State Normal Building, and he planted the trees which stand near this wing. Doctor Bennett traded all except two of the lots, having purchased all for \$600 a piece; these two he sold for \$133 and after deducting taxes had left about \$100. These lots were purchased by a Swede woman, who engaged in the raising of Belgian hares. Later the lots were purchased from her for the present use—the State Normal School.)

Business lots in the city advanced from \$40 a front foot to \$400.

One real estate agent's commissions alone during the boom period often amounted to \$1,000 a day.

Doctor Bennett purchased the last twenty-two lots of the West Kearney Improvement Company without seeing them or knowing anything about them. In two weeks he sold them at an advance of \$500. This company offered to give a lot to every one who would build a house worth at least a specified amount and an Omaha architect drew plans for one of these houses, but it was never built. On this tract was a station and park with a fountain. Now no traces of them are left.

The lot where now stands the Midway Loan and Trust Company Building was bought and resold at an advance of \$12,000.

THE KEARNEY CANAL

W. J. Scoutt

The necessity for irrigation in the Platte Valley very early appealed to the early settlers, and the feasibility of such a project was known as early as 1873. On a "Bird's-Eye View" of Kearney Junction, published in 1873, the line of the proposed Kearney Canal is shown. W. W. Patterson is probably the person that first discussed the matter.

An attempt to organize a company and construct a canal as early as 1875 was defeated by the fact that certain of the land owners across whose land the canal

would pass refused to either donate or sell a right-of-way for the ditch. This resulted in the first irrigation law of Nebraska being enacted by the Legislature of 1877, of which the Hon. E. C. Calkins was a member of the Senate, and who caused the introduction of a bill to constitute canals for irrigation or power purposes, works of internal improvement, and conferring on them the rights of Eminent Domain.

(Senator E. C. Calkins drew the Act of 1877, authorizing construction of canals for irrigation and power purposes and making them works of internal improvements.—J. N. Dryden.)

At a meeting of the Kearney Board of Trade in April, 1881, committees were appointed to secure data covering the cost of such a canal and to submit plans for the organization of a company to do the work.

A preliminary survey was made by one Simon Murphy, who estimated the cost at twenty-one thousand, four hundred and forty-eight dollars. But it was found that when the canal was constructed and enlarged the cost exceeded the sum of four hundred thousand dollars.

A company, known as The Kearney Canal and Water Supply Co., was organized with a capital stock of \$100,000, of which 60 per cent was subscribed, and the subscribers, all of whom were the early settlers and not very well-to-do, very largely exhausted their resources in prosecuting the work.

In April, 1882, at an election held, the City of Kearney voted bonds to the amount of \$30,000 to aid in the construction of the canal, which were to be sold and the proceeds given to the Canal Company in stated amounts as the work progressed.

The first president of the company was Nathan Campbell, and F. G. Keens was secretary. The other directors were: F. J. Switz, E. C. Calkins, R. L. Downing, J. H. Roe, H. Fred Wiley, Geo. R. Sherwood and S. L. Savidge.

During the summer of 1882 plans were perfected, final surveys made by John D. Buckley, and on September 6, 1882, contracts were let to Thomas Price for the actual construction of the ditch. Under this contract work was begun in September, 1882, and that date established the priority rights of the Kearney Canal (the oldest in the state on the Platte) to take water from the Platte River for irrigation and water power purposes.

The first and second miles of the ditch, from the headgates, were completed in the fall of 1882 and tested that December. Much other work was done during the fall and winter, and thirteen miles of the ditch were completed and water turned in during the summer of 1883.

The heavy fills across Deep and Mud creeks and at Kearney Lake were not completed until 1885, during the summer of which year the ownership of the canal passed from the original stockholders to Geo. W. Frank, who was then largely interested in lands in and adjacent to Kearney. To this time the original stockholders, officers and directors of the company were practically unchanged.

Mr. Frank undertook the completion of the canal and expended large sums of money in the work, the cost of which had so largely exceeded the estimates of the engineers. This work was done and water turned into the canal in the winter of 1886. A power house was erected, water wheels installed in the fall of 1886, and electric generators added and electric current transmitted for light

and power purposes in the summer of 1887. The work of completing the canal by Mr. Frank was in the hands of J. T. O'Brian, civil and hydraulic engineer.

As originally constructed the canal is sixteen miles long, and of an average size, 4 feet deep and 25 feet wide. The fall utilized at the power house is 56 feet.

In 1894 more water being required for power purposes, the canal was enlarged to an average of 9 feet deep and 35 feet wide, which gave it a carrying capacity of approximately 5,500 horse power. To aid in this work the City of Kearney again voted bonds in the sum of \$60,000, all of which sum was expended for enlarging and improving the canal.

In addition to furnishing water for irrigation and power house uses, the canal furnished water for power at the cotton mills for nearly ten years. At those mills exceeding 500 horse power was employed.

The title of the Kearney Canal in 1908 passed to The Kearney Water & Electric Powers Co., since which time it has been materially improved. More land has been irrigated from it than theretofore, and at the power house a more extended use is made of the water for power purposes. During the year 1915 new water wheels of 1,350 horse power capacity were installed, with new electrical generating machinery, and concrete and steel bulkheads and sluice boxes.

The height of fall at the power house is the greatest of any water power development in the state, and the present water wheels and generator the largest water-wheel generating unit in Nebraska, and the canal capacity is now being developed for the purpose of generating and transmitting electrical energy to the country districts and surrounding villages.

THE OREGON TRAIL MONUMENT

In the year 1909 Fort Kearney Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution undertook the erection of a monument, at Kearney, marking the Oregon Trail. Largely by subscriptions from patriotic individuals a sufficient amount was soon secured and an appropriate monument, of Barre granite, was purchased. The inscription on the monument reads as follows: "The first stone erected in Nebraska to mark the Old Oregon Trail. 1811-1869.

"Dedicated by Fort Kearney Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Kearney, Neb., February 14, 1910"

The location of the monument is in the park adjacent to the station of the Union Pacific Railroad, the park bordering on Central Avenue. The location is one of the most conspicuous and sightly in the city.

Of the beginning of the Oregon Trail, across what is now Nebraska, history seems to disclose that Robert Stuart and four companions (members of the Astor Expedition to Oregon in the year 1910) started from Oregon on a return journey to St. Louis; the party spent a portion of the winter of 1810-11, on the banks of the Platte River in the vicinity of Scotts Bluffs (of the present Nebraska) and in March, 1911, Stuart and his companions, on foot, journeyed down the Platte River on the north side, thus marking the beginning of the longest trail across our continent.

There be those who hold to the idea that the Oregon Trail across Nebraska

was confined to what might be termed a single pair of wagon tracks—one single definite trail—and that to appropriately mark the trail a monument must be placed just where those wagon tracks ran.

Emigrants over the trail to Oregon and California traveled with ox teams, averaged about fifteen miles per day, and grazed their oxen and other live stock beside the trail.

The editor holds to the idea that from east to west, across what is now Nebraska, from and including the Platte River Valley to the Kansas line, ran trails entitled to be called, the Oregon-Overland Trail. That in the Valley of the Platte in Buffalo County it is not in strict accord with the facts to drive a stake or erect a monument and say, "Right on this spot (between the river and the bluffs) ran the tracks of the Oregon Trail and nowhere else to the north or south." The whole valley, in the days when the Oregon Trail flourished, was a trail, marked with deep, well defined wagon tracks. The erection of a monument to the Oregon Trail has two purposes: One in memory of, a marker of the event; a milestone in its history. The other, educational. To reach and educate the people in this matter, we must, as far as practical, bring such monuments to the people, where the people can see, read and remember the legend there recorded. To place such monuments in inaccessible places or where few people see them is largely a waste of expense and of patriotic effort.

DEDICATION CEREMONIES, JUNE 9, 1910

(Note—The following account of the unveiling ceremonies is from the Kearney Daily Hub, M. A. Brown editor.)

With fitting solemnity the Old Oregon Trail Monument, the first commemoration of its kind in the State of Nebraska, erected by the Fort Kearney chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, was unveiled Thursday afternoon. Large crowds of visitors and residents of Kearney gathered about the Union Pacific Park to witness the ceremonies accompanying the unveiling exercises. Visitors high in the councils of the Daughters of the American Revolution and in state political realms took part in the dedication of this monument to the future generations of Nebraska, of Americans, of all who hold dear the memory of the pioneers of civilization, who endured hardships of war, privation, the dangers of the desert, all that a greater people than they might live in the Golden West.

The governor's party arrived early in the forenoon and were entertained at 12 o'clock luncheon at the beautiful suburban home in East Lawn of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Tabor. John L. Webster, president of the Nebraska State Historical Society, accompanied the party.

A luncheon consisting of six courses was served. The decorations were in the national colors, red, white and blue, and the place cards were tiny photographic views of the Oregon Trail Monument, which will be treasured by the guests as souvenirs of the dinner and of the unveiling of the monument, which followed immediately after the luncheon.

From an upper balcony of the house floated the Stars and Stripes, the governor's flag, so called by the family because it has waved over the heads of six governors who have been entertained beneath its folds.

The following were the guests at the luncheon: Governor and Mrs. Ashton C. Shallenberger, Hon. John L. Webster, Hon. S. C. Bassett, Mayor and Mrs. John W. Patterson, Judge and Mrs. W. D. Oldham, Mrs. Oreal S. Ward, state regent D. A. R., Mrs. Andrew K. Gault, vice president general N. S. D. A. R., Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton, regent Fort Kearney Chapter, D. A. R., Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Tabor and Misses Isabel and Agnes Tabor.

Following the dinner the party returned to the city in automobiles and were met at the Hub Hall by the Norris Brown Guards, Company A, N. N. G., with Capt. H. N. Jones commanding, the Kearney Concert Band playing "Hail to the Chief."

The procession was immediately formed by Maj. Walter C. Sammons, marshal of the day, and proceeded west on Twenty-second Street, south on Central Avenue, thence west on Twentieth Street to the Union Pacific Park.

A grand stand had been erected in the park just west of the monument and was occupied by the governor's party, Hon. John L. Webster and the other speakers of the day, Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Gault, and the officers and members of Fort Kearney Chapter D. A. R. South of the monument Company A and the Kearney Concert Band was placed, also a large delegation of soldiers of the Civil war.

Invocation by Rev. R. P. Hammons, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, opened the exercises, followed by the Lord's prayer in which the audience joined.

In the pause that followed the draperies about the monument were lifted by invisible wires and the monument stood revealed to the thoughtful crowd. As the flag hung suspended in the air, drooping in graceful folds of red, white and blue, Mrs. Oreal S. Ward, Nebraska State Regent D. A. R., stepped forward and while men stood with uncovered heads in silent reverence of the emblem of national unity and honor in these words she paid tribute to the flag:

"I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the republic for which it stands; one nation—indivisible—with liberty and justice for all."

Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton then, with a brief, fitting explanation of the value of such a monument, not so much to us but to generations to come, presented the monument to the City of Kearney. Mayor John W. Patterson responded to the presentation speech, congratulating the Fort Kearney Chapter of the D. A. R. on their successful efforts to commemorate the Old Oregon Trail and accepting in the name of the city this token of patriotic zeal toward the perpetuation of memories of earlier days.

A summary of Mrs. Norton's speech follows:

"Monuments are enduring links, which bind one generation to another. We of today do not need monuments to remind us of the romance and tragedy of the history of the Old Oregon Trail, for there are still among us, men who have traveled the dreary stretches of this road, who can tell us the story of their privations and sufferings, of their escapes from their savage foe, of the famine and thirst which they endured and of how after many years, they have seen the full fruition of their hopes, and the realization of their wonderful dream, of the building of an empire in the great West which stretches out from the Missouri to the Columbia.

"But our children, our children's children will need these monuments, 'Lest they forget.'

"The Daughters of Fort Kearney Chapter, D. A. R. are very proud of erecting the first stone in Nebraska to mark the Old Oregon Trail, and they are grateful to those who assisted in making this monument a reality and we feel that in placing it under the care and protection of the City of Kearney, that its permanency is assured for untold generations.

"More than sixty years ago the Old Oregon Trail ran close to where we now stand, but the hammer's stroke that drove the golden spike that on that memorable day in 1869 united the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railways just west of Ogden, proved the death knell of the old road, and drove the freighters and stage drivers from their peculiar avocation and made it a memory only.

"Now, Mayor Patterson, we ask you to accept this trust for the City of Kearney from the Fort Kearney Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution."

Following the unveiling services the procession formed again and marched to the opera house, where the speakers on this occasion were heard by the audience which filled the house, the aisles and the halls.

PROGRAM AT OPERA HOUSE

Dr. A. O. Thomas, president of the State Normal School, was chairman of the program at the opera house. He read the following telegram from Adj.-Gen. John C. Hartigan:

"Regret my inability to be present Thursday. Congratulations on beginning of a great work."

A letter from Mrs. Nettie Collins Gates, president of the Nebraska State Society, National Society Daughters of 1812 was read. The letter, which was addressed to Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton, follows:

"Civic pride and loyal patriotic sentiment are inherent in our American women. To them belong much of the honor of perpetuating historic spots and creating reverence for the same.

"Kindly convey to your Kearney Chapter, D. A. R., my heartiest congratulations at the unveiling of the first stone to mark the Old Oregon Trail in Nebraska."

In introducing the speakers and before the program began Doctor Thomas expressed his appreciation of the Daughters of the American Revolution as an order to promote and perpetuate interest in historic things.

An instrumental duet opened the program. Misses Norma Gordon and Susie Scott were at the piano. They played "The Poet and Peasant," by Suppe, and were applauded heartily by the audience.

A short introduction was accorded Dr. Wm. A. Clark, of the Normal School, and he began the speech-making of the afternoon. In part Professor Clark said:

"The life of a nation is organic. It is developed along certain lines by specific organs. The functions of its life, however, are subdivided. There is the judicial,



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(Photo by S. D. Butcher and Son)

UNVEILING THE "OREGON TRAIL" MONUMENT AT KEARNEY, JUNE 9, 1910

On platform, left to right: Mrs. A. C. Shallenberger, Gov. A. C. Shallenberger, Mrs. Oreal S. Ward, Mrs. Andrew K. Gault, Mrs. Charles Oliver Norton, Hon. John W. Patterson, Hon. John Lee Webster, Rev. R. P. Hammons, Mr. Edwin B. Finch, flag rope in hand.

legislative and executive. But there are certain adventitious orders not included in the general classification. These orders lend life to the nation, either by anticipating the future or preserving the past or present by means of education. The Daughters of the American Revolution performs all these functions. I am proud of what has been done in Kearney; of what the Fort Kearney Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution have done.

"It is said that Americans are losing their hero-worship. I believe as Carlyle did that hero-worship is essential and that the nation that does not have it is degraded.

"We appreciate the efforts of the pioneers and of this organization in perpetuating the memory of those efforts, which has been so effectually done through the leadership of Mrs. Norton."

Following Doctor Clark's address Mrs. Joseph Steadman sang a solo, "Birds in Dreamland Sleep," by White, with Miss Anna Caldwell, pianist, Harry Black violinist, Professor Porter clarinet, and Lewis Pierce, cornet, accompanying.

Followed a brief address by Mrs. Oreal S. Ward, of Lincoln, Nebraska State Regent, D. A. R. At the outset Mrs. Ward stated that our ancestors for the first 100 years were too busy making history, in conquering savage foes and subduing wildernesses to appreciate the importance of their own work which we are now perpetuating. Then followed a statement of the objects of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a great patriotic society, the work of which is so little understood, and closing with a tribute to the pioneers and congratulations to the Kearney Chapter of the D. A. R.

Mrs. Andrew Gault, of Omaha, vice president general of the National Society, D. A. R., was next introduced. Mrs. Gault denied that the society was organized for pink teas and to show good clothes. The society is organized for patriotic purposes and for marking historic spots, and will go forward in the fulfilment of that purpose. Relevantly, it was announced that the ladies of the Omaha Chapter would within a few weeks dedicate the second monument to the Old Oregon Trail in Nebraska.

Miss Elise Green sang very charmingly, "Awake, 'Tis Dawn," by Hamley; accompaniment by Miss Leota Mollling.

S. C. Bassett, secretary of the Buffalo County Historical Society, spoke briefly of what the monument meant to him—a mark of the trail and a marker for the thousands of graves of those who died in the wilderness. Incidents of the trail were related by Mr. Bassett.

Hon. John L. Webster, of Omaha, president of the Nebraska State Historical Society, was introduced amid great enthusiasm. Reverting to the central theme, General Webster said the exact location of the trail and the unveiling of the monument was of little significance compared with the fact itself. Another important thing in connection with the event is the fact that it is part of our written history. We are making history and others are writing it. Blot from your memory what happened yesterday and you will have no conception of what will happen tomorrow. The spirit of patriotism is preserved in history. This monument is a marking of history, of the manhood of the pioneers who opened the trail to the Oregon country, to the great Northwest.

The memories of those we talk about today who were our pilgrims and our

cavaliers, will 100 years hence have equal place with the Pilgrims of New England and the Cavaliers of Virginia. Followed a history of the first journeyings through this wilderness, then a desert, describing the transformation through succeeding geological changes. Followed again the emigrant caravans on the marking of the trail. Then the building of the Overland Iron Trail and the development of this wonderful country, and the importance of the West in its relation to the East.

Miss Agnes Mowry Tabor sang "I Hid My Love," by Dhardlot, very beautifully, with accompaniment by Miss Isabel A. Tabor.

The closing address by Governor A. C. Shallenberger complained that he had been left with practically "nothing to say," but might be able to pick up a few fragments. As to the monument—"As all roads lead to Rome, so all trails lead to Kearney"—hence the appropriateness of setting up this first stone to mark the great trail at Kearney, and how wonderful the great overland railway should follow that trail. The erection of this monument marks an epoch and signifies patriotic pride and love of home, and the governor added his congratulations to all who have participated in such a historic event.

The program in the opera house closed with the singing of "America," by the audience, led by Mrs. Steadman, and dismissal by Rev. C. B. Stephens.

So were the exercises concluded but the monument itself will stand by the road where thousands and thousands will read its message and feel the greatness of the West as they have never felt it before. It will translate its mute message to generations who will never have known the real West as it was when the great Oregon Trail was blazed; it will give to future generations the power to appreciate what the pioneers did, the manner in which they did it, and the innate worth of the pioneers themselves.

THE SOLDIERS' MONUMENT AT KEARNEY

(Note—The editor is greatly indebted to State Superintendent A. O. Thomas and Comrade F. J. Switz of Kearney for the history of the erection of this monument and of the unveiling ceremonies.)

In the year 1906, on the 12th day of February (Lincoln's birthday), Mrs. A. H. Boltin, president of Sedgwick Woman's Relief Corps No. 1 of Kearney, called a joint meeting of all patriotic and soldiers' organizations in the city with a view of securing the erection, by the city, of a soldiers' monument. Past Post Commander Capt. Joseph Black served as chairman of the meeting. Pres. A. O. Thomas of the State Normal School delivered an inspiring address appropriate to such an occasion.

On motion of Comrade F. J. Switz a monument committee was appointed, representing the two G. A. R. posts of the city and the citizens, with authority to request the city to erect a suitable soldiers' monument.

The members of the committee thus appointed were A. O. Thomas, chairman, and representing the citizens of Kearney, and Comrades F. J. Switz, Edwin Thomas, J. A. Larimer and James Larimer as representing Sedgwick Post No. 1 and Smith Gavitt Post No. 299, Grand Army of the Republic.

When the matter was brought before the city council it was learned that the

city had no authority of law to expend public funds for such a purpose and it became necessary to secure the enactment of a statute providing that cities might legally expend money for such a purpose. A bill to this end was drawn by City Attorney H. M. Sinclair, introduced in the Legislature by Hon. George W. Barrett, of Buffalo County, and became a law.

An ordinance providing for the erection of a soldiers' monument at the expense of the City of Kearney was passed June 7, 1909; the members of the city council being C. W. Hoxie, W. H. Knaggs, Charles Smithy, C. A. Barts, W. S. Freeman, C. W. Kibler, Robert Haines (a veteran soldier of the Civil war) and M. E. Chidester. John W. Patterson, mayor. After advertising for bids the contract for the monument was awarded to Troup & Cruik, of Kearney, at \$4,300.

UNVEILING CEREMONIES OCTOBER 25, 1910

To arrange for the unveiling ceremonies E. B. Finch and C. H. Gregg were added to the monument committee.

In carrying out the general arrangements the following committees were appointed: Bands—Geo. N. Porter, Harry Black; Committee on Finance—James Boyd, Dan Morris, C. W. Norton and Robert Garrison; Seating and Platform—W. F. Crossley, W. S. Freeman, E. Schuler and Frank Major; Flags and Decorations—E. B. Finch, W. O. King and L. L. Wernert; Parade—John Wilson, Gilbert Haase and Maj. Walter Sammons; Arrangement of Monument for Unveiling—C. A. Bessie and E. E. Piper; Publicity—This committee consisted of the same members as the Publicity Committee of the Kearney Commercial Club; Ushers—Dean W. A. Clark, Prof. H. N. Russell, Supt. H. E. Bradford, Supt. C. B. Manual, Ben Olson and Arthur Scoutt. The lumber for the seats, speakers' and band stands was furnished gratis by Mr. W. L. Stickle.

The lateness of the season produced considerable anxiety on the part of the committee in trying to select a good day in advance. October 27th, Roosevelt's birthday anniversary, was first selected, but it was suggested by Mr. F. J. Switz of the general committee that a storm was billed for that date. Mr. Switz was therefore made chairman of the Weather Committee and the date changed to October 25th. It was a delightful day. Delegations came from Holdrege, Funk, Axtell, Minden, Kenesaw, Grand Island, Wood River, Shelton, Gibbon, Elm Creek, Lexington, Overton, and the towns along the K. & B. H. Railroad. Long before the appointed hour for the ceremony had arrived the multitude had gathered, and it became evident that the 3,000 seats provided for the occasion would be entirely inadequate. But Central Avenue and wide Twenty-fifth Street provided standing room for the throng of 12,000 visitors.

The drapery which had veiled the monument since its erection was loosened. The statue of a volunteer soldier of the Civil war surmounting the shaft was draped with the Stars and Stripes. The speakers' stand was decorated with flags and bunting. Everything was in readiness for the unveiling ceremony. About the city hall were gathered the various organizations that were to take part in the parade. The Second Regiment Band heading the procession was located on Avenue A and Railroad Street. Immediately back of them came more than one

thousand students of the city schools. These were followed by 400 representatives of the State Normal. Next came the Kearney Military Academy cadets with arms, while Company A of the Nebraska National Guard under Capt. H. N. Jones formed the special escort of the guests of honor, the members of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Woman's Relief Corps, and the various ladies' auxiliaries, together with the Spanish-American war veterans. As the band opened with a military march all organizations fell in line. It was a grand spectacle. The procession filled Central Avenue from the railroad to the monument. As the advance guard reached the monument the ranks opened and the old soldiers and other guests of honor marched through. Along the line the crowds took up the cheering, banners and flags were waving everywhere.

The program began promptly at 2 o'clock. The presiding officer was Chairman A. O. Thomas. Seated upon the platform was the acting mayor and members of the city council; the Monument Committee; Past Department Commanders Eli A. Barnes, J. H. Maxon and C. E. Adams; officials representing the Woman's Relief Corps, Daughters of the American Revolution, Ladies of the G. A. R.; clergymen of the city; a few representative business and professional men of the city together with those having a place on the program.

The Second Regiment Band, N. N. G., under the leadership of George N. Porter, took up "America" and the multitude, standing with uncovered heads, joined in the song, after which Rev. Erastus Smith, a pioneer Methodist minister, a veteran soldier of the Civil war, delivered a prayer full of thankfulness for the blessings of a free and united country.

After the band had played the "Star Spangled Banner," Comrades Robert Haines and Joseph Black drew aside the veil, lifted the flag and the monument stood out in all its beauty. Constructed of the finest Barre granite, it stands thirty-three feet high. On the south of the die is the inscription "Erected in honor of the defenders of our country, 1861-1865 and 1898-1900. On the die to the north is the legend: "Erected by the City of Kearney, 1910." On the east and the west are the emblems of the Woman's Relief Corps and Ladies of the G. A. R. On the shaft to the south is the badge of the Grand Army of the Republic, while on the north is a crown of olives denoting victory. Surmounting the shaft is the volunteer soldier of the Civil war, with arms at rest, proclaiming peace. It is safe to say that this monument is not surpassed in beauty by any in the country. It is of artistic design and well wrought.

Following the unveiling, Acting Mayor Chas. W. Hoxie presented the monument to the old soldiers for dedication. The receiving ceremony was conducted by the Rev. Henry Wood, commander of Sedgwick Post No. 1, and Chaplain S. W. Thornton, of Smith Gavitt Post No. 299. In a brief address, Comrade F. J. Switz thanked the city officials and the citizens in general for this fitting memorial, and expressed the appreciation of the old soldiers for the honor thus conferred. The salute to the flag was led by Fort Kearney Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, Mrs. Charles O. Norton, regent, after which the band played an overture consisting of fragments of patriotic airs.

The orators for the occasion were United States Senator Norris Brown and Past Department Commander C. E. Adams.

Letters of congratulation were read from Major Arnold, Chancellor Samuel



UNVEILING OF SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, KEARNEY, OCTOBER 25, 1910
United States Senator Norris Brown delivering an address



CENTRAL AVENUE, KEARNEY

Avery, Prof. Joseph Sparks, Past Department Commander John E. Evans, President John Lee Webster of the State Historical Society, and ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, who sent "the best wishes in the world."

The monument stands at the intersection of Central Avenue and Lincoln Highway, located at this point by the city authorities in response to a petition to this effect signed by ninety-three soldiers of the Civil war.

STATE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AT KEARNEY

At the fifteenth session of the State Legislature (1879) an act was passed providing for the establishment of a state reform school in conformity with the provisions of section 12, article 8, of the constitution of the state. Ten thousand dollars was the amount appropriated for the establishment and maintenance of the school. Citizens of Kearney offered 320 acres of land as a site for the school, which was accepted. Senator John D. Seaman and Representative James H. Davis, members of the State Legislature, and Nathan Campbell and F. G. Keens, on behalf of the citizens of Kearney, being active in securing the location of the school at Kearney.

Both boys and girls were admitted to the school until the year 1890, when the Industrial School for Girls was established at Geneva and about this date the name of the school was changed from Reform School to Industrial School.

The school was ready for occupancy in July, 1881. The first superintendent, Dr. G. W. Collins, of Pawnee City, was appointed April 29, 1881. He was succeeded by S. C. Mullin, who served from January 1, 1884, until May 7, 1885, and was succeeded by John T. Mallalieu.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the school it was stated: "During the past ten years, 590 boys and 180 girls have been placed under the control of the school. Of this number 384 boys and 120 girls have passed out into active life. Good homes have been provided for many of them; others have gone out and secured homes for themselves."

The superintendents of the school in the order of service have been: J. T. Mallalieu, C. W. Hoxie, J. N. Campbell, J. T. Mallalieu, J. V. Beghtol, B. D. Hayward, E. B. Sherman, C. B. Manuel, R. V. Clark.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL AT KEARNEY

The State Normal School at Kearney was located by act of the Legislature in the year 1903 and opened to students in the year 1905, in charge of Dr. A. O. Thomas as president.

From a silver anniversary edition of the Kearney Daily Hub, October 29, 1913, is taken a brief summary of the establishment of the school, a financial statement and reports as to enrollment and graduation of students.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

23½ acres of land, valued at	\$10,000
Green Terrace Hall for dormitory, valued at.....	50,000

Perpetual water right from Kearney Canal, valued at.....	10,000
Water and sewer connections brought to buildings, which if necessary to be built would cost.....	20,000
Cash donated by City of Kearney.....	5,000
Total	<u>\$95,000</u>

LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS FOR BUILDINGS

Session of 1913, for buildings	\$ 50,000
Session of 1905, for heating plant	15,000
Session of 1909, for north wing	50,000
Session of 1911, for south wing	55,000
Total for buildings and heating plant.....	<u>\$170,000</u>

THE NORMAL SCHOOL'S RECORD TO 1913

The total appropriations by the Legislature for the support of the school have averaged each year, \$50,504.50. This includes all funds for water, fuel, lights, furniture, equipment, office supplies, printing, salaries, wages, etc.

No institution of the country has made a more enviable record. Members of the Legislature who have visited the school have repeatedly made statements that nowhere have greater results been achieved with funds appropriated. They have repeatedly complimented the management upon the conditions found and upon the conservation of funds set apart for its support.

The matriculation, which counts each student enrolled in the institution in the eight years but once, amounts to	4,695
Graduated from higher courses	522
Life certificates issued	301
Elementary certificates issued	467
Diplomas from department of commerce.....	20
Total enrollment, not including model schools and counting each student but once, during the year closing May, 1913.....	1,303
Average annual enrollment, about	1,100

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF KEARNEY MILITARY ACADEMY

(From an address by Bishop Anson Graves, December 18, 1906)

On my second visit to Broken Bow, in the year 1890, I had gone to my room for a little rest on Sunday afternoon. Soon after, my hostess called me, saying that a caller had come to see me. Supposing that some prominent churchman had come to pay his respects to the new bishop, I went down to the parlor. I found there a lad about twelve years of age. I was pleased that a boy should be so thoughtful as to call on his bishop. After a little talk together, he looked earnestly at me and said, "When can the church take me?" I supposed that he was think-



MILITARY ACADEMY, KEARNEY



NURSES HOME AND PAVILION, NEBRASKA STATE SANATORIUM, KEARNEY

ing of confirmation, so I asked him if he knew his catechism and what preparation he had had. He replied, "Oh, I don't mean that, when can the church take me and educate me for the ministry?" That question was a poser to me. I could not make any promises, but it set me to thinking very seriously. I knew that there must be many boys like him on the farms and lonely ranches of Nebraska.

Some time after this a committee of the United Brethren Church came to Kearney with the intention of starting a school there. They canvassed the town to see what could be raised for the purpose. They got the promise of twenty-five acres of land in the eastern part of town and a promise to put up one large building costing \$7,500. The committee then went to York, Neb., and succeeded in getting a better offer there, so they declined the offer at Kearney. Some of the citizens then came to me and asked me to take up with the offer made to the United Brethren. I did not see how I could do so then, but promised that on my trip East I would see if I could get sufficient help to enable me to found a school.

On my first trip East to raise money for our missionary work in October of 1890, I was invited to address a branch of the woman's auxiliary of a church in Yonkers, N. Y. There were about thirty ladies present. I told them of our missionary work and then I told them of the little boy at Broken Bow and the offer made me by the people of Kearney. I said I needed \$3,000 to build a dormitory and with that help I thought I could found a church school. After the meeting had adjourned, a lady whom I had never seen came to me and said, "I will give you the \$3,000." I almost broke down with emotion. Something for which I had pleaded before several wealthy congregations was now put into my hands without much effort. This lady was Mrs. Eva Cochran, who became a mother to the school and gave to its upbuilding at one time or another about thirty-five thousand dollars.

On my return to Kearney I told the people that I was ready to go ahead with the school and directed them to go on and put up the large central building. At the same time the contract was let for the dormitory of forty rooms. It was slow work getting the buildings finished and furnished, so we were not able to open the school until the September of 1892. At first we had both boys and girls in the school and it ran in this way for about seven years. Gradually the boys increased in number and the girls became fewer and fewer until the girls were reluctant to come at all among so many boys. About this time, 1898, the Spanish war broke out, and taking advantage of the military spirit which pervaded the country, we changed the school from a co-educational institution to a boys' military academy. At this time the name was changed from Platte Collegiate Institute to the Kearney Military Academy.

The year we opened the school there was a good attendance of boys and girls, mostly from the country. Soon after came years of drought and famine, so the country people had no money for schooling and the children had to work the year round to fend off starvation. It was a hard time for the school, but sympathizing friends in the East helped us to keep it going.

Prof. C. A. Murch took charge of the school for the first three years and then Mr. H. N. Russell for the next three years. Both gave up discouraged on account of the hard times. Then the Rev. E. P. Chittenden took the school, having like

the others, the whole plant free on condition that the tuition should be kept so low as to reach the needs of our plainer people. The first year Mr. Chittenden did very well, but in the midst of the second year, on account of neglect and complications, the school nearly broke up entirely. I then induced Mr. Russell to become headmaster and I took the general management of the school myself. I might then have given up the school in despair if just at that time an endowment of \$36,000 had not come to the school from the estate of Mr. Felix R. Brunot. This sum I carefully set aside, determined to use only the interest on it to keep the school going and to help the poorer boys with scholarships. After I had managed the school for several years and put it fairly on its feet, Mr. Russell was again willing to take the school plant, rent free, and assume the financial responsibilities. This greatly crowded our buildings, and there became great need of a large, permanent, fireproof building.

At this juncture Mr. F. G. Keens, of Kearney, came to me and offered to raise \$25,000 of it himself in the East for a fine new building. I laid the proposition before the "mother of the school," Mrs. Eva S. Cochran, and after careful investigation she promised the other \$25,000. The building was to be of reinforced concrete, the walls filled in with pressed brick and hollow tile and the whole entirely fireproof.

I would here add that in due time the building was completed and occupied. Mr. Russell remained in charge as long as I was bishop there and deserves great credit for the upbuilding of the school. The school became in every way a blessed success and a helpful adjunct to the church's work in the District of Kearney and the neighboring diocese. I would also add that the little boy at Broken Bow was a free pupil in the school for several years, although he did not finally study for the ministry. Some other pupils of the school, however, are now in the ministry and others became teachers there and elsewhere.



STREET SCENES IN RAVENNA

CHAPTER XXXVI

RAVENNA—FORT BANISHMENT—ERASTUS SMITH, THE FIRST SETTLER—BURLINGTON RAILROAD COMPLETED IN 1886—INDIAN RELICS—VILLAGE OF RAVENNA INCORPORATED IN 1886—VILLAGE OFFICERS—WATERWORKS INSTALLED—SEWERAGE INSTALLED—POSTOFFICE ESTABLISHED IN 1878—LIST OF POSTMASTERS—LIST OF PHYSICIANS—CEMETERY ESTABLISHED IN 1886—THE PUBLIC SCHOOL—RAVENNA NEWS—THE RAVENNA CREAMERY—THE DAIRY INDUSTRY IN BUFFALO COUNTY—THE RAVENNA MILLS—CHURCHES—BANKS—FRATERNAL LODGES.

RAVENNA

In the early days in the history of the land beyond the Missouri River there were many trails across the territory, one much traveled being up the Platte River on the north side. This trail crossed the Loup River at or near where is now the City of Columbus. It was a difficult crossing for the Loup was deep, with a strong current. To cross at that point emigrants swam their oxen across. Out of the wagon box they made a boat, some of them covering the box with skins of animals, others using a tent cloth, and in this improvised boat they ferried over their families and goods. In order to avoid this crossing many emigrants continued up the Loup River on the east bank, crossing to the west bank in the locality of where is now Nance County, and continued their journey up the South Loup across what is now Buffalo County when they crossed the low divide to the Platte River and continued the journey along the Platte River Trail. Thus it was that there were numerous wagon trails up the South Loup River and no doubt thousands of emigrants, traveling over this trail, have camped in the immediate vicinity of Ravenna, as here was to be found luxurious pasture for the stock of the emigrants, as well as an ideal camping place—timber and plenty of good water. These trails were plainly in evidence in the '70s when settlers living in the southern part of the county came to the Loup for wood. Many of these wagon trails were worn so deep that oxen could no longer travel them and then a new wagon trail was made beside the old one.

FORT BANISHMENT

The Union Pacific Railroad was completed across Buffalo County in the years 1866-67. Some of the tribes of Indians, more especially the Sioux in Northwestern Nebraska, were not friendly to the building of the railroad and in order to protect the workmen the general Government stationed troops in the territory to the north and small army posts—forts they were called locally—were built for

the comfort and convenience of the troops. One of these frontier posts was located on the south bank of the South Loup River in the center of section No. 16, town No. 12, range No. 14. In the month of June, 1871, the writer and a considerable number of colonists who had, in April, settled on claims in the vicinity of Gibbon, visited the South Loup country in order to view the land, there being no settlers in the northern part of Buffalo County at that date. The company camped for the night at the point where was located this post known as Fort Banishment. The earthworks—rifle pits—extended, in the form of a square, from the bank of the river to the south. Within the enclosure were two buildings constructed of oak logs, one for the soldiers, the other for their horses; the roofs were of poles and willow brush covered with sod and dirt. It is recalled that nailed on the outer walls of the buildings were a score or more of the feet of timber wolves, the feet being much larger than the feet of coyotes. It might be mentioned that below the fort, on the south side of the river, was an island embracing several acres, and on this island—thus protected from prairie fires—was a considerable growth of oak, yellow and black, many of the trees from two to three feet in diameter. It seemed that the trees to build the fort came from this island, access to which was by means of a beaver-dam bridge over which could be driven teams with loaded wagons.

When the courthouse was built at Gibbon in 1872, wood to burn the brick was hauled from the South Loup River, and practically all the trees on the island referred to were made into cord wood and hauled away. Much timber, cottonwood and oak, along the South Loup, of a size suitable for ties had been cut and used in the building of the railroad.

ERASTUS SMITH

One of the earliest settlers in the northern portion of Buffalo County was Erastus Smith, who made settlement in 1874, at the point where is now the Town of Ravenna. Mr. Smith brought with him a herd of some thirty-five head of shorthorn cattle, the first registered cattle of that famous breed to be brought into the county. He engaged in the cattle business keeping an average of one hundred and fifty head of registered and grade shorthorns.

Realizing how greatly settlers in Buffalo County were handicapped by lack of knowledge of climatic conditions, more especially as respects annual rainfall, in co-operation with the weather bureau of the University of Nebraska and the United States Department of Agriculture, in the year 1878 Mr. Smith began keeping a daily record of temperature and rainfall and which he continued until his death in 1909, a period of thirty-one years and which record is still (1915) being kept by members of his family. Mr. Smith was one of the most faithful and painstaking reporters connected with the weather bureau service. In the earlier years it was required that the temperature be taken three times in twenty-four hours, at 7 A. M., 2 P. M., and 9 P. M.; it is related that in the thirty-one years in which Mr. Smith kept his record some member of his family was always at home to make the record at the time required.

When Mr. Smith came to Buffalo County he shipped his household goods, six head of horses and grain for his teams and provisions for his family to last a



MICHAEL KNEISS

A resident of Ravenna who celebrated his one hundredth birthday in December, 1915.



ERASTUS SMITH

First settler in Garfield Township. Arrived in 1874 bringing with him a herd of registered short-horn cattle. Founder of Ravenna.

year, to Kearney; disposing of one horse he loaded his belongings onto wagons and with the members of his family started for the new home, some twenty-five miles distant, crossing the South Loup River at Peter's Bridge; in that portion of Buffalo County to which he journeyed, there were no settlers, the streams unbridged, and his sod house was the only habitation. In crossing the Beaver, near his claim, the wagon containing his household goods and provisions upset, all his goods were lost in the stream, including a cook stove, and three of his most valuable horses were drowned.

In those early days the Union Pacific Railroad Company having secured a decision from the courts which enabled it to evade payment of taxes on its lands, and there being very few settlers in the northern part of the county, it was many years before there were children enough of school age, and taxable property sufficient to warrant the establishment of a school within reach of the few settlers there located, and hence it was that Mr. Smith and his few neighbors were located in a school district, and paid taxes to support a public school, whose schoolhouse was in the Wood River Valley of the Platte some twenty miles distant. Also as a matter of history, but not pleasing to record, it might be added that all crops planted the first year by Mr. Smith and the members of his family, including a large garden, on which his wife expended much labor, took much pride in, and set great store by, was entirely destroyed by migratory grasshoppers, which even dug holes in the ground that they might get the last tiny rootlet of an onion.

In the year 1886 the Burlington Railroad was built into Garfield Township and Ravenna was founded and became a division station. Mr. Smith sold to the Lincoln Land Company a two-thirds interest in the townsite of Ravenna, he retaining every third lot.

In the early history of Buffalo County the Platte and Wood River valleys in the southern part were first settled by homesteaders who engaged in farming operations, while the northern part of the county, as well as the counties of Sherman and Custer were largely given over to cattle ranches; when settlers began to take homestead claims in this section there was much friction between the cattle men and the homesteaders; out of such friction grew the Ketchum-Mitchell-Olive tragedy and the killing of the cowboys by the sheriff of Custer County. It is true that some of the early settlers in that region "rustled" cattle found on the range and it is also true that cattlemen, by intimidation and by force endeavored to discourage and keep out would-be homesteaders; in the contest the homesteader prevailed and occupied the land as it was right and best that he should; the homesteader established a home for himself and his family, organized school districts, erected schoolhouses and supported public schools, instituted churches, bridged streams, laid out and improved public highways, advanced the cause of civilization, while the so-called cattle men occupied the public range with their large herds of cattle but contributed nothing to the development of the resources of the country or the upbuilding of the community.

INDIAN RELICS

The many Indian relics discovered from time to time by Erastus Smith, his grandson Lawrence Smith, and others, of specimens of pottery and stone imple-

ments used by Indians, as well as human bones of a bygone age, seem to clearly indicate that in this immediate vicinity was an Indian village and an Indian burying ground, doubtless of the Pawnee tribe of Indians, this being the home of the Pawnees when the white man came and one of the four confederated tribes of Pawnee being known as Pawnee Loup.

The Village of Ravenna was incorporated October 12, 1886, the board of trustees then appointed being Henry Boyle, M. S. Taffee, Joseph Bohac, E. Geist and R. M. Rankin, with Edw. Cronau as clerk.

In the year 1891 a system of municipal waterworks was installed at an expense of \$8,000. This system as completed in 1915 comprises six miles of 8-inch, 6-inch and 4-inch mains, the total cost \$40,000. In 1915 a sewerage system was installed at a cost of \$22,000.

In the year 1912 a privately owned electric light system was installed, by the Ravenna Electric Light, Heat and Power Company, A. T. Shellenbarger, president. The following are the names of the village officials at the close of the year 1915; Dr. Frank J. Wilkie, mayor; Carl Linn, A. R. Kinney, James Motsick and Wm. Vieregg, trustees; R. M. Thomson, attorney; A. E. Erasin, treasurer; C. B. Cass, clerk and superintendent of the cemetery. O. O. Geist, superintendent of waterworks and sewers; A. A. Mrkvicka, marshal; James Raymond, night watch.

In the year 1878, December 11, the Beaver Creek postoffice was established with Erastus Smith as postmaster. The name was changed to Ravenna on the completion of the Burlington Railroad in 1886. The names of postmasters in their order have been, Erastus Smith, W. A. Way, A. T. Shellenbarger, F. P. Wilsey, W. F. Richardson, Charles Miner, Frank Howard. Mr. Miner served as postmaster for sixteen years and relinquished the office to Frank Howard in March, 1915.

The volume of business of the office approximates fifty thousand annually.

The physicians who for a term of years have served the people of Ravenna and vicinity are, Dr. Charles A. Hale, Dr. John H. Penn, Dr. S. M. Bentley and Dr. George Buol.

A municipally owned cemetery of five acres was established in 1886, of which C. B. Cass has served as superintendent for more than twenty years. This is one of the handsomest and best cared for cemeteries in Central Nebraska. It is maintained by revenue derived from the sale of lots; ten acres adjoining on the south have been purchased and improved for cemetery purposes.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

The Ravenna School District was organized in the year 1884 with Erastus Smith, D. Hutchison and Frank Coulter as trustees.

The first teacher employed was Mrs. Alva Adams. The first high school established was in 1887 and the second in 1912.

The first high school building was erected at a cost of \$18,000. The new high school building, completed in 1915 at a cost of \$40,000. Twelve grades are taught and thirteen teachers employed; 460 students were enrolled in 1915. The present members of the school board—1915—are Charles Miner, George Smaha,



HIGH AND GRADE SCHOOL BUILDINGS, RAVENNA



FIRST SCHOOLHOUSE ERECTED AT RAVENNA

R. M. Thomson treasurer, Dr. J. H. Penn secretary, C. B. Cass president, Roy Greenstit.

In an edition of the *Ravenna News* for the year 1913 is given the following account of the public schools of the village:

"The people of Ravenna are justly proud of their system of schools and no factor in the development of our city receives more loyal support than does our institution devoted to the acquisition of knowledge and the application of the power derived therefrom.

"The university course as now offered is fully credited by the University of Nebraska for thirty-two points, graduates from this course being admitted without further examination. At the present time eleven of our graduates are pursuing courses in the above named institution. Many others are in attendance at other higher institutions of learning, in all of which our records are accepted in full faith.

"The normal training course for the training of teachers is fully approved by the state department of public instruction. Graduates from this course are given second grade county teachers' certificates which are exchanged for first grade county certificates after a teaching experience of one year. A majority of the rural schools in this part of the county are presided over by graduates of our normal training department.

"Under the provisions of the free high school law we are authorized to receive into the high school such non-resident students as are unable to secure the higher instruction in their home districts from which we receive a compensation of \$27 each annually. At the present time there are on our roll twenty-two such non-resident students.

"A department of music has been installed this year that gives every evidence of success. Our students are taking an interest in this subject not hitherto manifested and we are led to believe that this department will remain as a permanent feature of the school work. Musical instruction is given in each grade daily and, in the near future, it is expected will develop the ordinary musical faculties of the child.

"A course in Domestic Science conducted according to the Crete plan has been in successful operation for the last two years from which very gratifying results have been derived.

"The athletic work is now in charge of a competent instructor and the work of this department is progressing with much satisfaction.

"The former plan of simply turning the children loose at play time has been discarded and in the future play time as well as study time will be supervised. It is believed that all the elevating and ennobling influences of the teacher in the school room may be counteracted in a very short time by the indiscriminate and reckless commingling of all classes in uncontrolled association in play. Our ideal playground of the future will contain many pieces of playground apparatus which under the teacher's direction may become instruments of education and means of drawing forth the best elements of the child's nature."

THE RAVENNA NEWS

The Ravenna News was established in the year 1886 by C. B. Cass, who has served continuously as its owner, publisher and editor.

The News is an ideal local newspaper. Its policy is always constructive, never destructive. Its aim has been to develop and build up the village and the surrounding community. Its editor keeps in close touch with the people of his community, is in full sympathy with their desires and aspirations, has their full confidence and in a newspaper way The Ravenna News has served its people loyally, willingly and acceptably.

THE RAVENNA CREAMERY COMPANY

The oldest incorporated creamery company in Nebraska is the Ravenna Creamery Company, located at Ravenna, in Buffalo County. This creamery company was incorporated in October, 1869, by the following parties: Erastus Smith, F. E. Shaw, F. W. Sears, W. Z. Tillson, Henry Boyle, J. W. Dunkin, A. W. Wicher, M. Friend, James A. Clark, W. W. Pool and C. E. Davis. The capital stock was \$9,000.

This was one of some three hundred creamery plants promoted in Nebraska between the years 1885 and 1912, which cost the original stockholders at least two prices, and which statistics published in the 1912 annual report of the Nebraska Dairymen's Association disclose that of the total number, 23 per cent ran not to exceed one year, 50 per cent not to exceed two years, 63 per cent not to exceed three years and 80 per cent not to exceed four years. In the year 1895 the capital stock of the creamery was increased to \$15,000, and about this date C. A. Clark, an experienced creamery man from New York, was employed to take charge of the plant. In 1904 C. A. Clark, J. Clark and J. S. Clark having purchased the entire capital stock surrendered the original articles of incorporation and reincorporated under the same name with a paid up capital of \$50,000, which in 1914 was increased to \$75,000.

This creamery was operated for a time on the "gathered cream" plan, but soon adopted the so-called "Centralizer" plan—shipping cream by rail from near and distant points, thus largely extending its patronage and the territory from which cream was secured; also the company engaged in the manufacture of ice cream, the handling of eggs, and the, till then comparatively new industry, buying, fattening and shipping of dressed poultry. Such poultry, when purchased, is closely confined in crates holding six dozen fowls each and fed twice a day for some six to ten days with a ration of buttermilk, cheap wheat flour and corn meal, when they are in prime condition for the table.

The output of this company for the current year (1915) approximates very closely to 900,000 pounds of creamery butter, 60,000 head of dressed poultry, 6,400 cases of eggs, 24,000 gallons of ice cream, at a total expense for raw material and labor of approximately \$326,000.

The present (1915) officers of the company are: C. A. Clark, president; J. S. Clark, secretary, and C. D. Conn, treasurer.



RAVENNA MILLS AND DAM ACROSS BEAVER CREEK, RAVENNA



(Courtesy of C. B. Cass, Ravenna)

COTTONWOOD TREE ON THE BANK OF SOUTH LOUP RIVER, RAVENNA

An ancient landmark, believed to be two hundred or more years old

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY IN BUFFALO COUNTY

The dairy industry cannot be said to have greatly flourished in Buffalo County at any period since its first settlement.

A close analysis would disclose that dairying in the county—and in the state as well—bears a close relation to the rural population, and further that dairying on our farms is a side issue rather than a principal source of farm revenue. Some ten creameries have been built in the county, none of which except the Ravenna creamery were operated for any long period of time on account of insufficient local patronage. Commercial dairying in Buffalo County is best represented by cream shipments, such cream being largely manufactured into creamery butter.

The butter manufactured by the Ravenna Creamery Company, as given herewith, is largely from cream produced in counties other than Buffalo, and hence the shipments of cream from the county as herewith given approximates very closely to the total of the commercial dairy industry of the county.

Cream shipments from stations in Buffalo County, as reported to the Nebraska Railway Commission, from July 1, 1913, to June 30, 1914:

BUFFALO COUNTY

Stations	Gallons cream	Transportation charges
Pleasanton	28,130	\$849.95
Miller	26,100	992.68
Amherst	26,030	926.58
Elm Creek	23,980	887.78
Kearney	23,050	931.09
Gibbon	18,600	473.65
Poole	14,370	451.78
Shelton	12,120	335.13
Odessa	8,310	161.42
Riverdale	7,090	166.43
Ravenna	6,400	177.44
Sweetwater	6,360	34.50
Buda	200	6.47
Totals	207,740	\$6,394.90

It is estimated that from the foregoing number of gallons of cream could be manufactured approximately 975,000 pounds of creamery butter; the approximate value of the cream paid to the producer, \$288,000.

THE RAVENNA MILLS

The Ravenna Mills were originally built by C. S. Seeley about the year 1891, and about ten years later came into possession of Shellenbarger & Davenport, who suffered a total loss by fire and rebuilt the mill in 1902. In 1904 the prop-

erty came into the possession of the Ravenna Mills, Incorporated, which corporation has since owned and operated the business. The active managers are: A. R. Kinney, president and manager, and Robert S. Dickinson, secretary and treasurer.

This property represents an investment of about seventy-five thousand dollars and does an annual business of about three hundred thousand dollars.

The mill has a capacity of 500 quarter barrel sacks of flour daily, and the elevator and feed mill has a capacity of handling two or three cars of feed in addition daily. Ten men are given steady employment and additional help is required in the busy season.

The products of the mill are marketed chiefly in the northwestern part of Nebraska, and in Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota.

The lower grades of flour are sold in eastern cities and exports to England. The management is planning to enlarge the plant to a capacity of 1,000 sacks of flour daily and a storage capacity of 75,000 bushels of grain. Mr. Kinney, the manager, states: "It is a well known fact that the high lands of Buffalo County produce the choicest hard winter wheat grown anywhere in the world, and the Ravenna Mills flour is known far and wide for its excellence."

CHURCHES

The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lourdes was organized about the year 1889 by Rev. Father Thomas P. Haley, with a charter membership of fifteen families. About the same date (1889) a church building was erected at an approximate cost of fifteen hundred dollars. It is stated that the first pastor was Father J. P. Haley, but practically three or four miles north of where Ravenna now stands was called "Paris," and consisted of three sod houses, a blacksmith shop and a postoffice. In one of the sod houses Father J. F. Hayes said mass in 1883. In 1887 was the first confirmation at Ravenna by Bishop O'Connor. At that date the congregation consisted of eight German, eight Irish and some Bohemian families, the Bohemians being attended by Father Maly.

In 1915 the church had a membership of fifty families, the pastor in charge being Very Rev. Joseph Macourek, vicar general.

The First Congregational Church of Ravenna was instituted November 3, 1886, with Rev. Robert M. Travers as pastor. The charter members were: Robert M. Travers, Mrs. Robert M. Travers, Mr. and Mrs. Alex. H. Gray, F. P. Boyden, Mrs. Mary Boyden Smith, Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Pettitt, Mrs. Olivia Jeffries, John Pany. In the year 1887 a church building was erected at a cost of approximately fifteen hundred dollars. In the year 1893 a parsonage was built which has since been remodeled and improved.

In 1915 the church had a membership of eighty-two. Rev. H. M. Triplett is the pastor.

Lutheran Trinity Church (German), in Schneider Township, was organized in 1898, with Rev. William Landgraf as its first pastor, and the following charter members: Albert Thom, Hermann Rohde, Sr., John Pape, August Burke, Karl Thom, Henry Petermann, Fred Schmidt, Martin Keilig, Sr., Hans Voss, Carl Kutz, Albert Bedke.



METHODIST CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, RAVENNA



CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, RAVENNA

A church building and parsonage have been built at a cost of approximately two thousand dollars. In 1915 the church had a membership of twenty-three, its pastor being Rev. W. E. Harms.

BANKS

The Citizens State Bank of Ravenna was organized in 1902, with a capital stock of \$10,000. The officers and shareholders were: John Skable, president; William Benesh, cashier; directors, John Skable, William Benesh, Joseph Simon, Joseph Sheble, Ed Miner.

In 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus, \$5,000; deposits, \$175,000. Officers: F. J. Coats, president; M. L. Bonson, vice president; A. E. Erazim, cashier; H. J. Klatt, assistant cashier.

The State Bank of Ravenna was established in 1886, with a capital of \$25,000. The officers: C. N. Davenport, president; R. M. Thomson, vice president; J. H. Harrison, cashier; A. O. Skochdopole, assistant cashier; directors, C. N. Davenport, S. N. Wolbach, J. H. Harrison, R. M. Thomson, A. C. Mayer, A. R. Kinney, B. H. Paine.

In 1915 the bank had of capital stock, \$25,000; surplus, \$5,000; deposits, \$190,000.

POSTS—LODGES

Cedar Mountain Post No. 220, Grand Army of the Republic, was organized at Ravenna, July 17, 1886, with eight charter members: Henry Cochrane, John S. Salsbury, Thomas J. Perry, Jacob Long, R. J. Malin, J. B. Vanbrunt, M. G. Wheelock, Jeremiah Towney.

In 1915 the post had a membership of six, with John S. Saulisbury as commander. Since the organization of the post there have been sixty-six members, of whom John S. Salsbury, W. O. Pickett, William Lamb, Casper Shrader, Paul Miller, Joseph Clayton, C. G. Perkins and John Michie are living in Buffalo County. Twenty-six old soldiers are buried in cemeteries located in the vicinity of Ravenna.

Kismet Lodge No. 112, Knights of Pythias, was organized at Ravenna April 3, 1889. The charter members and officers: J. W. Dunkin, P. C.; Edw. Cronau, C. C.; W. R. Hershberger, V. C.; C. N. Davenport, P.; W. G. Hyer, K. of R. and S.; H. H. Rankin, M. of F.; F. E. Taylor, M. of E.; C. B. Cass, M. A.; Frank Valek, I. G.; Joseph Smaha, O. G.; C. A. Day, W. I. Greiner, A. B. Hlava, A. W. Wicher, J. H. Niles, J. H. Keck, Frank Fiala, Frank Krajcick, W. J. Eckerson, Charles Pedirit, Joseph Bohac, Joseph Hlava, Joseph Shebl, B. Engstrom, J. A. Kilgore, A. Goodrow, George Smaha, Henry Boyle.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of sixty-five. Officers: William Vieregg, C. C.; Robert S. Dickinson, V. C.; Carl Linn, prelate; R. A. Murray, K. of R. and S.; C. N. Davenport, M. of F.; James Motsick, Treas.

Ravenna Lodge No. 95, A. O. U. W., was organized October 26, 1886. The officers: F. W. Wicher, P. M. W.; A. S. Potter, M. W.; Henry Friend, F.; F. W. Sears, Rec.; Henry Boyle, Fin.; Edw. Cronau, Recorder; C. N. Davenport, G.; T. T. Gologly, O.; R. S. Boyle, I. W.; David White, O. W.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of fifty-three. Officers: C. B. Cass, P. M. W.; W. H. Margritz, M. W.; C. N. Davenport, Rec.; A. V. Hlava, Fin.; Edw. Cronau, Treas.; R. C. Salsbury, F.

Ravenna Hive No. 44, Lady Maccabees, was organized October 17, 1911, with the following officers: Jessie I. Petersen, P. C.; Anna Weidner, C.; Madge M. Dietlein, L. C.; Margaret C. Moore, R. K.; Sadie E. Glass, F. A.; Bessie L. Glass, chaplain; Leona M. Leidloff, L. A.; Dora E. Cunningham, Sec.; Martha Ruggles, Sent.; Veva Michie, picket.

Samson Lodge No. 329, Modern Brotherhood of America, was organized at Ravenna December 2, 1899. In 1915 the lodge had a membership of ninety-eight. Its officers: Mrs. Rosa Goodwin, president; G. T. Cupit, vice president; G. A. Winkler, secretary; Mary L. Tibbetts, treasurer; Willis Hutchison, guide; trustees, C. B. Cass, William Goodwin, Willis Hutchison.

South Loup Camp No. 1408, M. W. A., was organized at Ravenna June 10, 1890. Its officers: Samuel Evans, V. C.; J. C. Patterson, clerk; Joseph Haier, banker; C. A. Day, Adv.; John A. Kock, sentry; Chas. H. Hale, escort; Jos. W. Evans, watchman.

In 1915 the camp had a membership of 143. Officers: G. A. Winkler, V. C.; W. H. Margritz, Adv.; C. H. Piderit, clerk; H. H. Rasmussen, banker; Albert Polenz, escort.

Ivy Camp No. 1806, R. N. A., was organized at Ravenna September 1, 1899, with a charter membership of twenty-four, and the following officers: Miss Libbie Smaha, oracle; Mrs. Mary Bengsh, past oracle; Helen Zimpfer, vice oracle; Jessie Humpal, chancellor; Mrs. Ulasta Slavintinsky, recorder; Mrs. Emma Karel, receiver; Miss Olga Hach, I. S.; Miss Bessie Hosek, O. S.; managers, Elsie Meek, Mrs. Geist, Mrs. Lucy Smaha; marshals, Miss Adele Hlava and Miss Blanche Hach.

Les More Castle No. 2, Royal Highlanders, was organized at Ravenna March 1, 1897, with the following officers: John E. Mellett, P. I. P.; Dr. John H. Penn, I. P.; C. H. Freeman, C. C.; C. B. Cass, W. E.; John S. Molynaux, —; L. W. Brownfield, Treas.; Frank R. Donner, guide; M. McAndrews, herald; Hans Henry Luth, censor; F. Schieck, second censor; Jas. DeMaranville, C. of A.; J. Foster Buehner, warder; S. G. Swain, Sent.; Frank Kellogg, P. C.; Albert T. Walton, Canton Swain, Fred Harris, Fred Hlava, O. L. Miller, Dr. Samuel M. Bently.

In 1915 the castle had a membership of 190. The officers: Ferd Thompson, I. P.; C. H. McConnell, P. I. P.; Mrs. Edith Hughes, C. C.; Ina Skochdopole, W. E.; H. J. Klatt, Sec. and Treas.

Ruze Vitezstvi No. 92, Jednota Ceskych Dam (J. C. D.), Bohemian Woman's Auxiliary to Z. C. B. J. Order. Organized February 22, 1898, with twenty-three charter members. Membership of fifty-three in 1915. First officers: Mrs. Joseph Shebl, president; Mrs. Mary Hach, secretary; Mrs. Anna Jelinek, vice president; Mrs. Josephine Valek, treasurer. Officers in 1915: Mrs. Barbara Kolar, president; Mrs. Anna Jelinek, vice president; Mrs. Mary Hach, secretary; Mrs. Barbary Skochdopole, treasurer.

Zizkuv Palcat Lodge Cesko Slavonsky Podporujice Spolek (C. S. P. S.) was first organized at the farm home of Albert Skochdopole, in Garfield Township,



ENTRANCE TO CEMETERY AT RAVENNA



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, RAVENNA

November 15, 1885, with a charter membership of fifteen. The following officers were elected at time of organization: Albert Skochdopole, president; Frank Fiala, vice president; Frank Skochdopole, secretary; James Hervert, treasurer.

In 1897 this lodge membership was transferred to the Z. C. B. J. (Zapadni Bratrská Jednota), Western Bohemian Brotherhood, and at present the lodge has an active membership of 157. The organization has occupied its own building for a number of years and has purchased a fine site for a proposed new hall and auditorium, to cost not less than \$10,000. Present (1915) officers: Joseph Brt, president; Frank Fiala, past president; Vencil Kuticka, vice president; Frank Slavintinsky, secretary; Anton Erazim, treasurer; A. V. Hlava, collector.

Bily Dub Camp No. 117, Woodmen of the World (Bohemian), was chartered October 8, 1907. First officers: Bart Neiberk, consul; Albert Mrkvicka, vice consul; Alois Klinkacek, banker; James Motsick, clerk; Joseph Kolar, escort; Joseph Musil, sentry; Vaclav Razim, Louis Macek and Anton Jelinek, managers; Dr. C. A. Hale and Dr. J. H. Penn, physicians. Present (1915) membership, fifty-two. Officers: Joseph Brt, consul; Frank Slavintinsky, adviser; Louis Vesely, clerk; Joseph Witter, banker; F. J. Macek, flagman; James Motsick, escort; John Sklenar, sentry; Thomas Suchy, watchman; Rudolph Finder, Louis Klinkacek and James Kostal, managers; Dr. J. H. Penn, physician.

Ravenna Lodge No. 347, I. O. O. F., was organized November 20, 1909. Charter members: John S. Salisbury, N. G.; Charles A. Liedloff, V. G.; E. F. Carr, Sec.; A. R. Norton, Treas.; Dr. John H. Penn, John Akred, W. M. Feldmayer, Jacob Gehrt, Hermon Witte, Roy Salisbury, George Hutchison, Joseph Hafner, W. F. Stark, C. Feldmayer, E. E. Evanson, George H. Morgon, D. N. Henry (past grand), E. S. Wiley, C. H. Rockey, H. C. Decious. In 1915 the lodge had a membership of forty-eight. Officers: W. F. Stark, N. G.; A. U. Wilson, V. G.; G. A. Winkler, Sec.; Wm. Butler, Treas.

Fidelity Rebekah Lodge No. 284, I. O. O. F., was organized November 21, 1910, with twenty-eight charter members. Its first officers: Lilie Akred, N. G.; Rachael A. Butler, V. G.; Dr. E. A. Carr, Sec.; Mrs. Walter Newberg, Treas.

A dispensation was granted for Lotus Lodge No. 289, A. F. & A. M., at Ravenna, June 11, 1914, and charter issued June 1, 1915. The petitioners for the dispensation were: Alfred G. Hunt, W. M.; Courtland D. Conn, S. W.; George W. West, J. W.; Albert V. Hlava, Treas.; Charles Miner, Sec.; Claude A. Jones, S. D.; Louis M. Ferrier, J. D.; Edw. Cronau, Lorin M. Walther, Frank C. Moore, Clarence E. Collender, James M. Mewhirter, Walter Newberg, John H. Penn, Robert M. Thomson, Clark Biggerstaff, John A. McDonald, Mac W. Wade, Frank J. Benesh, Andrew G. Ward, George C. Moore, J. Hlava, John J. Witte, Leroy Brewer.

CHAPTER XXXVII

ELM CREEK TOWNSHIP—EARLY SETTLERS—ELM CREEK STATION AND EATING HOUSE—COLD TEA SOLD EMIGRANTS AS "WET GOODS"—CORD WOOD SOLD AT SHERIFF SALE AT EIGHT CENTS PER CORD—ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 9—LIST OF POSTMASTERS; PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS—THE FIRST NEWSPAPER—INCORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE—CHURCHES—BANKS—LODGES—FIRST CHURCH SERVICE A FUNERAL OCCASION—ODESSA TOWNSHIP—FIRST SETTLERS—REMINISCENCES—GRANT TOWNSHIP—REMINISCENCES.

When the Union Pacific Railroad was completed across Buffalo County in the years 1866-67, a station was established and named Elm Creek and D. C. Bond appointed agent. Also at Elm Creek was located an eating house, Charles Davis proprietor, and the emigrant train, carrying passengers, was scheduled to stop twenty minutes for meals at this point. Mr. Davis also kept a saloon and in 1872 an advertisement of his dining hall and saloon appeared in the Buffalo County Beacon, published at Gibbon. Stations were few and far between on the railroad in the early days and travelers who indulged in strong drink embraced every opportunity offered to lay in a supply in bottles and jugs. The presence of liquors on the emigrant train made much trouble for the trainmen, and it is related that the following plan of lessening the evil was adopted at Elm Creek, in co-operation between the trainmen and Mr. Davis the saloonkeeper.

On the arrival of the emigrant train refusal was made to sell liquors in bottles and jugs on the plea that the trainmen objected, but the would be purchasers were informed that if they would quietly wait until the train was due to leave and the trainmen elsewhere employed, they could have all the bottles and jugs of liquors they desired.

Hence it was at the last moment those who wished loaded up with wet goods. After the train had left for the West it was discovered that the wet goods consisted of cold tea and for a mile or more west of the station the roadside was lined with broken jugs and bottles.

Among the first to take homestead claims in what is now Elm Creek Township were: A. F. Fraser, T. J. Holt, B. Foot and H. Ryan in 1871 and Fannie Nevius, James Tyler, W. Shreve, R. M. Holt, M. Stout, F. Ryan, D. McAlister, W. S. Leake, J. E. Anderson, P. Hansen, D. T. Hood, W. V. Hoge, J. McKee and J. W. Stevens in 1872.

A postoffice was established at an early date, D. C. Bond serving as the first postmaster. Wm. Clark for a time handled mail at a location one mile west of the present village, where the first schoolhouse was built and at this point a store flourished for a time.

John Churchill, who built and conducted the first store on the present village site served as postmaster. The others, as recalled, in their order were: D. I. Brown, Ed Potter, F. M. Barney, Charles Willis, Mark Jones, B. F. Saylor, and Ed Fitzgerald the present (1916) incumbent. The postoffice is of third class, the annual business for the year 1914, approximating three thousand dollars.

SHERIFF'S SALE OF CORD WOOD AT ELM CREEK IN 1870

Joseph Owen, an early settler and serving as deputy sheriff of the county in the year 1870, relates that he sold on execution, at Elm Creek, on the 10th of November, 1870, 460 cords of four-foot wood, at prices ranging from six to nine cents per cord.

Mr. Owen states that the price at which the wood sold was just sufficient to satisfy the judgment and costs.

A memorandum in Mr. Owen's possession discloses the names of parties purchasing and the price paid:

D. C. Bond, 70 cords at 9 cents.....	\$ 6.30
Charles Davis, 180 cords at 6 cents.....	10.80
B. I. Hinman, 210 cords at 6 cents.....	12.60

The following is copied from correspondence relating to the sale:

"North Platte, October 26, 1870.

"Mr. Sheriff:

"Enclosed please find execution; directions for service will be found in Revised Statutes, pages 474-476, sections 485-490.

"You will go to McLeans and Russells at Elm Creek and take possession of enough property to satisfy execution and if you do not find partnership property take individual property.

"They may talk large but go ahead and take the property and sell and if they resist call out power of county.

"And put up five notices of sale, two in precinct where you sell.

"You had better take property to some place where you can rely on its not being run off. Notify me when and where the sale will be and I will be down.

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) B. I. Hinman, attorney."

"Wood River Centre, Neb.

"September 17, 1870.

"B. I. Hinman, Esq.:

"Sir: Execution received. I have been up to Elm Creek and levied upon four hundred and fifty cord of wood, being the only property belonging to McLean. I could not find out whether any one had any claims on the said wood. Therefore I could not see any reason why I should not levy on the same; enclosed find copies of sheriff sale. Hoping this will meet your approval, I remain,

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) Joseph Owen,

"Deputy sheriff."

"P. S. Don't fail to be down at Elm Creek on the 10th inst."

INDEMNIFYING BOND

"In consideration of sale of wood by John Oliver, sheriff, by his deputy, Joseph Owen, to me, I hereby agree to indemnify them against all damages arising from said sale.

"November 10, 1870.

"(Signed) B. I. Hinman, attorney, him to stamp the above as no stamps could be procured.

"(Signed) B. I. Hinman."

Mr. Owen also has so-called "indemnifying bonds" signed by Charles Davis and D. C. Bond. It is noticeable that in each instance the signer of the "bond" "authorizes them to affix stamp as it can not be procured," but in no instance is the stamp affixed.

It appears that the amount involved in the case was \$8.30 as witnessed by the following receipt signed by the attorney for the plaintiffs in the case.

"Elm Creek received of John Oliver \$8.30 on execution of Riddle Fuller Company against McLean and Russell.

"(Signed) B. I. Hinman,

"Attorney for Riddle Fuller Company."

The Village of Elm Creek was incorporated January 12, 1887, the members of the first village board being N. O. Calkins, H. D. Beecroft, E. O. Carpenter, H. Nantker, D. C. Bond.

In the year 1907 the village put in a system of water works—a steel tank on an elevated tower 120 feet in height, capacity 40,000 barrels, supplied by five wells, thirty-five feet deep, the water pumped by a twenty-horse power gas engine; twenty-two blocks of water mains were laid the same year, with sixteen hydrants and about sixty-five private taps, in charge of the village marshal.

On June 10, 1872, C. Putnam, county superintendent, made of record the following in his office:

"Organized this day, School District No. 9, of Buffalo County, embracing all the townships in Range No. 18 of Buffalo County; sent notice to John P. Arenott (Arndt) directing first meeting to be held on Wednesday, June 19th, at the house of Charles Davis at 2 o'clock P. M."

From records in the office of the county superintendent it appears that D. F. Hood was elected director on organization of the district and that in a report filed with the county superintendent, July 10, 1873, there were forty children of school age in the district.

As recalled bonds were voted by the district with which to build a schoolhouse, and it is stated in the Buffalo County Beacon, published in 1873, that the Union Pacific Railroad transported free from Omaha the lumber to build the schoolhouse. The schoolhouse was located about one mile west of the site of the present Village of Elm Creek.

Josephus Moore, now deceased, was the first teacher employed.

The records disclose that Josephus More (Moore) was issued a license as a teacher in 1873.

Later this school building was moved into the village and when a larger



HIGH WATER SCENE IN ELM CREEK IN SUMMER OF 1915



VIEW ON TYLER STREET, ELM CREEK

building was erected, the old one was purchased and used as an Episcopal Church. This church existed but a short period and the building is now (1916) owned by A. Reeve and used as a chapel in his undertaking establishment. In the year 1913 the high school was raised from a ten-grade school to twelve grades, duly accredited and employing seven teachers.

The present board of education is composed of C. T. Mastin, Dr. J. W. Laughlin moderator, D. J. W. Frank treasurer, C. G. Bliss, W. C. Keep and E. Trates.

In the year 1910 John A. Nitchey built and equipped an electric light plant; the building is of concrete blocks, power is furnished by a fifty-horse power oil engine. Light is furnished for streets and for private homes and business houses.

As recalled, R. N. Folk was the first newspaper man in Elm Creek, his paper the Elm Creek Sun, the first issue was dated June 2, 1886.

About the year 1900 E. C. Krewson purchased the plant of the Buffalo County Beacon, being published at Gibbon, moved the plant to Elm Creek, and began publication under the name Elm Creek Beacon. At the present time (1916) E. C. Krewson is editor of the Beacon.

Two grain elevators are located at Elm Creek with a storage capacity of approximately twenty thousand bushels each.

The Elm Creek flouring mill was built about the year 1897 by Frank McCall, the town donating the site. It was rebuilt in 1903 by Stephen Dworak. In 1915 the mill was not in operation.

Of physicians and surgeons who have ministered to the people of Elm Creek and vicinity the names of the following are recalled: Doctors Case, Tomlinson, Couch, Butterick, J. W. Frank, C. A. Yoder, J. W. Laughlin.

A fire swept Elm Creek in the year 1906, July 1st, destroying fourteen buildings; a better Elm Creek, with larger and more durable buildings has risen in its place.

In 1915 the village officers were: Trustees, O. J. Lloyd chairman, T. A. Cox, J. L. Daul, H. A. Wells, W. C. Rishel; J. O. Daul, treasurer; R. J. Mitchell, clerk.

The Farmers and Merchants Bank of Elm Creek was organized in 1889 with a capital stock of \$12,500, with B. H. Goodell, president.

In the year 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus, \$3,500; deposits, \$74,874; W. N. Garrison, president.

The City Bank of Elm Creek was organized May 9, 1907, with a capital stock of \$10,000. The officers were: John A. Miller, president; C. G. Bliss, vice president; S. A. Reasoner, cashier.

This bank owns its own building erected in 1911.

In 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$10,000; surplus, \$3,500; deposits, \$90,199.

The officers of the bank: C. G. Bliss, president; H. A. Wells, vice president; E. E. Bliss, cashier; L. M. Bliss, assistant cashier.

The Christian Church at Elm Creek was organized in February, 1910, with thirty-five charter members, the first pastor, Rev. Harry G. Knowles, who served the church until 1913. In the summer of 1910 a church building was completed at a cost of \$5,000, and dedicated in July of that year.

In 1915 the membership of the church was eighty.

Succeeding Rev. Mr. Knowles, the following pastors have served the church: H. H. Utterbach, F. R. Wedge, G. P. Brammel.

In the organization of a Methodist Church at Elm Creek, it is related that the first service was a funeral sermon for Mrs. Ryan, preached by Rev. Mr. Summers who had homesteaded north of Elm Creek. The funeral was on December 4, 1872. In February, 1873, Mr. Summers held a series of revival meetings and a church organization was effected. The charter members as near as can be recalled by Mrs. George Milbourn were: D. I. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Holt, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Holt, Rev. and Mrs. Summers, Mrs. Shuffelbarger, Miss Mollie Shuffelbarger, Joseph McKee, John Badgely.

Meetings were held in the schoolhouse until a church was built during the pastorate of Rev. T. H. Thurber in 1883, being located south of the track; about the year —, during the pastorate of S. J. Medlin, the church building was moved north of the track, remodeled and improved. In 1915 the membership of the church was 136.

The names of the pastors who have served the church, in their order are: Rev. Mr. Summers, Wm. Willard, J. H. Vincent, W. S. Norval, Rev. Mr. Dressler, Asbury Collins, T. H. Thurber, Joseph Gray, C. H. Savage, George H. McAdam, J. G. Hurlburt, L. W. Chandler, R. Randolph, Samuel Cates, J. A. Haggard, H. M. Pinckney, N. H. Miles, S. J. Medlin, R. H. Thompson, O. F. Chesebro, C. E. Woodson, W. C. Swartz, George Shuman, J. M. Haskins, H. S. French, F. A. Shawkey.

Of the Catholic Church at Elm Creek, it is related that services were held in the railroad section house in 1871 or 1872, before there was any other meeting place in the village. That about 1878 the church had a membership of ten or twelve families and at that date a small church building was erected; this building was enlarged in 1889.

Of the pastors who have served this people and church the names of the following are recalled: Father Walsh came once a month from Lexington, he is now located at Battle Creek (Nebraska); next Father Flood, now dead; Father Fitzpatrick from Kearney; Father McGovern from Kearney, now bishop of Wyoming; others, Fathers Delbo and Dailey; Rev. T. D. Sullivan is the first resident pastor, having been located here since 1907. The membership of the church at the present time (1915) is thirty-five families.

Asher Chapter No. 252, O. E. S., was instituted at Elm Creek in March, 1913, with twenty-four charter members. The first officers were: Mrs. E. Ray, W. M.; Joseph Elliott, W. P.; Mrs. Mary Jones, A. M.; Miss Jessie Jones, Cond.; Mrs. A. Miller, A. Cond.; Mrs. John L. Daul, Treas.; Mrs. John Kemmerling, Sec'y; Mrs. George Milbourn, Chaplain.

In 1915 the chapter had a membership of thirty-six. Its officers: Mrs. Mark Jones, W. M.; Joseph Elliott, W. P.; Mrs. E. Ray, Sec.; Mrs. John J. Daul, Treas.; Miss Bessie Lloyd, A. Cond.; Mrs. John Kemmerling, A. M.; Mrs. George Milbourn, Chaplain.

Elm Creek Lodge No. 314, I. O. O. F., was instituted in March, 1906, with M. C. Brown as Noble Grand.

The membership of the lodge in 1915 was thirty-three. Its officers: A. M. Brown, N. G.; H. E. Shafto, V. G.; John Richards, Secy.



HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, ELM CREEK



METHODIST CHURCH, ELM CREEK

Elm Creek Lodge No. 133, A. F. and A. M. was instituted at Elm Creek, August 8, 1884, with ten charter members. Its officers: Daniel C. Bond, W. M.; O. Calkins, S. W.; Robert K. Potter, J. W.; Lewis B. Irvin, S. D.; Delbert G. Webster, J. D.; David I. Brown, Sec.; Charles J. Carper, Tyler.

In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of thirty-nine. Its officers: August Pierson, W. M.; John L. Daul, S. W.; William A. Clarke, J. W.; William T. Adams, S. D.; Bert Miller, J. D.; Frank J. Jones, Sec.; B. E. Elliott, Treas.; John H. Richards, Tyler.

Elm Creek Lodge No. 108, A. O. U. W., was instituted January 12, 1887. Its first officers were: Frank McCall, P. M. W.; David McCall, M. W.; H. D. Becroft, For.; R. N. Volk, O.; J. H. Morris, Rec'r.; David McComb, Fin.; Wm. Barron, Recv.; G. G. Case, G.; R. M. Jones, I. W.; A. T. Geyer, O. W.

In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of seventy-two. Its officers: W. C. Pettett, P. M. W.; J. D. Hayes, M. W.; R. M. Jones, F.; Geo. Witmer, O.; C. E. Clark, Recdr.; M. J. Jones, Fin.; W. T. Gould, Recv.; W. J. Dow, G.; E. Gottwald, I. W.; S. L. Beaver, O. W.

Purity Lodge No. 50, Degree of Honor, A. O. U. W., was instituted April 4, 1893. Its first officers: Hattie Scott, P. C. of H.; Frankie Lloyd, C. of H.; Carrie Brown, L. of H.; Zelia Rall, C. of C.; Fannie Haughton, Recdr.; Sarah Fisher, Fin.; Eunia Mace, Recv.; Lillie Snyder, Usher; May Brown, I. W.

In the year 1915 the lodge had a membership of eighty-four. Its officers: Martha Milbourn, P. C. of H.; Mary Pettett, C. of H.; Annie Pettett, L. of H.; Rose Thompson, C. of C.; Sadie R. Gould, Recdr.; W. T. Gould, Recv.; Catherine Hurley, Fin.; Mary Shawkey, Usher; Susie Smith, A. Usher; Hannah Palmer, I. W.; Ethyl Soniville, O. W.

Golden Rod Camp No. 470, Royal Neighbors, M. W. A., was instituted at Elm Creek, November 27, 1896, with twenty-one charter members. Its first officers: Mrs. Fannie Dermody, Mrs. Minnie Newcome, Mrs. Anna Dermody, Miss Addie Nantker, Mrs. M. Ellen Anderson, Mrs. L. May Arndt, Mrs. Evelyn Clark, Mrs. Matilda Nantker, Mrs. Amanda Tussing. The remaining charter members: Mesdames Etta Tucker, Sarah Morris, Catherine Milbourn, Anna Camfhie, Barbara Schiff, B. F. Tussing, S. J. W. Tucker, J. H. Morris, William Dermody, W. F. Milbourn, Mrs. D. E. Reve and Mrs. O. J. Lloyd.

In the year 1903 the camp lost by fire, its charter, regalia and all its supplies, but nothing daunted were up and doing. In the year 1912 twenty-four new members were added.

The Royal Neighbors of America is said to be the largest women's fraternal society in America.

In 1915 Golden Rod Camp had seventy-one members. Its officers: Ragina Fitzgerald, Bessie Frates, Mary Neidigh, Mary C. Skawkey, Martha F. Frank, Louisa M. Roger, Luella Shafto, Jennie Bushee, Lucy Anderson, Addie Daul, M. Ellen Anderson, Nina Mitchell. Physicians: Doctors J. W. Frank, J. W. Laughlin, C. A. Yoder.

Home Camp No. 1860, M. W. A., was instituted at Elm Creek, in 1891, with charter members as follows: F. W. Schiff, venerable counselor; Geo. C. Case, George Decker, Edward Fitzgerald, Samuel P. Flesher, J. M. Guisinger, Wm. C. Keep, Lawrence Kelly, Oliver J. Lloyd, Robert Mitchell, David McComb,

Adelbert Snyder, John Taylor, Charles D. Taylor, August J. Ulrich, Albert Younkin.

The (1915) membership of the camp was eighty-two. Its officers: V. C., C. J. Lloyd; W. A., E. C. Krewson; Banker, J. A. Johnson; Clerk, T. A. Cox.

The original records of the camp were burned, together with the charter, and a new charter was issued July 12, 1906.

ODESSA TOWNSHIP

What in 1915 is known as Odessa Township was in 1866-71 known as Stevenson's Siding and later Crowellton.

The first to take homesteads in that locality were Dan A. Crowell and D. Allen Crowell, in 1871; R. D. Gould, J. Zerk, D. Brown, E. and C. Christianson, J. F. Suplee, S. Tolefsen, R. Vails, S. W. Homer, Flora Thomas, H. Brown, J. B. Vincent, H. F. Leonard, William C. T. Kurth, George W. Tovey, J. Ratliff, M. Homer, J. E. F. Vails, John D. Seamen, in 1872; C. S. Greenman, E. N. Lord, George D. Aspinwall, George Hall, R. F. Watters, Theodore Knox, James Sturrock, A. Ream, J. E. Chidester, J. Homer, Jr., in 1873; James Halliwell, D. Harpst, John T. Brown, Edward Keltner, William F. Reeves, J. M. Grant, Thomas Maloney, in 1874; George Jones, H. Ransom, Catherine Edwards, in 1876; F. W. Nichols, J. Vails, George A. Bailey, Susan C. Hurlburt, D. Hostetler, H. H. Achey, Susan Grant, L. C. Skelley and Adah Grant, in 1878.

D. Allen Crowell and Dan A. Crowell were twins, D. Allen being an active, prominent minister in the Methodist Church, serving as pastor of the Methodist Church at Kearney in the early '70s, as recalled at the period when the first church building was erected in the city. Dan A. Crowell served as county superintendent, county commissioner and taught in the Kearney schools. John D. Seaman served as state senator. George D. Aspinwall was the first to be elected and serve as clerk of the District Court, and J. E. Chidester served as county commissioner.

It is recalled that Thomas Maloney was one of the first licensed teachers in the county. It is related that Mrs. Theodore Knox selected the name Odessa to take the place of Crowellton as the name of the township, or rather precinct. Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Knox settled at Gibbon in the winter of 1871-72, and kept boarders during the period in which the courthouse was being erected, and the editor moved the family to their homestead claim near Crowellton in March, 1873.

Mrs. Susan Grant, who took a homestead claim in the precinct in 1878, was of pioneer stock. She was widely known and highly respected.

Several members of her family settled in that vicinity in an early day, and many of her descendants still reside there. Three of her daughters are Mrs. J. D. Seaman, Mrs. E. R. Webb and Mrs. D. Harpst. Mrs. C. V. D. Basten of Kearney is a granddaughter.

SUSAN CARR GRANT

Susan Carr was of a family of Virginians who moved by wagon through mountains and forests and settled in the Western Reserve about the year Ohio



MRS. SUSAN GRANT

A homestead settler in Odessa Township in 1875

became a state, that is, in 1868. Benjamin Carr, her father, had sold his slaves. One of the slaves, the nurse, followed on foot in peril of lurking savages, and in greater danger of starvation. The poor creature lived on roots and berries, ravenously breaking eggs in a nest she found only to discover that they contained half-hatched serpents. She brought a silver spoon to the baby of the Carr family. It would be happiness to record that she gained her freedom. Alas, for the cruelty of slavery, she was promptly deported back to her new master. Susan Carr was born in Ohio 100 years ago, March 15, 1816. She always retained traces of Virginia and of the southern life in her speech, her manners and unbounded hospitality.

She married Michael Grant in 1838 and had the usual large family of that period. Fated to the life of a pioneer, they left Ohio and its comforts to clear new land and open up a great new farm. She was indefatigable and efficient, and lived on a large scale in crude abundance. She attended to the huge Dutch oven, watched over the dryhouse, made maple sugar and tallow candles. She raised three orphan children at different times in Ohio. In Indiana she took an Irish family of three orphans into her home at once. Two of these orphans, the Maloneys, came to Nebraska with her. They settled at Crowellton, now Odessa, on the land now owned by E. R. Webb, who is her son-in-law.

Susan Grant lived there, seeing many changes in her family and neighborhood, for eighteen years. No longer young, she nevertheless, by her broad sympathy, brave cheer, good business ability and generosity, bettered the little frontier community.

She was of helpful service to every life within reach of her beneficent influence. Such lives are not forgotten. She died December 3, 1891, at the age of seventy-five. It falls to the lot of few women to leave a memory more cherished in the hearts of her descendants.

School District No. 12 was organized by C. Putnam, county superintendent, October 17, 1872. The district embraced all of range No. 17 in Buffalo County.

Notification was sent (J.) Marsh Grant, a taxable inhabitant therein, as per form in the law provided.

The records disclose that in July, 1873, this district had eighteen children of school age, and that J. Marsh Grant was serving as director of the district.

REMINISCENCES

Mrs. C. V. D. Basten

It was February 13, 1873, a little girl, traveling westward with her father and mother over the newly completed "B. & M. R. R. in Nebraska," as it was called then, was anxiously peering into the night as the train approached Kearney Junction. A gentleman, noticing her excitement and curiosity, talked to her about the new country—Indians, buffalo, prairie fires and prairie-dog towns, etc. He had been in the country five years as station agent at Elm Creek, Mr. D. C. Bond. He had seen buffalo shot from a cabin doorway as a herd of them stampeded through the little pioneer settlement. He transmitted, by telegraph, the account of the Sioux-Pawnee battle at Brady Island, transmitting and receiving on an

old-fashioned paper-ribbon telegraph instrument. He told how glad he was to see settlers come in. It was Mr. Bond's privilege, as the hard years came on, to stand by the settlers. In 1874 he brought out a car load of flour and let them have it—to pay for when they could.

The little girl's father took a pre-emption and bought an equal amount of railroad land at Crowellton, which was the first station east of Elm Creek. Mr. Bond thus became a neighbor and a highly esteemed friend through many years. Crowellton was only a place where mail was thrown off.

If the conductor was complaisant he would let passengers off, but sometimes he would compel them to alight at Stevenson, three miles farther east. Stevenson had a section house, Crowellton had a postoffice, in the house of Mrs. Susan Grant, which was also the social center of the neighborhood. Her son, J. Marsh Grant, had a library of 300 volumes—high, serious in character—forcing borrowers to read Doctor Kane's "Arctic Explorations," Hugh Miller's "Red Sandstone" and Dryden's poems when they would have much preferred the current novels of the day. Jules Verne's "Around the World in Eighty Days" came out at that time. We much enjoyed the description of the highly improbable sail-sled ride between Plum Creek and Omaha. Besides the books the Grants had the only sewing machine in the neighborhood, and they loaned it as freely as the books; it went from one house to another—was rarely at home and lasted two years.

Almost the first thing erected was a schoolhouse, which the wind promptly blew away, leaving the floor. It was as promptly rebuilt, and Thomas Maloney resumed his school. Some of his pupils were Adah Grant, Estelle Grant, Maggie Maloney, Adah Seaman, Harry Seaman, Josephine Halliwell, Jessie Greenman, Lizzie Vail and her brother. The Vails were English, one brother, a bachelor, was a doctor. They had a comfortable sod house and a large family. The Sturrocks were related; James Sturrock, a nephew, by trade a plasterer. The young wife, a good looking young dressmaker, came direct from England to take land—lived in one room with a shed roof, in the bottoms. Mrs. Sturrock gave us a graphic account of how she trod on a skunk when we paid her our first call.

The two families, Vails and Sturrocks, went almost immediately to California, though the Sturrocks lived a while in Kearney.

Mr. Greenman and others started a Sunday school which met at the schoolhouse. It was attended by everybody in the neighborhood.

Mr. Lord, a relative of the Goulds, and a theological student, preached there sometimes, and a homesteader by the name of J. B. Vincent wanted to; he was a religious fanatic, came to the meeting with a 12-pound clasped Bible. Mr. Lord happened to state that the Bible was not originally written in English; this Mr. Vincent indignantly denied. Another religious fanatic, a man by the name of Mitchell, boarded with Mrs. Catherine Edwards, mother of the Reeves boys, William, James and David. This Mitchell used to speak at meetings held during a revival by Reverend Mr. Summers (afterward pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Kearney). He would become greatly excited—a soul under conviction. One day detectives came out from Illinois and arrested him for murder.

Prof. D. B. Worley of Gibbon taught singing school at the schoolhouse in the

winter of 1874. He drove through to Overton, where he had some land. A literary society was started the same year in which budding oratory was encouraged. Amateur theatricals, attended by wagon loads of young people from Elm Creek, were the gala occasions. Dancing parties were not infrequent at the homes of the settlers in both communities, Odessa and Elm Creek.

Almost the first to erect shacks and live at Crowellton were the Brown brothers. One of them, D. Brown, left his wife, an intrepid little woman, while he worked on the railroad. Wandering groups of Pawnees were always peering in at her windows and begging persistently. Entirely alone, she was not frightened, which is more than can be said for other women better protected. Mrs. Brown went miles after her cow, which drifted away in the big April storm of 1873; herded the cow back and saved her. Henry Brown afterwards moved with his family to Kearney. The Christianson brothers built a house that was afterwards used as a schoolhouse in East Odessa. The Homer and Harpst families were related; came from Pennsylvania and returned there after a short stay, probably two or three years. The Clellands took up railroad land in 1874.

George W. Tovey was an 1872 settler on the land afterwards occupied by Theodore Knox, later known as the John Neal farm. Mr. Tovey was large of frame—brown-eyed and slow of speech. He would never commit himself; would always qualify every statement he made, and was a favorite of the young people. He and his homesteading partner, whose name is forgotten, would have responded more often to social demands, but they were obliged to accept alternately, as they possessed but one white shirt between them.

George D. Aspinwall was the second school teacher. He was a brother-in-law of J. E. Chidester. Other relatives by the name of Ransom came from Wisconsin and were well known citizens of the district and county for many years. Richard Waters lives on the homestead he settled on in 1873—probably the longest continuous residence in that neighborhood.

James Halliwell, an Englishman from Altoona, Pa., attained a great age, in the nineties. His farm is occupied by Roy Knap. His son, Samuel Halliwell, lives in the neighborhood.

J. M. Grant, Silas Grant and Thomas Maloney came to Odessa in 1872. By mistake they broke out R. D. Gould's land and wasted a year of hard work. Their land was a mile farther west. They built the house now occupied by E. R. Webb. J. M. Grant is now in Washington. Silas Grant went to Cabool, Mo., and died there July 17, 1908, one of the richest and best beloved citizens. His wife, Maggie Maloney, preceded him by ten years.

Thomas Maloney left Odessa in the spring of 1877. He has lived in Washington and Arkansas, and is now superintendent of a Government reclamation project in Phoenix, Ariz.

The Acheys and the Hostetlers were brothers-in-law, afterwards moving to Kearney; have relatives living in Kearney; the Lantz and Feathers families being descendants. L. C. Skelley occupied two places; the first purchased of Thomas Maloney for \$500, which they sold. They then lived for some years on what is now known as the Rall place; this they traded for a farm in Iowa. They are passing their declining years, having reared a family of six sons, all settled in Kansas City, Mo.

Cordelia M. Waite came with her father and several brothers, and sisters, from Michigan. Cordelia, a quiet, refined girl, taught school on Wood River, north-east of Kearney, boarding in a sod house with a lean-to bedroom. This addition separated from the main building one night when she was sleeping. The ridge pole fell across her, killing her.

The noise of the falling structure was not heard by the family. They discovered her in the morning with her cheek lying on her hand, just as she had slept.

George Hall lived but a short time in Odessa, moving to Illinois. Mrs. Hall's brother shot a buffalo in the hills north of Odessa in 1873. A deer was killed about the same place in 1872, weighing 200 pounds dressed. In 1874 Silas Grant, with a companion, hunted 100 miles farther west, and brought home venison and buffalo and a large number of buffalo robes. The buffalo meat was dried and lasted all summer.

John B. Neal settled on the Theadore Knox place in 1877, and lived there until 1903; had a family of eight children, five of whom are living. He was a successful farmer and a good citizen. He and his wife are living in Lents, a suburb of Portland, Ore. Two of his children, Sadie and Roy, live in Portland, Ben in Odessa, Henry in Kearney, Mentie in Wisconsin.

GRANT TOWNSHIP

Among the first settlers in Grant Township were John Groves, J. Atkinson, Jr., Richard Sell, J. J. Roberts, in 1872; Miles B. Hunt, W. White, E. S. Marsh, G. L. Kough, A. M. Mudge, J. K. Sanford, W. H. Brown, G. F. Hesselgrave, T. E. Foster, William Brown, in 1873; William Grant, G. W. Coffman, A. Thompson, Lydia M. Mace, H. Coffman, J. H. Coffman, Rena Hollenbeck, in 1874.

School District No. 13 in this township was organized by Dan A. Crowell, county superintendent, March 10, 1873. Notice of the organization of the district was sent Miles B. Hunt, a taxable inhabitant of the district, and directed that the first meeting for the election of school district officers be held at the house of said Miles B. Hunt on Friday, the 28th day of March (1873), at 10 o'clock A. M. (It will be noted the number of this school district is 13 and the first meeting held to elect officers met on Friday.)

The records disclose that in July, 1873, this district is reported as having twelve children of school age, and E. S. Marsh was serving as school director.

Mrs. C. V. D. Basten writes of the early history of Grant Township as follows:

HUNTSVILLE—STANLEY

The first location of Huntsville, which, accurately speaking, was the school-house, was picturesque; the building was white with green blinds. The river and its bridge and the overhanging trees on the banks made a peaceful, sylvan background. This was two miles east of the present Stanley. Huntsville was named after Miles B. Hunt; Crowellton after Dan A. Crowell. It is a pity the names had to be changed, at the request of the postoffice department, because easily confused with other names of postoffices in the state.

In 1872-73 all the homes were dugouts. Coming upon them from the side or rear, one knew it was a dwelling because of the stovepipe sticking out.

Few had floors. Mrs. William N. Brown put her good rag carpet directly upon the hard worn earth; had white curtains at the windows in front, one each side the door. The beds were curtained off in the rear corner of the single room. It was really attractive and comfortable.

Miss Rena Hollenbeck, who was married after her term of school in 1875 to J. H. Coffman, had a very attractive sod house nicely furnished.

The Hunts had several rooms in their dugout. They had a large family. Mr. Hunt was, in a sense, the dominating spirit in the neighborhood; an intelligent, forceful man. He was president of the school board. Gilbert Kough, Floyd Gargett and A. M. Mudge were directors in 1876. J. Marsh Grant taught there in 1873; Benjamin L. Grant in 1874. Benjamin L. Grant died November 11, 1877. His sister, Adah A. Grant, taught two months beginning January 1, 1877. Adah Seaman in the spring of 1876.

Floyd Gargett lived west of Huntsville; his wife was a sister of H. C. McNew, for many years editor of the Shelton Clipper. C. F. Hesselgrave was a relative of Gargett. The Hamiltons lived west of the Gargetts and were the only members of the community originally from New England.

John Groves, J. J. Roberts, W. White and G. L. Kough were all soldiers of the Civil war and past middle age. H. L. Seaman was also an old soldier, and there were probably others. Washington Petit lived east of Huntsville; his daughter, Carrie, attended school in 1876. So did children from the White, Mudge and Brown families, as also did Tabitha McNew, sister of Floyd Gargett.

There was no social life in the community except church and prayer meeting. Politics and baseball interested some of the men. Rev. Ober Knepper used to preach there. At a Wednesday night prayer meeting all those gifted in prayer took turns praying for Washington Petit's bad temper. His wife was present; this was but a year or two before Petit was killed by one of his sons.

The people in Huntsville had a very hard time during the winters of 1873, 1874 and 1875. It is doubtful if our forefathers were much nearer the borderline of hunger. Bread and gravy was the great staple. Coffee was made from wheat and corn browned, and then ground. One woman told of parching corn and cracking it with a nut-cracker to feed her children; women exchanged recipes for making gravy. It was a stout-hearted, brave but very narrow-minded community. The Hunts and Koughs went to Washington. Forest Hunt has been a successful follower of the sea and owns boats in the coast and Alaska trade. The Coffmans are also in Washington. Mr. Hunt and most of the older settlers are long since dead.

H. L. Seaman died in California in November, 1915, aged seventy-four, the last of a family of five brothers.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

LOUP AND RUSCO TOWNSHIPS—NAMES OF EARLY SETTLERS—PETER'S BRIDGE—BUFFALO IN PLEASANT VALLEY IN 1874—THE VILLAGE OF PLEASANTON—A 10-GRADE HIGH SCHOOL—BUFFALO COUNTY TELEPHONE COMPANY—FARMERS GRAIN COMPANY—THE PLEASANTON STATE BANK—THE FARMERS STATE BANK—COMMERCIAL CLUB—CHURCHES—FRATERNAL AND BENEFICIAL LODGES.

The first settlers in what is now known as Loup Township were H. F. Hand, J. T. Palmer, L. A. Colburn, C. B. Oakley, N. Dick, N. A. Brunce, J. Welch and H. H. Clark, who took homestead claims in the year 1874. Previous to the year 1880 twenty-nine homestead claims had been filed upon in the township.

The first settler in what is now Rusco Township was E. M. Holly, in 1873, and A. Peake, John Wilson, L. H. Johnson, J. L. Scott, L. Allen, B. L. Graham, A. M. Morse, F. Boyer and J. H. Lockard, in 1875. Twenty-five claims had been filed upon in the township previous to the year 1880.

PLEASANTON

The earliest settlement in the vicinity of Pleasanton was made on the farm now owned by Henry Peters on section No. 2. This land was homesteaded in 1874, and for many years there was a log house on this farm built by the previous owner. The name of Peters gained more than local fame on account of a bridge across the South Loup bearing his name. In the early settlement of the country there was a large amount of travel passing over this bridge by settlers who, arriving at Kearney, were making settlements in the northern part of Buffalo County and in Sherman and Custer counties, Kearney being the nearest railroad point. In the year 1874 Charles B. Oakley, Louis Colburn and H. H. Clark came looking for free land in the vicinity, and located in Pleasant Valley. The original survey was so faulty it was necessary for Mr. Clark to return to Kearney and secure the services of the county surveyor in order to properly locate their claims. Mr. Oakley located on section No. 8, the others on sections No. 7 and No. 22.

At this date the country was wild, there being many antelope, some deer and a small herd of buffalo. Mr. Clark and Mr. Colburn left the country, but Charles B. Oakley still lives here and is still enjoying life, having seen the country grow up from a wild region, passing through the sod-house period to one of the many prosperous settlements of Buffalo County. During the grasshopper year most of the settlers left this part of Buffalo County, so that Mr. Oakley has seen this locality settled twice, so to speak, he remaining through all the trials incident to pioneer life.



SCENES IN PLEASANTON

The townsite of Pleasanton was surveyed and platted in 1890, and the village incorporated January 12, 1894, and the following board of trustees appointed: E. C. Moffitt, E. W. Noyes, A. V. Hlava, D. Wort, S. E. Smith.

A school district was organized (No. 105) in 1890, the first district officers being Rudolph Ritter, Sr., James Welliver and A. V. Hlava.

This school district now (1915) has a 10-grade accredited high school, employing three teachers, and has built, at an expense of \$5,000, an up-to-date school building, all paid for. The present school district officers are: W. R. Scribner, director; I. T. Hart, moderator; R. B. Wort, treasurer.

That the country tributary to Pleasanton is fertile and fruitful, and that the early settlers made good on their homestead claims, is best evidenced by the value of farm products shipped from this point in the year 1915, approximately: Grain, \$150,000; hogs and cattle, \$120,000; horses and mules, \$20,000.

At Pleasanton are two grain elevators with a capacity of about twelve thousand bushels, and the lumber sales for the year 1915 amount to approximately forty thousand dollars.

The village owns a complete water system, costing \$9,000, and furnishing an abundance of water for domestic use and fire protection.

The members of the village board in 1915 were: F. L. Grammer, chairman; A. L. Randall, R. A. Eaton, A. E. Pearson, C. F. Hall.

The Buffalo County Telephone Company was organized by the people of Pleasanton and vicinity in the year 1903 and incorporated in 1910 with S. B. Carpenter, president; A. V. Valentine, vice president; P. S. Holtzinger, manager; M. S. Booher, secretary; F. L. Grammer, treasurer. The company had 128 telephones in operation.

In the year 1915 the capital stock of the company was \$6,580; surplus, \$2,000; phones in operation, 324. Officers: A. H. Valentine, president; Adolph English, vice president; B. S. Wort, manager; M. S. Booher, secretary; F. L. Grammer, treasurer.

The Farmers Grain Company, with four stockholders, was incorporated in January, 1905, under what is known as the "Line" system, Pleasanton being one of the successful branches of the system. In 1915 the company had a membership of more than one hundred, comprising both business men in the village and farmers of the surrounding community. The company handles grain, coal and lumber. D. Phillips is president of the company; the local board of trustees, Albert Reese, Fr  d Wise, W. F. Vest.

The Pleasanton State Bank was incorporated July 23, 1892, with a capital of \$10,000. The incorporators were D. W. Titus, F. L. Grammer, Joseph Grammer, E. W. Noyes and John Terhune, who were also the board of directors. The officers of the bank: John Terhune, president; E. W. Noyes, vice president; F. L. Grammer, cashier. In 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus, \$10,000; deposits, \$150,000. The officers: A. H. Grammer, president; E. W. Noyes, vice president; F. L. Grammer, cashier; W. R. Scribner, assistant cashier.

The Farmers State Bank at Pleasanton was incorporated May 29, 1909, with M. L. Dolan, president; Charles G. Ryan, vice president; J. R. Bonson, cashier. This bank has a capital stock of \$12,000; deposits, \$62,000. The officers in

1915: M. L. Dolan, president; Ludwig Mueller, vice president; F. A. Mueller, cashier.

In September, 1914, was organized the Pleasanton Commercial Club, with a membership of thirty. The officers: R. O. Stevenson, president; H. H. Lambers, vice president; F. A. Mueller, secretary.

UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

During the summer of 1892 the people of Pleasanton and vicinity, being eager for church privileges, thought it expedient to organize a Sunday school at the Pleasanton schoolhouse, one-half mile south of town.

Daniel Cluster was elected superintendent, serving for one year, and being followed by C. W. Wood and Marion W. Perkins. During the existence of the Sunday school it was convenient for the West Nebraska Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ to send a preacher each year to conduct services at the Pleasanton schoolhouse. In the year 1895 the Pleasanton church was organized, but the services continued to be held at the schoolhouse until January, 1899, at which time the new United Brethren Church was dedicated. The charter members of this church were: Mr. and Mrs. D. Cluster, Mr. and Mrs. James Pearson, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Chingrin, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Easley, Mr. and Mrs. Marion W. Perkins, Mrs. E. C. Moffitt, Mrs. J. Van Buskirk, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Koffroth. The church has (in 1915) property worth \$3,000, and a membership of 100.

The pastors who have served this church and people have been, in the order named, A. B. Bechtold, D. A. Geil, William Tooley, W. G. Arnold, Mary W. Holman, Mr. Henline, J. A. Darby, E. White, T. J. Gallagher, A. Boyd, A. W. Neville, R. A. Giles, R. L. Brill, Blaine Radcliff.

The Roman Catholic Church was organized in March, 1906, by Father Wolfe, and meetings were held in Grammer's Hall until January 1, 1910, when the new church building, which cost \$3,000, was dedicated. The different priests in charge of the church have been Fathers Cavana, Moser, Link, Kampman, Yorke and Schida. The church trustees are Joseph R. Nickman, Joseph Schuller and Joseph Zwiener.

Pleasanton Lodge No. 282, A. O. U. W., was instituted in April, 1893, with the following charter members: J. Johnson, Walter W. Reese, Joseph Grammer, D. Wort, Vanzle Voseipka, F. L. Grammer, C. B. Oakley, Thomas Bell, William Johnson, Berdine F. Rogers, S. Remington, Charles M. Trott, William Moxley. The officers: D. Wort, M. W.; W. W. Reese, P. M. W.; Joseph Grammer, F.; C. M. Trott, O.; F. L. Grammer, Rec.; A. V. Hlava, Fin.; C. B. Oakley, G. In 1915 the officers were: W. R. Jones, P. M. W.; T. M. Davis, M. W.; F. L. Grammer, Rec.; E. W. Noyes, Fin.; C. B. Oakley, G.; Dr. A. L. Randall, physician.

Pleasanton Camp No. 2053, M. W. A., was organized July 15, 1893, with the following charter members: E. C. Moffitt, V. C.; S. E. Smith, W. A.; F. G. Hays, banker; J. H. Hansen, clerk; C. W. Wood, escort; Dr. J. H. Penn, physician; J. H. Booher, sentry. In 1915 the camp was in a flourishing condition, with the following officers: F. L. Grammer, V. C.; J. H. Booher, W. A.; A. H.



CATHOLIC CHURCH, PLEASANTON



UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH, PLEASANTON

Grammer, banker; W. R. Scribner, clerk; Louis Zimmer, escort; Dr. A. L. Randall, physician; W. C. Stevenson, watchman; Carl Kirschner, sentry.

POOLE

The Village of Poole in Buffalo County had its beginning about the year 1889, a little trading post with one store, a grain elevator, and was known as Poole's Siding. In the year 1905 the Union Pacific Railroad Company completed a depot and installed an agent.

THE POOL RANCH

In 1876 W. W. Pool came to Nebraska, taking as a pre-emption claim 160 acres in section 12, township 11, range 15, in what was later known as Cedar Township. In 1883 Mr. Pool and others organized the Nebraska Land and Cattle Company, which engaged in cattle raising, the company having some ten thousand acres of land in Beaver and adjoining townships. The officers of the company in the beginning were: B. F. Peck, president; R. L. Downing, vice president; W. W. Pool, secretary and manager. In addition to stock raising the company cultivated about thirty-five hundred acres in mixed crops, and in 1889 grew 800 acres of wheat.

REGISTERED DEVON CATTLE

Mr. Pool brought with him from New York a small herd of registered Devon cattle, the first, and so far as the editor knows, the only herd of registered cattle of the Devon breed ever brought into the county.

At a county fair held in Shelton, Mr. Pool exhibited his cattle and they attracted much attention. They were well bred, of a deep red color, long branching horns and active on their feet. The cows of the breed are good milkers and there are no better oxen than those of the Devon breed. Mr. Pool and many others who were acquainted with the breed were of the opinion they would prove a very desirable, valuable breed for this locality. The result was most disappointing. The climate and conditions were not congenial, and the writer is advised the breed made no impress on the cattle of the county. Mr. Pool being engaged extensively in the cattle business, and living some distance from a commercial center, and it being before the days of telephones, he constructed a private telegraph line from his ranch to Ravenna, and himself and two of his daughters became fairly expert operators. At a later date, when the Union Pacific branch was built to Pleasanton, a siding was put in near the Pool ranch and named Pool Siding, and later the name changed to Poole. The first and only agent at Poole has been J. C. Mahoney.

In 1910 the village was incorporated, the members of the village board being C. E. Clark, J. S. Hanna, J. E. Criffield, Henry Abrams and J. C. Mahoney.

School District No. 60 was organized in 1882, and the first schoolhouse built of sod, and was located on the northwest quarter of section No. 22. The members of the first school district board were Messrs. Swigart, Dodge and John

Anderson. In 1884 a frame schoolhouse was built, and in 1890 this was moved to a grove on John Jergensen's farm, near the Union Pacific track, west of Poole. In 1907 the old schoolhouse was sold and a new one built in the village. The present school board is composed of John Jergensen, Charles Brabham and William Klein.

On July 9, 1907, was organized the First United Presbyterian Church of Poole. The charter members: T. J. McConnell, Mrs. Orie McConnell, Roy McConnell, Ruth McConnell, Vada McConnell, J. Charles Miller, Martin A. Sullivan, Mrs. Nonnie Miller, Mrs. Effie Sullivan, Ella Watt. The pastors serving the church, in their order: N. A. Whitehill, J. S. Tussey, Earl C. Coleman.

The State Bank of Poole was chartered July 11, 1905, with a capital stock of \$10,000; deposits (1915), \$100,000. Officers: M. L. Dolan, president; Adam Schneider, vice president; C. E. Clark, cashier; E. A. Clark, assistant cashier.

Poole has two grain elevators, with a capacity of 1,500 bushels. During the year 1914 there was shipped of carload lots: Corn, 20; hay, 2; stock, 40; wheat, 160; miscellaneous, 10; total, 232.

The population of the village is 200. The members of the village board (1915): Joseph Clayton, A. D. Hanna, Francis Reynolds, B. J. Stover, J. C. Mahoney.

CHAPTER XXXIX

ARMADA TOWNSHIP AND MILLER—LIST OF EARLY SETTLERS—WM. CRAVEN STARTS IN BUSINESS IN A SOD HOUSE WITH A CAPITAL OF \$9—POSTOFFICE ESTABLISHED IN ABOUT 1884, NAMED ARMADA—VILLAGE OF MILLER INCORPORATED IN 1890—NAMES OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES—NAMES OF POSTMASTERS—NAMES OF PHYSICIANS—THE FIRST NEWSPAPER—THE MILLER INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COMPANY—BANKS, SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, LODGES—W. C. T. U. ESTABLISH A LIBRARY AND REST ROOM.

ARMADA TOWNSHIP—MILLER

The first settlement in Armada Township appears to have been by H. C. Harbaugh, A. J. Fannell, Wm. Carr, R. Burney and Thomas Jeffry in 1873; John Mercer, J. H. Brown, Robert Miller and Oscar Hamilton in 1874.; I. Lamb and J. F. Mackey in 1875; A. L. Armstrong in 1877; Wm. M. White, G. A. Roach and H. Zarrs in 1878; J. L. Abel, R. F. Simpson, F. B. Craps, A. F. Burt and H. T. West in 1879.

In the year 1881, Wm. Craven, a soldier in the Civil war and a native of North Carolina, purchased ten acres of land, built a sod house in which on a capital of \$9 he began the keeping of a store. A postoffice had been established about three miles distant, a petition was circulated and the postoffice moved to that point, William Craven named postmaster, and the name of Armada given to the embryo commercial center. When the K. and B. H. Railroad was built into the township the village was moved to the railroad and named Miller. Miller was incorporated in the year 1890, with J. Millspaugh, M. O. Polter, A. B. Cherry, H. S. Pease and Dr. E. W. Northrup as its first board of village trustees. The names of the present board of trustees are: Dr. J. P. Norcross, chairman; J. W. Miller, A. E. Kappel, Ray Cox and J. M. Robinson; Ross Brown, village clerk.

Miller has three grain elevators with a grain storage capacity of 160,000 bushels.

A postoffice was established in 1890 and the names of those who have served as postmasters are in the following order: A. B. Cherry, H. S. Pease, B. F. Harbaugh, H. S. Pease, L. W. Hall, L. K. King.

The names of the physicians who have served the people of the locality are: Dr. E. W. Northrup, Dr. J. P. Norcross, Dr. C. R. Watson.

The first newspaper was edited by Charles M. Huston, 1891-1893.

The Miller Sun, edited by F. W. Pace since 1915.

The Miller Independent Telephone Company was organized in 1906 with

a capital stock of \$2,500. Its first officers: J. P. Norcross, president; L. W. Hall, manager; F. D. Brown, treasurer. The names of those most active in promoting the company were J. P. Norcross, L. W. Hall, F. D. Brown, L. P. Wells, N. Maddox, C. M. Huston, R. M. Pierce. This company began business with forty phones in operation. In the year 1915 the company had a capital stock of \$4,500 and 150 phones in use. Its officers: J. C. Power, president; P. M. Jacobson, vice president; L. W. Hall, manager; F. D. Brown, treasurer.

The First Bank of Miller was organized in 1889 with a capital stock of \$25,000. Its officers: J. E. Dickerman, president; W. C. Tillson, vice president; F. D. Brown, cashier.

In the year 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus and undivided profits, \$25,000; deposits, \$100,000. Its officers: K. Dickerman, president; K. H. Dickerman, vice president; F. D. Brown, cashier; Ross Brown, assistant cashier.

The bank occupied its present (1915) quarters in 1909.

The Bank of Miller was organized in 1889 with a capital stock of \$25,000; the first officers, Mathew Maddox, president, W. L. Maddox, cashier. In the year 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$25,000; surplus, \$7,000; deposits, \$40,000.

The banking quarters were destroyed by fire November 9, 1915, the bank occupying its new quarters early in the year 1916.

School District No. 54, Miller, was organized in 1890, the first district officers, H. S. Peace, P. L. Anderson, C. H. Aron. At an expense of approximately three thousand five hundred dollars a school building was erected in 1893.

The Miller School has ten grades and employs four teachers; the present (1915) district officers are Charles Aron, C. M. Houston, L. W. Hall.

The United Brethren Church was organized at Miller in 1890 with a charter membership of some twenty-five or thirty; among the names which can be recalled are Henry C. Green, J. W. Wylie, W. F. Triplett, J. W. Stevens, Wallace Pierce and A. Boyd.

The first pastor was Rev. A. Boyd. A church building was erected in the year 1893 at an approximate cost of fifteen hundred dollars. The membership of the church in 1915 is forty-six; its pastor, Rev. William Buswell.

Church of Christ of Miller was organized in 1913 with a charter membership of fifteen; H. Ehreman and J. P. Norcross were chosen elders, and Wm. Fisher, deacon. The first pastor was Paul Young, evangelist.

A church building was purchased in 1914 at a cost of \$1,500.

The membership in 1915 was twenty; the church has no regular pastor, A. J. O'Neal serving as resident evangelist.

A Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at Miller in 1890, with a charter membership of twenty-five; the first pastor, Rev. S. J. Medlin. A church building was erected in 1893 at an approximate cost of two thousand dollars.

This church organization disbanded and sold their church edifice to the Church of Christ.

The Christian Church at Miller was organized in 1905 with a charter membership of thirty-five; the elders were J. P. Norcross and H. Ehreman; the deacons, D. F. White and Ray Cox. The first pastor, Rev. J. W. Walker. A church



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF MILLER



PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING, MILLER

building erected in 1907 cost approximately sixteen hundred dollars. The present membership is forty. Rev. Charles J. Shook was pastor up to 1913, since that date the church has been without a resident pastor.

In the year 1910 there was instituted at Miller an organization of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union with a charter membership of about twenty. Among those most active in this movement, as called to mind, were Mesdames L. W. Hall, F. D. Brown, J. G. King, Ray Cox, A. E. Kappel, H. W. Fox, Wm. Fisher, C. A. Sea and Miss Ruby Aron.

The members of the union have a library of about two hundred volumes, a club room for meetings and support and care for a rest room for ladies.

Jewett Post No. 228, Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Nebraska, was instituted at Miller in 1885 with thirty-five charter members. In 1915 the post had a membership of eleven, J. W. Stevens, post commander.

A. F. & A. M.

Square and Compass Lodge No. 213, A. F. & A. M. of Nebraska. Organized in 1888 as Armada Lodge U. D., moved to Miller in 1890 and chartered as Square and Compass Lodge No. 213, December 14, 1891. Charter membership, eighteen: Peter L. Anderson, Henry R. Berkheimer, Frank D. Brown, Oliver R. Bryan, Arthur F. Burt, Willard J. Clark, William M. Craven, Henry C. Green, Howard C. Harbaugh, Nathaniel H. Hawk, Frank J. Himmelwright, Darius B. Jones, Isaac R. Kidd, Erie W. Northrup, Thurston W. Sibley, Samuel Veal, Cyrus W. Wright, James W. Wylie. First officers: William M. Craven, W. M.; Howard C. Harbaugh, Sec'y. Present membership, forty. Present officers: Ross Brown, W. M.; C. R. Watson, S. W.; D. W. Friend, J. W.; F. D. Brown, Treas.; L. W. Hall, Sec'y.

Miller Camp No. 973 M. W. A. was instituted with a charter membership of thirteen: Mark Aspinwall, Frank D. Brown, Wm. Lamma, Mark O. Petter, Peter L. Anderson, David Cummins, M. J. McNally, Joseph W. Stevens, L. B. Irwin, Harvey Brown, John W. King, Erie W. Northrup, Edward Wilson.

The first officers were: L. B. Irwin, V. C., Edward Wilson, Mark Aspinwall, clerk. In 1915 the membership was eighty-five. A. N. Bliss, V. C., A. E. Scranton, clerk.

Logan Lodge, Knights of Pythias, No. 125, was instituted March 12, 1890, with officers and charter members as follows: W. L. Maddox, P. C.; M. B. Potter, C. C.; H. C. Green, V. C.; Charles Porter, P.; Jos. Millspaugh, M. E.; C. M. Huston, M. F.; J. W. King, K. R. & S.; A. B. Cherry, M. A.; Thomas Walker, I. G.; F. C. Potter, O. G.; G. E. Tarbox, W. A. Hackett, E. C. Wilson, E. B. McElhinney, Allen Bush, Edward Bush, Thomas Cook, Edward Moore, H. S. Pease. In 1915 the lodge had a membership of forty-two. Its officers: A. N. Bliss, C. C.; J. W. Larson, V. C.; Ross Brown, P.; A. C. Andrews, M. W.; J. J. Norcross, K. R. & S.; H. M. Crusinberry, M. A.; L. W. Hall, M. E.; George Comstock, M. F.; C. M. Houston, I. G.; L. S. Baker, O. G.

Miller Lodge No. 303, I. O. O. F., was instituted May 1, 1905. The charter members being: A. W. Osborn, N. G.; S. B. Montgomery, V. G.; Wm. Tiede, Secy.; E. E. Cole, Treas.; L. A. Hazzard, J. E. Elmore, E. F. Wagner, C. W. Draper, James Sennett, J. G. Hall.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of twenty-five. H. M. Crusinberry, N. G.; H. Reir, V. G.; A. E. Scranton, Secy.; E. E. Cole, Treas.

WATERTOWN

Watertown, a station on the branch line of the Union Pacific extending north from Kearney, was established in the year 1890.

A postoffice was established in 1890 with J. S. Veal as postmaster.

In the year 1886 a school district, No. 101, was established; in the year 1915 there were thirty-nine pupils enrolled, two teachers employed and ten grades taught in the school.

In the year 1891 a Methodist Church was organized with fourteen members. The pastor in 1915, Reverend Mr. Thurber.

At this point is a grain elevator with a capacity of 10,000 bushels, and twenty-five cars of hay, grain and live stock were shipped in the year 1914.

AMHERST

The Village of Amherst was incorporated in the year 1894. Its first village officers were O. G. Cobleigh, John Schnoor, Frank Outson, J. Y. Jones, Stanley Wysoki.

It is a thriving village, with two banks, a telephone exchange, two grain elevators, a feeding point for large numbers of sheep, and is a thriving commercial center having the patronage and support of a prosperous rural community.

Notwithstanding every reasonable effort has been made by written communications to obtain data and information as to the local history of the village, its churches, its fraternal organizations, its telephone company and other features of the history and activities of its people, the result has been disappointing.

School District No. 119 (Amherst) was organized in 1893, with Herman Kapedsky as director. In 1892 a church building had been erected and this building was purchased by the school district and used as a schoolhouse; the cost of the building was approximately six hundred dollars. A high school was established in 1908. In 1915 ten grades were taught and four teachers employed. The school district officers were: James L. Vest, F. M. Kenney, W. W. Johnson.

The Commercial State Bank of Amherst was organized June 10, 1908. The incorporators, Henry Menke, T. B. Garrison, Sr., H. H. Sinclair. The capital stock, \$10,000. The first officers, T. B. Garrison, Sr., president, Henry Menke, cashier.

In 1915 the bank had a capital stock of \$10,000; surplus, \$3,499; deposits, \$46,242. W. M. Ross, president, S. E. Smith, cashier.

First National Bank of Amherst—In the year 1915 its officers, A. U. Dann, president, A. T. Reynolds, cashier. Capital stock, \$25,000; surplus, \$5,000; deposits, \$195,000.

Amherst Lodge No. 324, I. O. O. F., was instituted March 25, 1907, with a charter membership of forty. Its first Noble Grand being E. F. Wagner.

In 1915 the membership was thirty-three. The present officers are: A. R.



VIEW OF RIVERDALE



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF AMHERST

Green, N. G.; J. H. Hoagland, V. G.; W. W. Johnson, Sec'y; T. R. Curd, Treas.; Frank Long, Warden; L. Trumble, Conductor; Bert Jones, O. G.; J. M. Johnson, I. G.; Jas. Jameson, R. S. N. G.; Roy Curd, L. S. N. G.; S. Y. Harris, R. S. V. G.; C. T. Grimes, L. S. V. G.; M. E. Parker, R. S. S.; Wm. Buettner, L. S. S.; Milton King, Chaplain.

The Past Grands of the lodge have been L. Trumble, F. Harris, W. W. Johnson, F. H. Belschner, C. Blois, T. R. Curd, G. Veal.

RIVERDALE

The unincorporated Village of Riverdale had its beginning in the fall of 1890 when August Raymond built the first dwelling house.

In 1915 there were three general stores, two grain elevators with a storage capacity of 20,000 bushels each, one bank, a telephone exchange, two churches and three fraternal lodges.

Riverdale is most appropriately named, located as it is in the beautiful and charming, fertile and fruitful Wood River Valley of the Platte.

School District No. 15 was organized by Dan A. Crowell, county superintendent, May 3, 1873. The territory embraced was four miles from east to west, extending to the north line of the county, twenty-two miles, embracing eighty-eight square miles of territory.

Official notification of the formation of the district was delivered to J. R. King, directing that the first meeting be held at the house of said King, on Saturday, the 10th day of May, 1873, at 7 P. M. The records seem to disclose that J. R. King was elected director of the district, that on the 10th day of July, 1873, there were in the district seventeen children of school age and that the district had been apportioned \$37.29 of the state school fund.

At a cost of \$1,200 a schoolhouse was erected in 1873.

In 1911 the number of grades taught was increased to ten, and in 1912 the school building was enlarged and improved at an expense of \$1,200. Three teachers are employed. The present (1915) district officers are: O. G. Knox, director; C. H. Pratt, treasurer; John Farrell, moderator. O. G. Knox has served as director since 1895.

The State Bank of Riverdale was organized in July, 1907, with a capital stock of \$5,000. Its incorporators were: A. T. Reynolds, Fred Bargmann, W. H. Swartsley, C. H. Pratt, Thomas Pratt.

The officers of the bank: Fred Bargmann, president; A. T. Reynolds, vice president; C. H. Pratt, cashier.

In 1915 the bank had as capital stock, \$5,000; surplus, \$5,000; deposits, \$50,000. Its officers: Fred Bargmann, president; Thomas Pratt, vice president; C. H. Pratt, cashier.

The Riverdale Christian Church was organized January 1, 1898, with the following charter members: William Knox, Emma Knox, J. C. Burnell, Belle Burnell, W. A. Whitney, Mattie Whitney, Charles Larsen, Henrietta Larsen, W. T. Keyes, Flora Keyes, Homer R. Knox, Jacob Flury, Catherine Flury. The first pastor was Rev. J. W. Walker.

A church building was erected in 1894 at an approximate cost of twelve hundred dollars. In 1915 the church had a membership of seventy.

It was without a pastor.

Riverdale Lodge No. —, I. O. O. F., was organized April 5, 1910, with charter members and officers as follows: W. H. Grassmeyer, N. G.; John Farrell, V. G.; C. S. Hubbard, Sec.; A. E. Walters, Treas.; Thomas Pratt, Fred Schirneker, W. O. Stephens, Sanford Merrill, W. H. Cottrell, Howard Wimberly.

In 1915 the lodge had a membership of sixty-nine. Its officers: E. W. Pratt, N. G.; J. E. Nelson, V. G.; R. L. Prascher, Sec.; C. H. Pratt, Treas.

CHAPTER XL

SCOTT AND SARTORIA TOWNSHIPS—LIST OF EARLY SETTLERS—REMINISCENCES BY JOHN SWENSON—JEF HOOLEY SHOTS AN ELK—HOOLEY, A PROFESSIONAL HUNTER—SWENSON'S RIDGLING PONY—"YES, STRANGER, FOR HUMANITY SAKE"—FIRST SETTLERS—FOUR DAYS' LABOR TO GET A SACK OF FLOUR—CHILDREN QUARREL OVER WHO SHALL HAVE A FLOUR SACK FOR A GARMENT—TEAM LOST IN QUICKSAND HOLE IN LOUP RIVER—A DUCKING IN AN AIR-HOLE—A COW, A LAME AND A PIG—COTTONWOOD TIMBER ON THE SOUTH LOUP.

SCOTT AND SARTORIA TOWNSHIPS

The first settlements in Scott Township appear to have been by Benjamin Scott and John Laro in 1873, W. Hanshen, J. P. Gilmore, James A. Betts in 1874, J. J. Moore and James Broadfoot in 1878, and W. W. McLea and O. H. Lowry in 1879.

The first settlers in Sartoria Township appear to have been B. Lee, Nels Lee and Mattie Stockdale in 1878, and P. Pierce, C. Cook, Wm. Cook, W. J. Grant and George Pfeiffer in 1879.

Township No. 12, Range No. 17, was originally named Taylor Township. There is a tradition that the name "Taylor" did not appeal to John Swenson for some reason and Mr. Swenson induced the county board to change the name to Sartoria, explaining that Sartoria was a French word having a like meaning as Taylor.

REMINISCENCES IN THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF SCOTT AND SARTORIA TOWNSHIPS

By John Swenson

(Note—Mr. Swenson was a soldier of the Civil war, leaving one arm on the battlefield. He took a homestead claim in Divide Township in the year 1874. He served two terms as county superintendent.)

My reasons for becoming a dweller in the region afterwards named Sartoria was that I wished to get into a territory which afforded opportunities for raising live stock. The country was then regarded as useless for any other purpose; with this end in view, I went from my homestead on section No. 4, town No. 10, range No. 16, early in March, 1879, up along the South Loup River to look for a suitable location. Finding no place suitable to my purpose, after having gone up to Elk Creek, I returned the next day. It rained and snowed alternately that day. At the foot of a high hill, now called Black Hill Creek, I saw a cabin. Of

course I went in. Here dwelled Jephtha Hooley, a professional hunter. He met me with every kind of good will and generosity.

Put my horse in a roofless stable and gave him some of his last bunch of hay. Making known the object of my visit Hooley pointed east and said: "See that bluff yonder? There you will find a log house and a good well; occupy this and you will have plenty of hay and lots of range." I took Hooley's advice and am still on that ground to which he pointed me.

HOOLEY SHOOTS AN ELK

During our conversation Hooley told me of an accident that hit him on one of his recent hunting expeditions. Having heard that elk were often seen in a certain locality, Hooley went there to get some of them. He arrived at the objective region late one evening and let his mules loose to graze while he was arranging for the comforts of his camp. Something scared the mules and they came stampeding by the camp, and Hooley said, "Here come the elks," leveled his faithful rifle and down fell one of his mules.

One thing more in connection with Jef Hooley. Poverty though not injurious is always inconvenient and sometimes occasions loss. For stabling our stock during the first we lived on the Loup (1879), we put two long stacks in parallel positions about sixteen feet apart and roofed the space between them with poles the hay. The 12th of February, 1880, was the worst day of the worst winter which I have experienced during all the years I have lived in Nebraska. The wind piled the snow on our stable roof so it broke. I had opened the door, so the sheep were running out just as the crash came. The last of the sheep, thirty in number, and one calf, became covered with the debris; I needed help to manage the situation. Jef Hooley, two miles distant, was the nearest and only place I could go to expect help.

Hooley appeared to be indifferent to God's commandments except the one which advises to not give thought for the morrow. When I came to his house, the last handful of twigs had been put into the stove. So before he could render me any assistance, he had to provide something to burn for his house. To effect this, he with a hunting partner, had to go to the river one mile away, in one of the worst Nebraska storms, to drag home a load of willow brush and chop it up, before he could go with me. He and his companion worked for me till dark pulling out from under the debris, dead sheep.

Jef Hooley's source of livelihood was what he could bring down by his gun. He went west into what he called the sandhills, and came home about Christmas time with a big load of deer and antelope. I remember with affection Jef Hooley, mostly for the good heart he carried covered with a lot of rubbish.

MY RIDGLING PONY

My first power of conveyance was a ridgling pony, weighing in good condition 812 pounds. He took good care of himself on the road whether he had his burden on his back or behind him. However, if there was a horse within several miles ahead of him, he would deliver a speed and assume a style that the king's

horses could not surpass. There being no special inducement for progress on the other side of the river and somewhat heavily loaded his wagon got stuck in the quicksand and one time when I asked him to cross the river without any load he refused to go on.

Leaving my sod house on the divide and directing my course towards my newly acquired home, I had to cross the Loup; Billy stopped again. Mr. Elisha Miles' ranch was near by. Unhooking the horse I led him up towards the ranch house. Mr. Miles was plowing. I went up and saluted him. He did not answer my greeting nor face towards me, just turned his head and looked askant towards me. I explained my predicament and asked him to help me out. At that time in comparison with Mr. Miles I was a young man. He said, "Young man where are you bound?" I answered: "I am moving on the place vacated by O. W. Smith." "The deuce you are," said Miles. "That is right in the midst of my range. Don't you know that the cattlemen allot the range between them and they allow no squatters to come in and occupy any part of it?" I said, "I have heard of such arrangements, but any private agreement about a matter of which they have no legal right, has no binding power on others who have just the same rights as they have." "Can you pull me out?" I asked. "Yes, stranger, for humanity sake," he said.

Coming up to my new habitation, which consisted of a log house 11 by 12, with earth roof, one window, and no door, I put in my load of furniture and ascended a high bluff from which I could view the landscape in all directions. No where was there a habitation of man visible. But along the river-bottom was life and joy; there were thousands of prairie chickens playing and cooing, while in the hills vibrated the thrilling melody of cranes.

FIRST SETTLERS

The first settlers in the region afterwards named Sartoria, came in the fall of 1877. They were Norwegians named Lee. They consisted of the parents, four stalwart sons and two grown up daughters. They took three homesteads at first and more afterwards. They had but one team. Began breaking prairie early in April and ended in June.

With that only team, they went to Kearney, once a week (twenty-eight miles) to get their two plows sharpened. They raised eighteen bushels of sod corn to the acre, that year. The Lees, though prosperous were impressed by a spirit of expansion to seek better opportunities, sold out their holdings to a colony which came from Iowa. They were Richard Hughes, Owen Jones, and W. R. Jones. of these only the latter is now left. He is quite prosperous, has raised a colony of daughters who have the peculiar distinction of having acquired education and are not above work. There came also with those mentioned a family named Royale. They were and are so numerous that I have to limit my narrative to the mentioning of only one, George. George Royale came to Sartoria with five motherless children, and was apparently the poorest of the poor. What has he now? He owns all the homesteads which his fellow colonists bought and has a landscape west of numberless acres and all his places stocked to their full capacity.

The other settlers who came by companies, were the Browns, McCurries, the Chipps and others from Missouri.

SCOTT TOWNSHIP

This township was first settled by Benjamin Scott, after whom it was named, who settled on his homestead on Deer Creek in 1873, and on which he lived continuously till 1907, when he hung up his armor and was put to rest. His good wife went some years before him. There was nothing remarkable about Ben Scott, except that he was a model citizen, as I believe he had been a model soldier.

On the west bank of the river Cornelius Cook erected a rather nice frame house. He and his family were people of education and refinement; they tried to live like white people should live; at this undertaking their means soon quit them and they quit the country.

Mr. Cook's land was transferred to his son-in-law, T. J. Parish, who has added many acres to it since and made it a good size ranch. Frank, his son, lives on the place now (1915) and is prosperous.

The first Klunders, the Sohrweids, the Wheelers and the Dickmans, were there when I came on the river. Just where they settled I do not know, but I know they have been and are prosperous; they are worth from twenty-five to one hundred thousand dollars, every one of them, and though some of the first settlers are dead and some gone to other places, their children have succeeded them and are worthy successors, making wealth and improving the country.

LUDICROUS AND DANGEROUS INCIDENTS

There were many ludicrous as well as dangerous happenings along the river, which, if related, would read stranger than fiction. I will mention but two with which I had to do. Early in March Dan Rohrbarger and I went south on the divide after some corn. On coming back my horse, being used to cross the river, bounded right through. Rohrbarger's horses, despite his whipping with a two-foot long willow switch, stopped in the middle of the stream to drink. The team having satisfied itself, when urged to go on could not move the wagon. Rohrbarger, facing the river diagonally and seeing the water running by him swiftly, cried to me, "Ain't I going?" "Not that any one can see," I replied. "What will I do? No, rather say, what can you do? Will I have to leave the wagon here?" he said. I replied, "If you can not move that's the only thing you can do." Rohrbarger unhooked the horses and walked out on the wagon tongue and shook the tongue loose from the neckyoke and jumped on one of the horses. When this one was asked to go he could not get his feet loose. After floundering for some time he finally fell on his side with Mr. Rohrbarger under him. Rohrbarger at last got out and walked home in his wet clothes, four miles. The next morning he came with two men and two teams. How to get the wagon loose looked to be a difficult matter indeed. All that was to be seen of the wagon, was one corner about eight inches above water. The two men went into the wagon in the water and as the team passed forward and back the men in the wagon threw,

each time, four grain sacks of corn into the passing wagon. The corn being all out the wagon had to be taken to pieces to the last wheel to get it out of the quicksand.

A DUCKING IN AN AIR-HOLE IN THE ICE

Poverty having somewhat let loose its grip, we slowly crawled out of it and some of us got in possession of some not insignificant herds of cattle. I, among the most of those mentioned, got in possession of cattle and knew, like the man who has earned a dollar, how to use it, took care of my herd. One Sunday, bright the breezy, I went to the river to see that the cattle got water and to prevent them from falling into air-holes and drowning. One large bunch came to one of these air-holes and, behold, the ice broke and the whole bunch fell in.

All scrambled out except one little calf. This one raised his front part up so that his knees rested on the edge of the ice. I, reaching out for a hold at the root of his tail, to help him out, slid into the river head foremost. With difficulty I got out. Thermometer 6 below zero, alone, and three-fourths of a mile from the house, to go-against a brisk northwest wind. I expected to freeze to death, but there was no other way than to try to get home. In running towards the house my clothing soon got stiff and kept the wind from using its power on me. I got home all right.

A COW, A LAMB AND A PIG

In my sheep keeping we sometimes had orphan lambs. These we had to feed with a bottle. This was tiresome and so with one lamb I tried to teach it to nurse a small cow. This went well after the first trial. When the little cow was lying down, the lamb hunted out the teat and then nursed the cow. The cow let down her milk so that it ran on the ground. A pig took care of what seemed to be wasting. He followed the stream from the ground to the teat, and in this way learned to nurse the cow also. These two followed the cow until satisfied, after which they would lie down. When again the cow wanted to be relieved she lowed, the lamb came running and bleating at every jump and the pig came following as fast as he could and squealing at every jump. The cow stood the same as for her own calf. These two grafters grew to big proportions.

COTTONWOOD TIMBER ON THE SOUTH LOUP

The South Loup River having its banks covered with lots of big trees and brush was, for a short time, free for all, and was a real blessing to the people of a large extent of country. This timber served for fuel and building material for the settlers. There was nothing anywhere else one could get to burn except what could be had from the river, and how the pioneers made use of this opportunity may be judged from this—there were 300 large cottonwood trees in front of my house in September, 1879, and in the following year there were eleven of the scrubs left. Besides furnishing building material and fuel these trees were also shaped into ways to furnish bread to the most needy. John

Stockdale, after having built his sod habitation and broken a few acres of prairie, his means for a livelihood were all gone. He had to turn to the timber to see what he could get out of it. He went after a cottonwood log one day, split into stove length the next day, hauled it to Kearney (some twenty-five miles) the third day and brought home a sack of flour the fourth day. It sometimes happened that he arrived home a little later than usual, then all the light used by the family would not leave the window and all the members of the family waited and watched till father was in sight; the children often quarreled among themselves about who should get the flour sack for a garment.

Among the early arrivals of homesteaders there were not more than one in five that owned a team; one who possessed even a pair of oxen was considered well off. He had constant appreciation from those not so fortunate, and was solicited to break some sod with which to build a sod house and to break a few acres of prairie that would enable the homesteader to plant a little garden and a few acres of corn.

The homesteaders kept coming, not all at one time, but right along for fifteen or twenty years, but seldom any better provided with means than were the first arrivals. These last ones had to take land less choice than was the privilege of those who came before them. Our opportunities to help a new comer did not cease for years. After we had pulled ourselves out of the deepest ruts of poverty we were better able to help those who came ten or fifteen years after we came.

One cold morning in March a very small man came to me and asked to buy a pair of oxen, without money. I had no oxen at all. "Have you no unbroken steers?" he asked. I replied, "I have one three-year-old half-bred Texan and one what we call a native, three years old." "Let me have them," he urged. "My good man, you could not handle the half-breed at all," I replied. "Yes, let me try it. I can handle him," he still insisted. With all the persuasion I could make, he insisted so hard that we had to get him the steers. But how could we catch the wild one, that was the important question. We had a haystack, close and parallel with the end of a shed, with a door which opened into a partition in the shed, the haystack and the end of the shed serving as a chute. We got him in and how this steer felt about his captivity you can imagine when you know that he stood on his hind legs and reached his front feet up to the roof. We managed to put loops of a strong rope over his big horns and then we let the wild fellow out with little Felix Kreutzer at the end of the rope. Now the comedy commenced. The steer behaved after the fashion of a bucking broncho, but with all his capers Felix stuck to the end of the rope. Finally the animal became somewhat tired and had turned in the direction he should go. Felix went ahead, pulling on the steer, who now stood stock still. After about two hours of jerking and pulling the steer took now and then a leap forward. In this manner Felix led the steer home, a distance of sixteen miles, and the next morning, while we were breakfasting at 8 o'clock, Felix and his wife stood outside the door and wanting the other steer. In my judgment Hercules never performed a greater wonder than did little Felix Kreutzer when he led that wild steer sixteen miles, all alone. These steers he broke to the yoke, broke up his farm with them and had no other team for several years. He is now a retired farmer, living at Amherst, contented and happy.

While serving as county superintendent and visiting schools over the county I had a good chance to learn the condition of the people.

Sometimes when I had occasion to stop over night with some farmer, most generally a school director, on asking to stay, the woman would say, "I hate to refuse you staying, but the fact is we are so hard up for something to eat that we cannot think of asking anyone to subsist on our fare." I would answer, "If that is all the trouble, it seems to me that what you can live on every day and look as well as you do, I can get along with for one night." "Well," she would generally reply, "if that is the way you look upon the situation and are willing to take what we have to offer, you are welcome."

In the morning, when I asked the lady what I owed for my accommodation, "Oh, nothing. I would not think of charging anything for such fare as you have had." I would say, "Indeed, you must. I am out on business and am making money, and invariably pay my way, and you shall not be an exception."

Well, she would say, "If you are so insistent on paying, give what you will." In giving her \$1 she would object and say at any rate that was too much. After some parley back and forth, she would take the dollar, finger it and squeeze it and exclaim, "Oh, my! my! my! Now I have money to buy some tea." I would be invited to come to their house next time and at such time I should pay nothing, and they would have coffee, tea, sugar and meat, which they lacked at this time.

CHAPTER XLI

FIRST SETTLERS IN CEDAR TOWNSHIP—MRS. JOHN DAVIS LOSES HER LIFE IN THE MEMORABLE STORM OF APRIL, 1873—GRASSHOPPER RAID IN 1874—ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 20—MRS. E. W. CARPENTER FIRST TEACHER—BUILT A SOD SCHOOLHOUSE IN 1875—FIRST PRECINCT ELECTION HELD IN 1874; THE ELEVEN VOTES CAST COST THE COUNTY \$14, AND WERE WELL WORTH THE MONEY—MAJORS POSTOFFICE ESTABLISHED IN 1879; NAMED IN HONOR OF COL. THOMAS J. MAJORS—E. W. CARPENTER NAMED POSTMASTER AND SERVED TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS—UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ORGANIZED IN 1882 WITH FIVE CHARTER MEMBERS.

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF CEDAR TOWNSHIP

By Hon. James E. Miller

Cedar Township comprises all of town No. 11, range No. 15.

The first homestead selections were made by (E.) West and (S. J.) Houston, two soldiers of the Civil war, from the State of Ohio. After making selection of the east half of section No. 14, they returned to their homes in Ohio. They returned in the spring of 1873, made their filings on their homestead claims, and hired E. W. Carpenter to break five acres on each quarter, when they again started for Ohio, but were detained at Grand Island three days by the great storm of April 13-15, 1873, and were never heard from again.

The first actual settlement in the township was made in the spring of 1873 by John Davis on section No. 2, E. W. Carpenter and Joseph White on the west half of section No. 14, and Samuel Higgins on section No. 22. These settlers were located on their claims during the great storm in which Mrs. John Davis lost her life. On Sunday morning, April 13th, Mr. Davis started for Grand Island on foot, following the section lines east. The storm overtook him before he arrived at his destination. He left his wife in their dugout with the understanding that she would go to the home of E. W. Carpenter for the night, a mile or more to the south. The storm came so suddenly (at 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon) that it seems she did not dare to leave home. It appears that she undressed and went to bed, and that in the night the ridge pole broke with the heavy load of dirt (the dugout had a dirt roof). The rafters protected her so that she might have remained in the bed. The door was barred, and it appeared she forced her way through the window. She left with but little clothing and without her shoes. When the storm ceased (at sundown) on Tuesday, neighbors went to the Davis home, and not finding her, began a search, and found her body

on a ridge about sixty rods southeast of her home. Mr. Davis arrived that evening. They buried her near the dugout. The place has changed owners several times and it is likely all traces of the grave is lost.

The same year (1873) M. A. Young and Joseph Clayton settled on the west half of section No. 10, Capt. J. M. Treichler on the southwest quarter of section No. 22, Maj. John Dance on the northwest quarter of section No. 25, and Mrs. S. Higgins filed on the northwest quarter of section No. 26 for her children by a former husband. In October, 1873, the writer with his family arrived at Kearney, and meeting John Davis, was persuaded to investigate his neighborhood, and after looking for a location in Platte and Boone counties concluded that the abandoned homesteads of West and Houston suited him. He with Henry Luce filed contests and secured homestead papers and made permanent settlement.

The foregoing constituted the settlement during the winter of 1873-74, which was a mild, dry winter. The summer of 1874 was very hot and dry, a little wheat was harvested, but no corn. About the middle of July the migrating grasshoppers completely covered the ground and devoured nearly every green thing. It looked as though we had struck the wrong country, but we all stayed except Major Dance.

In the spring of 1874 Robert Haines of Center Precinct called on us for the purpose of estimating the value of our personal property and securing the names of our children of school age so that his school district could get the state apportionment due school districts. We at once took the proper steps to head off this scheme by organizing our township and forming School District No. 20 by taking the north twelve miles from School Districts Nos. 11, 6 and 16. We drew our share of the state apportionment, and hired Mrs. E. W. Carpenter to teach our school.

She furnished the room and taught three months for \$30.

So satisfactory was her work that we employed her the next summer to teach in the same room. However, by this time teachers' wages had advanced 100 per cent. (The records disclose that on February 17, 1874, on petition of J. E. Miller and other legal voters, County Superintendent J. J. W. Place created School District No. 20, and issued a formal notice to the legal voters in the new district to meet at the home of E. W. Carpenter on March 6, 1874, and perfect the organization of the district.)

Those were flush times in 1876, having had fair crops in 1875, settlers began to flock in, and we had to build a schoolhouse. The materials were "Made in Nebraska." The walls of the schoolhouse, two feet thick, were of sod and plastered with gypsum dug from a nearby bank. The joists and rafters were from cottonwood trees, and the roof was made from willows and sod. The materials for the floor, windows and the door had to be imported. The architects and the builders were home grown. This commodious edifice afforded ample room for school purposes, as well as a place for church, Sunday school and political meetings. It became a great seat of learning and many graduates from the school are holding positions of honor and trust.

Our first precinct election was held in 1874. Eleven votes were cast, which cost the county \$14, and they were well worth the money. The year 1876 was a poor one for crops. It will be long remembered by early settlers as the last and

greatest sweep of the migrating grasshoppers. These pests covered the cultivated portions of South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and the western half of Iowa. The year 1877 was one of the most productive years in our history (as a county), and prices for grain ruled unusually high, especially for wheat. From this date for twelve successive years there was not a crop failure.

We first got our mail at Gibbon, then changed to Kearney. During the summer of 1879 we sent a petition to Washington for a mail route and a postoffice. We failed to send a name for the office, so the postoffice department named the office Majors, in honor of the blue-shirted statesman of Nemaha County, Col. Thomas J. Majors.

E. W. Carpenter was appointed postmaster, and William Grant of Kearney mail carrier. This star route was later extended to the home of Erastus Smith, where later Ravenna was located. Mr. Carpenter continued as postmaster until the office was discontinued in 1907, a period of twenty-eight years. His income from the office the first year was \$9, and probably did not exceed \$30 in any one year during the time he held the office. This was certainly a great sacrifice on the part of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Carpenter in the interests of the neighborhood, and I am sure it was so considered by all patrons of the office.

Mrs. E. W. Carpenter taught two terms of school of three months each. She was a highly useful woman in our community. Her death occurred April 13, 1907.

The first church organized was the United Presbyterian. It was organized in John McCool's sod house by Rev. David Inches of North Bend, Neb., on December 20, 1882. The charter members were: John McCool, Mrs. Rose Ann McCool, James E. Miller, Mrs. Ann J. Miller and George W. Duncan. The church had a scattering supply for a pastor until 1885, when Rev. Isaac A. Wilson was installed as pastor. The church increased rapidly until it about reached the one hundred mark, when some of the members moved to Poole, in Beaver Township, and started a church there. Others moved to other states, greatly weakening the congregation. In 1915 the church had a membership of about thirty. In 1915 the pastor for the two churches—Majors and Poole—is Rev. E. C. Coleman.

THORNTON TOWNSHIP

The first settlers in town No. 10, range No. 15, in Buffalo County, were C. A. Borders, N. Turner, F. Chisler, F. J. Weldin, M. Conners, J. C. V. Kelley, B. J. Holmes, W. S. Hall, in 1873; and S. S. St. John, J. M. Smith, J. Gass, N. E. Coombs, Joel Miller, N. Fellers, J. Trumbull, W. J. Neely, J. E. Holloway, F. G. Hamer, B. Streigle, G. H. Cutting, W. G. Patterson, S. W. Thornton and E. Goodsell, in 1874.

When township organization was adopted in the county in 1883, the county board named the township "Thornton," in honor of Hon. S. W. Thornton, a soldier of the Civil war and one of its earliest settlers.

In the life of the township there was organized a Catholic Church, which erected a church building. The church organization is still in a flourishing condition.



UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH AT BUTLER IN BUCKEYE VALLEY
Erected in 1898

At an early date there was an organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, their church building being known as Haven Chapel, which is still a religious center for a considerable extent of territory.

At an early date a postoffice was established and which was continued until the advent of free rural delivery, since which time people of the township have been served by a carrier from the Kearney office.

One of the first farmers' telephone companies in the county was organized largely through the efforts of people residing in this township, a history of which, kindly furnished by George Bischel, appears elsewhere in this volume.

Hopewell Camp No. 4522, M. W. A., was instituted at Hopewell schoolhouse, School District No. 35, in Thornton Township, February 8, 1897. The first officers and charter members were: D. M. Arbuckle, V. C.; I. F. Henline, B.; J. C. Powers, A.; David R. Mathieson, clerk; L. N. Hollingsworth, P. W. Snook, George Bischel, J. N. Johnson, E. E. Thorn, J. H. Fester, J. S. Burton, William R. Fisher, F. S. Musil, William Oehrich, Ed Gillming, David McCan, Louis J. Meyers, George H. Gillming, Ed A. Poole, A. J. Frederick, Peter J. Gillming, C. L. Greenhalge, George S. Hayes, Ed A. Rose, Nicholas Gass, Fred A. Rynese, A. E. Debrie.

George Bischel served as clerk of the camp for eight successive years.

In the year 1897 the camp erected a hall, 29 by 36 feet, on section No. 16, in Thornton Township. The membership so greatly increased that in the year 1901 the hall was enlarged by an addition of sixteen feet. In 1911 the membership of the camp was 105, and in 1915 the membership was seventy-six. The officers: J. M. Stiles, V. C.; Frank Stiles, A.; W. J. Turner, B.; Fred Sitz, clerk.

Prairie View Camp No. 2228, Royal Neighbors, M. W. A., was instituted in Thornton Township June 13, 1900. The officers and charter members were: Mrs. Hannah Smith, oracle; Mrs. Luella Rogers, recorder; Mesdames Mary Altmaier, Bessie Bischel, Maggie Baily, Gertrude Burton, Maude Clark, Edith Debrie, Jannette Cass, Jane Foster, Ethel Gillning, Alma Howe, Mary Hayes, Etta Richards, Flora E. Weller, Miss Lucretia Snider, George Bischel, A. E. Debrie, Luther McKee, George Richards.

This camp has the distinction of being the only Royal Neighbor camp in the State of Nebraska located in a rural neighborhood, its membership composed entirely of farmers, their wives and daughters. Mrs. George Bischel, who served eight years as recorder of the camp, writes that this organization meant much to its members, as it was the means of bringing them together in a social way when otherwise the members would probably never have all been known to each other. Of course there was always the faithful few who kept the camp alive.

In the year 1915 the camp had a membership of thirty. Its officers: Mrs. Mary Altmaier, oracle; Mrs. Minnie Mast, recorder.

BUCKEYE VALLEY—BUTLER

Buckeye Valley is in Valley Township, and the first settlement in Buckeye Valley was by Col. W. T. Beatty and George Simpkins, in 1873; W. R. Wheeler, in 1874; J. B. Wheeler, George E. Fredericks, T. Q. George, O. Knepper, in 1878, and William Trivelpiece, in 1879.

Col. Wm. T. Beatty was a native of Ohio and gave to the valley its name, "Buckeye Valley."

On March 5, 1879, County Superintendent John Swenson organized a school district, No. 49.

A schoolhouse was erected in which a Sabbath school was held, this about the year 1880. Rev. J. Marsh here organized a "class" of the Methodist Church, and Mr. Marsh also held regular preaching service in the schoolhouse. In the early '80s a Grange was organized, which flourished for many years, this being the last of the Grange organizations of that date in the county to surrender its charter.

A postoffice was established named "Butler," and which was continued until the establishment of rural delivery.

It is recalled that a very successful fair was held at Butler, with considerable exhibits of live stock and farm products.

Mr. George C. Lunger kindly furnishes the following history of the organization of the United Brethren Church at that point:

The first Sabbath school in Buckeye Valley was organized May 30, 1880, at schoolhouse No. 49, with Rev. O. Knepper as superintendent.

Rev. O. Knepper also preached each Sunday after Sunday school and occasionally in the evening for a period of two years.

The Butler class of the United Brethren Church in Christ was organized under the pastorate of Rev. John Green in September, 1884, with the following charter members: O. Knepper, Mrs. Emma H. Knepper, Henry C. Fliegel, Mrs. Elizabeth Fliegel, Johnathan Stearns, Mrs. Mary Stearns, Mrs. N. Woodhull and several others.

At an expense of \$915 a church building was erected and dedicated April 24, 1898, by Bishop J. S. Mills, the pastor at that date being Rev. A. L. Zimmerman, and the trustees George C. Lunger, Wm. Trivelpiece, O. Knepper, H. C. Fliegel and Peter Gillming.

The pastors serving this church from the beginning have been O. Knepper, John Green, H. S. Munger, J. M. Witters, J. Bremser, W. S. Fields, T. B. Cannon, Wm. Thompson, C. J. Bohart, A. L. Zimmerman, Wm. Tooley, A. Boyd, W. C. Miller, L. L. Epley, W. C. Arnold, Reverend Mr. Spahr, J. Mason, Walter Smith and C. E. Harrington.

This church disorganized in 1915, and the church building was sold to the Buckeye Valley Grange, and is now (1916) being used as a Grange hall.

A Methodist Church was organized at Butler and a church building erected, but a history of the church is not available for this history.



FIRST SCHOOL IN GIBBON



GIBBON FLOURING MILL

First mill in Nebraska west of Hall County. Erected in 1873

CHAPTER XLII

FIRST FLOURING MILL; ERECTED IN 1873—FIRST MILL IN STATE WEST OF HALL COUNTY—SETTLERS CAME 100 MILES TO MILL.

THE FIRST FLOURING MILL

The first mill for the grinding of wheat and other grain, erected in Nebraska west of Hall County, was at Gibbon in 1873.

This mill was not only useful and beneficial to the early settlers of a large portion of Central and Western Nebraska and Northwest Kansas, but it was a most important factor in the early settlement of Buffalo County and of the country named. Its establishment encouraged the growing of wheat as it enabled the early settlers to have ground into flour and meal grain of their own raising thus saving the expense of shipping such grain to distant markets and paying freight on flour and meal manufactured at distant points. So important did the Union Pacific Railroad deem the erection of the flouring mill in the settlement of the new country that it transported, free of charge, two carloads, one of machinery, one of lumber, for the construction of the mill, this free transportation being for the same reason that free transportation was granted of material for building churches and schoolhouses.

In the early days settlers came, in some instances, distances of more than one hundred miles in order to get their grain ground into flour. Some of these settlers came with ox teams, bringing full loads, being a week on the way, at times waiting a week for their turn to have the grain ground and then a week on the road home. For many years the mill was run as a custom mill, each one receiving the flour from his own grain and awaiting his turn to have his grain ground.

The original mill was built in the summer and fall of 1873; the building was about twenty-four feet square and two stories; there were two runs of four-foot buhr stone, one for wheat, one for feed and a reel bolt. The capacity of the mill was about thirty barrels per day.

Power was furnished by Wood River, a stream of living water having a fall of about ten feet per mile; the dam erected was about ten feet high.

The mill dam has always been a source of great expense to maintain. About twelve feet below the surface is a layer of quicksand and muskrats working down into the quicksand caused great damage. It is estimated that in the thirty-seven years since its first construction from twenty thousand to twenty-five thousand dollars have been expended on this dam. While there has never been a complete washout, each year repairs have been necessary. In the year 1877 the

mill was remodeled, another run of stone added for grinding middlings, thus increasing the yield of flour per bushel. In the year 1884 the roller process of grinding was introduced, increasing the capacity of the mill to sixty barrels. The Gibbon mill was one of the first in the state to introduce the roller process of grinding. In the year 1889 the mill was again remodeled, a swing sifter system installed, also a twenty-one horse power gasoline engine, thus increasing the capacity of the mill to eighty barrels. The Gibbon mill was one of the first in the state to install machinery necessary in the milling of turkey red winter wheat which practically took the place of spring wheat which before the advent of the turkey red had been altogether grown. The successful milling of turkey red winter wheat was of immense benefit, financially, in the development of the agricultural resources of Central Nebraska. In the year 1905 there was installed a fifty-horse power steam engine with all the latest and best improvements, making the capacity of the mill about one hundred and twenty barrels.

From the building of the mill in 1873 and the remodeling of the same from time to time, nothing but the latest and best improved machinery has been installed and from 1873 to date (1916) the manufactured product has always been recognized as first class, standard as to quality.

Also the management of the mill has always been in the hands of men with a well earned, well deserved reputation for honesty and integrity in all their business relations. The original builders of the mill were I. N. Davis & Company (I. N. Davis and James H. Davis), who conducted the business until 1885. From 1885 to 1897 I. N. Davis was owner; from 1897 to 1907, James H. Davis and son (Roy A. Davis); Roy A. Davis from 1907 to 1914, when J. N. Ashburn purchased a one-half interest. Roy A. Davis died in 1915 and the Gibbon mills for more than forty years in the Davis family passed into other hands.

The managers of the business have been James H. Davis, from 1873 to 1885; James S. Hopkins, 1885-88; C. Putnam, 1888-90; Bert Sprague, 1890-92; C. Putnam, 1892-97; Roy A. Davis, 1897-1914. The millers employed appear in the following order, beginning in 1873: Fritz Stark, Hans Voss, J. B. Ring, Fred Carter, James S. Hopkins, Bert Sprague, Bayard Seaver, Charles A. Putnam, J. D. Mickey, R. S. Winchester, Ralph Sprague and Homer J. Mickey in 1916.

About one hundred thousand bushels of wheat are milled into flour each year.

CHAPTER XLIII

ORGANIZATION OF TELEPHONE COMPANIES IN BUFFALO COUNTY—THE FARMERS' TELEPHONE COMPANY—BUFFALO COUNTY TELEPHONE COMPANY—UNION VALLEY TELEPHONE COMPANY—THE FAIRVIEW TELEPHONE COMPANY—THE MILLER INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COMPANY.

THE TELEPHONE IN BUFFALO COUNTY

The progressive and enterprising spirit of the people of Buffalo County is no better illustrated than in the almost universal use made of the telephone, in the homes on the farm, as well as in the towns. The beginning of telephone systems in the county was through people living on farms, people of small means. The writer well recalls his first use of a telephone—a wire reaching from the house to the barn, the phones a tin can at either end of the wire.

At first a number of farmers co-operated in extending a wire into the nearest village, a friendly business man serving as "central." Often the wire was attached to fence posts and quite often a fence wire served also as a telephone wire.

Beginning with about the year 1902, farmers' co-operative telephone companies were organized in various parts of the county, and in a comparatively brief time the county became a network of telephone wires, with a telephone in every home.

No attempt is here made to compile an accurate and complete history of the beginning and development of the telephone in Buffalo County, but enough is here presented to record the date of the beginning, the methods used, the growth and development to date (1915).

THE FARMERS' TELEPHONE COMPANY

The Farmers' Telephone Company of Buffalo County was organized March 2, 1902. The incorporators were W. J. Smith, Albert Allen, Joseph Buck, Jr., Jacob Stearley and W. H. Maurer of Shelton Township. The first officers were: W. J. Smith, president; W. H. Maurer, vice president; George W. Barrett, treasurer; Joseph Buck, Jr., secretary. The authorized capital stock was \$10,000 and the company had about one hundred shareholders. The territory first covered was confined to Shelton Township, and the company began business with approximately twenty-five phones.

In the year 1915 the company covered territory embraced in Shelton, Sharon, Gardner, Schneider, Platte, Gibbon, Valley, and Center townships, in Buffalo County, two townships in Hall County, and its lines extending into Kearney

County and having in use 1,100 phones. The capital stock is \$10,000, but instead of paying dividends the company has invested its earnings in the extension and improvement of its plant, which is estimated to be worth thirty thousand dollars.

The company now has about thirty-five shareholders. Its present officers are: George W. Barrett, president and secretary; C. M. Beck, vice president; H. J. Dugdale, treasurer.

(Note—The editor is indebted to Mr. C. M. Beck, vice president and manager of the Gibbon office, for data as to the history of the Farmers' Telephone Company.)

BUFFALO COUNTY TELEPHONE COMPANY

In the year 1903 several meetings of farmers residing in Thornton and adjoining townships resulted in the organization on April 1, 1903, of the Buffalo County Telephone Company, those signing the articles of incorporation being: George Bischel, Peter Wink, H. G. Rieter, J. D. Lowenstein and W. D. Stadleman. The officers elected being: Peter Wink, president; Joseph A. Waters, vice president; George Bischel, secretary; John L. Hopper, treasurer; W. J. Stadleman, manager. The board of directors was: George Bischel, Joseph A. Waters, John L. Hopper, P. F. H. Schars and Peter Wink. The lines of the company covering territory embraced in Center, Thornton, Valley, Schneider, Cedar, Beaver and Loup townships. At the close of the year 1906 the company had 225 miles of wire and 225 phones installed. By January, 1908, the company was out of debt and in September, 1908, a dividend of 15 per cent was declared. In January, 1909, it was decided to divide the territory, those tributary to Pleasanton to go with the Pleasanton company and be called the Buffalo County Telephone Company and a new company to be formed to cover the territory tributary to Kearney.

In February, 1909, was organized the Union Valley Telephone Company, those signing the articles of incorporation being: Pat Fitzgerald, George Bischel, H. G. Reiter, R. F. Cruik, Dallas Henderson, N. B. Freeman, and C. H. Fleming. George Bischel was elected president and manager; W. D. Thornton, secretary; who with Dallas Henderson, C. L. Snider and C. H. Fleming constituted the board of directors.

It appears that the Union Valley Telephone Company began business with a capital stock of \$5,000 and with ninety-five phones in operation. This company rebuilt its lines and in 1915 has 175 phones installed, rents its phones at \$1 per month, declares an annual dividend of 15 per cent and on payment of a 25-cent switching charge at the Kearney central office its patrons can talk to about twenty-one hundred phones.

The present officers are: W. D. Thornton, president; George Bischel, secretary and treasurer.

(Note—The data for the foregoing history of the Buffalo County and Union Valley Telephone companies was kindly furnished by George Bischel.)

BUFFALO COUNTY TELEPHONE COMPANY

The Buffalo County Telephone Company was organized by the people of Pleasanton and vicinity in the year 1903 and incorporated in 1910, with S. B.

Carpenter, president; A. V. Valentine, vice president; P. S. Holtzinger, manager; M. S. Booher, secretary; F. L. Grammer, treasurer. The company having in operation 128 phones.

In the year 1915 the capital stock of the company was \$6,500. Surplus, \$2,000. Phones in operation, 324. Officers: A. H. Valentine, president; Adolph English, vice president; B. S. Wort, manager; M. S. Booher, secretary; F. L. Grammer, treasurer.

(Note—This history of the Buffalo County Telephone Company was kindly furnished by F. L. Grammer, of Pleasanton.)

FAIRVIEW TELEPHONE COMPANY

The Fairview Telephone Company was organized February 20, 1904, the incorporators being: W. C. Pettett, C. E. Gresham, E. E. McCartney, C. E. Holmes, E. A. Edgerton, J. D. McCartney, C. F. Bowie, W. T. Gould, A. E. Pettett, R. H. Clifford, C. H. Gale, H. H. Northrup.

The first officers were: W. C. Pettett, W. T. Gould, and E. E. McCartney.

The capital stock was \$5,000. When the line first became established it had fifteen phones in operation and extended about ten miles north of Elm Creek.

In 1915 the company had as capital stock \$10,000, with 225 phones in use and covered a territory of about one hundred and seventy-five miles, and also operated a thirty-mile toll line extending to Miller and Amherst.

This company has been in operation ten years. The dues are 40 cents per month.

The officers in 1915 were: Eber Richards, W. Chismore, C. Bowie, A. R. Balyot, G. Sheldon.

(Note—Data furnished by W. C. Pettett.)

THE MILLER INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COMPANY

This company was organized in 1906 with a capital stock of \$2,500. Its officers were: J. P. Norcross, president; L. W. Hall, manager; F. D. Brown, treasurer.

The names of those most active in promoting the company were: J. P. Norcross, L. W. Hall, F. D. Brown, L. P. Wells, N. Maddox, C. M. Huston, R. M. Pierce. The company began business with forty phones in use. In the year 1915 the company had as capital stock \$4,500, and 150 phones in use. Its officers were: J. C. Power, president; P. W. Jacobson, vice president; L. W. Hall, manager; F. D. Brown, treasurer.

(Note—Information furnished by Ross Brown.)

CHAPTER XLIV

EFFORTS TO VOTE COUNTY BONDS AS AID TO RAILROADS—EFFORTS NOT SUCCESSFUL—
VOTING COUNTY BONDS FOR COURTHOUSE AND PLATTE RIVER BRIDGES—A PROTEST
AGAINST VOTING RAILROAD BONDS SIGNED BY 294 TAXPAYERS—A SUBSCRIPTION
LIST IN CIRCULATION IN 1888 TO RAISE FUNDS TO ASSIST IN CARRYING AN ELEC-
TION OF BONDS AS AID TO A PROPOSED RAILROAD.

That there are no railroad bonds outstanding against Buffalo County and that the bonded indebtedness against the county is comparatively small at this date (1915) is not because no effort has been made in the past to vote such bonds, but rather to the reason that the early settlers, so to speak, "burned their fingers" in the voting of county bonds and have fought shy on any such proposition since.

The early settlers, being comparatively young in years, and of little experience in public affairs, were easily induced to vote county bonds with which to build a courthouse at Gibbon and to bridge the Platte. Time and again boomers and promoters have since made efforts to have county bonds voted in aid of proposed railroads, but without avail.

County commissioners, under the spell of such boomers and promoters, were quite complaisant to their visionary schemes and called elections for such purpose, but the people of the county were quick to protest and prevent favorable action.

The county bonds voted to complete the courthouse at Kearney would not have been voted had not the taxpayers of the county been tricked in the matter of building a courthouse. The wish of the taxpayers was to levy a tax for a term of years with which to build the courthouse, and on estimates submitted and agreed to, voted the levy.

Tricksters and schemers so manipulated the matter that the levy so voted was expended in a foundation and side-walls and it was necessary to vote county bonds in the amount of \$45,000 in order to complete and furnish the building. The foundation walls of the present courthouse were first laid in the fall and early winter, and when frozen appeared firm and solid. C. Putnam was at the time deputy county clerk, and being of an inquiring turn of mind and a man of strictest integrity, he pried off a section of the foundation wall, carried it in the clerk's office beside the fire, and it soon crumbled to pieces. The result was Capt. Joseph Black, also a man of unquestioned integrity, was appointed to superintend the erection of the present county courthouse.

As a matter of history, to illustrate how complaisant the county commissioners were to assist in forwarding schemes to bond the county in aid of proposed

railroads, and how wide awake the voters were to prevent such action, record is here made in one instance of the action of the commissioners and of the protest of the voters.

The editor has in his possession the original petitions, bearing signatures of the petitioners, which make plain the history of the case. Five of these petitions were circulated and signed by a total of 294 taxpayers. The forty-eight names first given are of persons residing in Kearney at the time.

The petition and signatures are as follows:

"To the Honorable Board of Commissioners of Buffalo County, State of Nebraska:

"Gentlemen—We, the undersigned, respectfully petition your honorable body to recall the proclamation made by you which provides a special election to be held on the 27th of November, 1875, for the purpose of voting on the proposition to issue the bonds of Buffalo county in the sum of \$75,000 to aid in the construction of a proposed railroad from Kearney to Sioux City, and your petitioners further pray that you give notice in the county papers that the said proclamation is recalled and countermanded, and as reasons therefor we offer the following: That the petition upon which the said proclamation was granted was signed by less than one-fourth of the voters of Buffalo county. That the said petition was circulated only in Kearney and that it was not generally known that such a petition was in circulation. That a majority of the voters of Buffalo county are opposed to the said proposition and by recalling it the expense of an election will be saved, and to this end your petitioners do earnestly pray."

SIGNATURES

T. C. Roberts	M. R. Wickwire	Geo. Stearley
F. L. Schmidt	E. J. Bunk	Edward Oliver
David Anderson	James McCrary	A. Zimmerman
C. L. Shiffes	Wilhelm Weber	Eph Oliver
D. H. Pagneer	John P. Smith	James Wilkie
W. S. Freeman	D. B. Allen	O. C. Hancock
J. S. Harrington	A. S. Craig	J. C. Stanley
A. I. Aitken	C. W. Dake	E. Miller
John N. Brown	Nathan Campbell	Lyman Everett
A. B. Richardson	G. N. Cornell	A. D. Barnhart
E. B. Carter	A. M. Gay	J. T. Mullins
H. L. Faddis	E. B. Pickering	S. A. Thomas
B. F. Sammons	J. W. Chambers	Wm. Craven
H. J. Allen	F. Cuddebeck	W. A. Loossee
A. Meyer	S. M. Swely	C. Putnam
J. R. George	H. M. Hanson	H. Randalls
Adelbert Smith	E. R. Griffin	Eugene Hall
Joseph Owen	A. L. Webb	Geo. W. Eastman
A. Binst	J. A. Harron	J. G. Carson
G. L. Thomas	H. W. Giddings	W. F. Pickering
D. W. Johnson	A. M. Way	J. N. Mettler

Ed J. Cook	James H. Fee	S. R. Traut
J. N. Keller	S. C. Ayer	John W. Berry
James O'Kane	J. H. Darby	Chase Stenbach
H. E. Swan	J. P. Putnam	James T. Hays
R. M. Grimes	James Mularkey	V. T. Broderick
H. A. Lee	M. S. Cook	I. P. George
C. O. Childs	John Lucas	W. R. Jackson
John Haug	J. J. W. Place	F. Stark
Arthur Wollaston	Isaiah White	Henry Hilficker
P. Letterman	S. C. Bassett	J. D. Drury
James Oliver	P. K. Drury	S. A. Marshall
P. Walsh	Wm. S. Hall	Aaron Ward
George Smith	B. Truman	R. George
John Henry	C. A. Borders	A. J. Oviatt
John E. Miller	C. Oakley	Saml. T. Walker
T. F. Craig	Robt. Waters	Abraham Barrett
George Meisner	S. A. Barrett	S. Rosseter
F. E. Colby	N. W. Short	O. E. Thompson
L. D. Craven	G. W. Simkins	J. B. Wheeler
A. Henry	A. Row	O. B. Washburn
V. T. Mercer	Joseph Glaze	John Greer
C. T. Dildine	Alva G. H. White	David Hostetter
A. F. Taylor	J. E. Kelsey	James Mills
John Mahon	E. B. Dunkin	Alfred Thorne
D. M. Puiser	J. F. Broderick	G. R. Tracy
R. W. Russell	S. M. Palmer	C. A. Smith
John Hoge	Wm. F. McClure	J. B. Thomas
H. Curran	J. A. Danner	H. M. Fisher
I. W. Brown	Wm. H. Kelly	Wm. Roach
E. T. Hulianiski	E. Harris	T. J. Hubbard
Roe Brothers	E. Northrup	Geo. H. Silvermail
F. J. Switz	James Wallace	Wm. H. Bray
S. B. Lowell	A. F. Gibson	J. Trumbull
John Jones	Wm. Wheeler	J. H. Davis
J. N. Allen	M. D. Marsh	C. E. Brayton
J. M. Bayley	S. F. Berry	J. E. Mowers
Abram Smith	W. H. Killgore	O. A. Buzzell
H. Dugdale	J. R. Rice	Will P. Trew
M. Slattery	Geo. H. Bicknell	L. D. George
Thorn Thomas	J. Marsh	J. E. Miller
H. S. Colby	James Thomas	Wm. T. Beatty
C. S. Bailey	J. A. Waters	Henry Cook
Robert Goar	Benedict Streigel	F. F. Blanchard
B. A. Fox	A. Henderson	John Stern
Gottlieb Daudte	B. C. Bassett	T. S. Mitchell
Casper Meisner	R. G. Graham	John Reddy
E. Livingston	J. S. Chamberlain	H. Fairchild

D. P. Ashburn	George Grabach	Lorenzo Plumb
A. Watenpaugh	G. N. Smith	W. N. Brown
Robt. Kilgore	W. H. Sprague	E. W. Carpenter
Geo. E. Norris	I. D. LaBarre	E. D. Hubbard
W. A. Huntley	L. J. Babcock	C. W. Hatch
L. S. Hough	A. Eddy	J. McCool
Michael Connor	H. H. Haven	Robert H. Hick
Nilson Zellers	Martin Oard	C. H. Bishop
H. Huges	Joseph White	Samuel Higgins
W. E. Oakley	James Ogilvie	C. T. Silvernail
F. D. Boardman	D. H. Hite	T. J. Mahoney
P. T. Davis	Amos D. George	O. D. White
T. F. Broderick	Wm. Stern	
Ebon Bray	R. E. L. Willard	

The following subscription list, bearing the signatures of seventy persons and pledging a total of \$250, was found among the papers of S. S. St. John, a long time resident of Kearney, and turned over to the editor of this history by his son, L. N. St. John.

The heading of the subscription list reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, agree to pay the amounts placed opposite our respective names to assist in carrying the election of bonds to aid the Nebraska Southern Railway company in constructing a line of railway from Red Cloud to Kearney, Nebraska; and, also, to pay expenses asked by Gov. Thayer for the encampment of the state militia here two weeks in September, 1888, 2,500 strong."

CHAPTER XLV

COWBOY TROUBLES IN BUFFALO COUNTY—GREAT HERDS OF TEXAN CATTLE—ATTORNEY F. G. HAMER OFFERS TO WHIP THE WHOLE CROWD—THE KEARNEY GUARDS—THE KILLING OF MILTON COLLINS—CAPTURE OF JORDON P. SMITH—THE PRELIMINARY TRIAL—FIRST TRIAL OF JORDON P. SMITH—APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF VENUE—EDITORIAL FROM KEARNEY JUNCTION TIMES—OFFICERS OF THE COURT—LIST OF JURORS—VERDICT OF THE JURY—SENTENCE OF THE COURT—SECOND TRIAL OF SMITH—SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY—ACCOUNT OF THE TRIAL BY JUDGE E. F. GRAY—EXPENSE TO THE COUNTY OF THE TRIAL—EDITOR M'NEW, OF THE SHELTON CLIPPER, WRITES OF COWBOY TROUBLES AT KEARNEY—MURDER OF AN UNARMED BOY BY THE CITY MARSHAL OF KEARNEY—MARSHAL "SCARED TO DEATH"—CITIZENS OF KEARNEY UPHOLD THE MARSHAL.

(Note—While newspapers were published in the county since 1872, there are no files of such papers available of an earlier date than the year 1880. In preparing this historical sketch no copies of newspapers were available except one copy of the Kearney Junction Times of December 14, 1875, and a copy of the Lowell Register of May 16, 1876. The writer is greatly indebted to E. Bowker, clerk of the District Court, for the original court records in the case; to Judge Joel Hull of Kearney County, for copies of the records of the case in the Kearney County District Court; to Judge E. F. Gray of Fremont, who defended Jordon P. Smith; to Judge F. G. Hamer; and to Hon. I. D. Evans.)

COWBOY TROUBLES IN BUFFALO COUNTY

The cowboy troubles in Buffalo County date from about the year 1873. Kearney Junction had at that date a population of about two hundred and fifty, and as regards saloons and gambling and questionable resorts, which were in large measure responsible for the cowboy troubles, the town at that period and for years later was a quite "wide open" frontier town.

In the early '70s great herds of half-wild Texan cattle were driven from the great plains of Texas, leaving that state in a weak and half famished condition about April 1st and, moving slowly and allowed to graze, arrived in Nebraska about June 1st in a strong and thriving condition, and being held and grazed on the nutritious grasses of Nebraska were by September ready for market. A herd (so called) numbered about twenty-five hundred head and the writer well recalls a visit in 1871 to three great herds of these cattle—7,000 head in all—being held and grazed on Elm Island, a part of the Fort Kearney Military Reservation.

In the Buffalo County Beacon of July 13, 1872, appears the following: "A

herd of 4,000 Texan cattle in charge of T. J. Wheat has arrived from Texas and are being held on Elm Island. These cattle are enroute to Fort Randall, there to be issued as a meat ration to the Indians. Buffalo are plenty on the south side of the Platte and the herders amused themselves with catching and branding some buffalo calves."

These herds were in charge of cowboys, many of whom were Texans and Mexicans. While in charge of a herd the cowboys were kept under reasonably good discipline, but when the herd had been disposed of and the herders paid off, they quite often repaired to the nearest frontier town where liquor was sold and engaged in a wild debauch—drinking, gambling and rioting. These cowboys were expert marksmen and horsemen, and nothing more delighted them than to ride into a saloon, demand the drinks at the point of a revolver and then go forth to "shoot up the town," as it was termed. This consisted of a wild ride through the streets, whooping, cursing and shooting in all directions. Kearney Junction was, in those days, a rendezvous for cowboys returning to Texas and who terrorized the inhabitants by their lawlessness. The most serious disturbances occurred in the fall of the year, and culminated in September, 1875, in the shooting of Milton M. Collins by Jordon P. Smith, foreman of a cowboy outfit, encamped on the outskirts of the city.

At times, during these troubles, citizens of the town armed themselves and patrolled the streets and also the trails leading into the town and horsemen coming towards the town were halted and questioned.

When the cowboys got on a rampage and riding up and down the streets fired off their revolvers in order to terrorize the inhabitants, some of the citizens would arm themselves and hiding behind cover return the fire, but so far as recalled no serious injury was done by either party.

In those early days F. G. Hamer was a struggling young attorney, located at Kearney Junction, and had already acquired something of a reputation as a scrapper. It is related that one day when quite a lot of cowboys were in town drinking and likely to make trouble, Attorney Hamer strolled over to some hitching racks where the cowboys had congregated and offered to fight the whole crowd, one at a time, "catch-as-catch-can," with the understanding that if he was found to be the best man they should leave town and make no trouble. The cowboys did not take up with the offer—that was not their way of fighting.

Realizing that some organized effort was necessary in order to protect the lives and property of the citizens, E. C. Calkins secured permission to organize a company of state militia known as Kearney Guards.

THE KEARNEY GUARDS

The Kearney Guards, Company B, State Militia, was organized November 5, 1875; E. C. Calkins, captain; ———, first lieutenant; George S. Duncan, second lieutenant; number of men, 40; number of arms, 58; rounds of ammunition, 1,000. In a report to the adjutant-general under date of December 26, 1877, by Captain Calkins, is disclosed the following: First lieutenant, R. A. Julian; second lieutenant, James Jenkins; number of privates, 40; number of arms, breech-

loading Springfield rifles 53, smooth bore muskets 20, carbines 9; 1,000 rounds of ammunition received, 315 expended, 685 on hand.

Both Captain Calkins and Lieutenant Jenkins are known to have been soldiers of the Civil war and doubtless many of the privates had seen like service, as a very considerable per cent of the early settlers of both the county and state had seen service in the Civil war and were then in the prime of life, their average ages being about thirty years. Captain Calkins was a good disciplinarian and the Kearney Guards were recognized as an efficient and well disciplined company.

Mr. Calkins, a native of New York, was a soldier of the Civil war and came to Buffalo County in 1873. He served as state senator, six years as regent of the State University and as a Supreme Court commissioner. His death occurred in 1912.

Notwithstanding a quite lengthy search among the records of the adjutant-general's office, in which the writer was kindly assisted by Adjutant-General Phelps, the above is all that can be learned as to the history of this company of state militia. To the writer it seems strange that such records (reports) should be missing and equally strange that no effort has been made to write a history, as it were, of Nebraska's territorial and state militia.

In a published biographical sketch of the life of L. R. More appears the following account of the organization of the Kearney Guards: "In 1873 Mr. More was appointed captain of the Kearney Guards by Governor Furnas. Under his leadership the cowboys' 'reign of terror' came to an end, they losing two of their number in a running battle." In search of the records in the adjutant-general's office the writer of this account of cowboy troubles could find no account or mention of L. R. More as captain of the Kearney Guards. So far as the official records seem to disclose the "guards" were organized in 1875, with E. C. Calkins as captain.

THE KILLING OF COLLINS

The cowboy troubles at Kearney Junction reached a culmination the 17th of September, 1875, when Jordon P. Smith, foreman of a cowboy outfit, shot and killed Milton M. Collins, son of Judge and Mrs. Asbury Collins, who were among the earliest settlers of Buffalo County.

Jordon P. Smith had delivered a large herd of Texas cattle to the Indians in Southern Dakota and was returning to Texas with his men and ponies, and had halted at Kearney Junction for a carousal. His camp was on the Platte bottom near the bridge, and his ponies had strayed into a field of sod corn belonging to Collins. Smith had learned of the ponies being in the corn and that Collins wanted damages and had threatened that he would have his ponies or have blood. On the way to camp Smith met Collins riding towards town and they returned together. Collins was unarmed and when he attempted to dismount on reaching home Smith shot him and killed him; Collins' wife standing in the door and witnessing the deed. After shooting Collins, Smith and his outfit crossed the Platte on the bridge south of town and were seen by M. D. Marsh of Gibbon, who was helping to move a stock of goods belonging to Hiram Hull from Lowell to Kearney Junction. It appears that Smith and one of his companions, Bert Brown, went

up the Platte River and attempted to hide on an island in the Platte in Dawson County.

On the evening of September 18th the following telegram was received from Sheriff James of Dawson County:

"Plum Creek, Nebraska, September 18, 1875.

"Sheriff Anderson: Come up on train. Got one man and two horses; other man not yet; I have island all surrounded; men all tired out; send men and fresh horses from there. Answer soon.

("Signed) JAMES, Sheriff."

When this telegram was received, Sheriff Anderson, with a large posse of citizens of Kearney Junction, was in the Republican Valley hunting for Smith, and Col. John H. Roe selected eighteen men, among them S. W. Powers, J. P. Johnson, A. B. Richardson, Geo. H. Bickwell and E. J. Newland, who left for Plum Creek on the 9.15 train that evening and arrangements were made to send the horses on a freight train leaving at 10.40. At 10.30 a telegram came saying Smith had been arrested.

On Sunday morning, September 19th, Colonel Roe and S. W. Powers went to Plum Creek, returning in the evening with Smith, who was kept that night in Roe Brothers' real estate office and a hearing had on September 20th before County Judge D. Westervelt, Smith being bound over to the District Court and sent to Fremont, Dodge County, for safe keeping.

THE FIRST TRIAL OF JORDON P. SMITH

Buffalo County at the date of this trial was in the Third Judicial District, consisting of the counties of Washington, Dodge, Platte, Cuming, Burt, Dakota, Dixon, Cedar, L'Eau-Aui-Court, Kearney, Lincoln, Hall, Buffalo, and the territory lying west of the same and north of the Platte River. Of this judicial district Samuel Maxwell was judge and M. B. Hoxie district attorney. The regular terms of District Court in and for Buffalo County were fixed by law on the first Monday in March and the second Monday in September. No term of court was held in September in Buffalo County, the term being adjourned to the second Monday in December. The Board of County Commissioners of Buffalo County requested Judge Maxwell to hold a special term of court in Buffalo County, but no such special term was held, and the court convened December 13th. The first day of this term the grand jury found a bill of indictment for murder in the first degree against Jordon P. Smith, Frederick Copeland and Bernadino Roach.

This grand jury was composed of the following, the court appointing F. S. Trew foreman: Daniel Stonebarger, I. B. Wambaugh, J. E. Kelsey, Jasper Fish, Nathan Campbell, S. F. Henninger, William Nutter, F. F. Blanchard, L. D. Grant, James Westervelt, H. E. Swan, J. S. Murphy, George H. Smith, J. J. Whittier.

It appears that the order of the court was for the sheriff to summon ninety-six men from residents of the county outside a limit of ten miles outside of Kearney Junction; this jury panel as talesmen from which to select a jury. The order to summon these talesmen was quashed but it appears that the sheriff immediately summoned the same men from those present.

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF VENUE

In the affidavits filed by Smith's attorneys for a change of venue the writer of this historical sketch ventures to quote in order to properly demonstrate the state of public opinion both in regard to the Smith case and to the cowboys as well. In an affidavit Sheriff James, of Dawson County, states in substance that on the night of the 18th of September, 1875, about 10.30 o'clock, a party of citizens from Buffalo County came to Plum Creek, the deputy sheriff of said county was with them. The party were armed with guns and revolvers and during the night the party came to the jail where Sheriff James was guarding Smith, and the deputy sheriff of Buffalo County (D. B. Marsh) said, "The —— ought to be taken to Kearney and hung," also that threats were made to take them out of the jail and hang them to telegraph poles. The following (exhibit "A") is an editorial appearing in the December 14th (the trial of Smith then taking place) issue of the Daily (Kearney Junction) Times, L. B. Cunningham, editor:

THE HERDERS

"Our people are greatly concerned about what will be done with the herders, especially the cold-blooded murderer Smith. Where there is any doubt existing in the minds of any, whether a supposed criminal is the right one or not, and where the people may be unduly prejudiced against a prisoner, it may be well to have a change of venue. But in a case where there is a cold-blooded murder committed without provocation, and the murderer is known, positively, by everyone, then such a one should be tried right where the crime was committed; if it were upon the very self same spot, it would be better, and if found guilty, then let him hang. Let one wretched life compensate, so far as it can, for the other that is lost to us. Talk of prejudice, indeed. How can a mind be prejudiced where there is no shadow of a doubt? Here there is no doubt. Milton M. Collins was murdered, 'shot like a dog,' and for nothing, by this selfsame Smith. Whom is there that doubts? Wherein is the foundation for such doubts? The idea is a ridiculous one. A half simpleton would laugh at such folly. The juries have all been selected according to law. No objection can be founded on that ground. This individual committed a murder in our midst. Our people want no change of venue, they want no delay, no extra cost of thousands of dollars, probably, on account of change of venue and delay. We hope the authorities will see this matter in this light. Our people are as ready to give justice as any people. Let him, the particular one, have a fair trial right here, but let no injustice be done by the intrigue of shrewd attorneys. The people want no more cost and trouble than is positively necessary; they have already endured enough by these murderers."

Also it is the opinion of the writer of this sketch that the cowboy troubles at Kearney Junction, including the killing of Collins by Smith, were the direct outgrowth of the open saloon and the almost unrestricted sale of intoxicating liquors. In support of this opinion it can be said that Gibbon was the county seat of Buffalo County before the removal to Kearney Junction, and was a good trading point before there was a Kearney Junction and during the cowboy troubles

herein related. That during these years—the early '70s—many herds of Texas cattle in charge of Texan and Mexican cowboys were held in the vicinity, and the herders did all their trading at Gibbon; also after delivering their cattle they often returned to Gibbon to buy supplies for the return journey. Gibbon had no open saloons and so far as can be recalled there was no trouble as between the cowboys and the citizens of Gibbon and the surrounding country.

OFFICERS OF THE COURT

The officers of the court at this trial were Samuel Maxwell, judge; M. B. Hoxie, district attorney. The attorneys for the defense were E. F. Gray of Fremont, and Warrington and Hewitt of Plum Creek. Hamer and Connor were attorneys for Copeland and Roach.

David Anderson, sheriff; Joseph Scott, county clerk and clerk of the District Court; F. G. Keens, deputy clerk. In the list of jurymen herewith given, following each name is the number of miles he resided from Kearney Junction, none residing nearer than ten miles: C. S. Bailey, 24; G. W. McKee, 14; E. W. Fawcett, 14; T. J. Shuffleberger, 18; Walter Shreve, 18; Louis Kocher, 16; William Pettitt, 10; Charles E. Butler, 12; Edmund Miller, 23; J. D. Drury, 14; Robert Hick, 15; Emory D. Hubbard, 15. By ballot C. S. Bailey was chosen foreman of the jury.

December 17th (three months from the date when the murder was committed) the jury returned the following verdict:

State of Nebraska	} Indictment
vs.	
Jordon P. Smith	} for Murder.

"We, the jury empaneled, charged and sworn to well and truly try and true determination make in the above entitled cause, do find the defendant, Jordon P. Smith, guilty of murder in the first degree.

“(Signed) C. S. BAILEY, Foreman.”

December 18th Judge Maxwell pronounced sentence as follows:

"And now and on this same day came the said parties into court the said State of Nebraska being represented by the district attorney and the said defendant being before the court in person and attended by his said counsel and thereupon came the district attorney and moved that the said defendant be brought to the bar of the court in person and attended by his counsel and having been asked by the court what further he hath to say why the judgment of the court should not be pronounced against him, answereth naught. It is therefore considered and adjudged by the court and the sentence of the court is, that you, Jordon P. Smith, be conveyed hence and confined in the jail of Buffalo County until Friday, the 7th day of April, 1876, and that on the 7th day of April, 1876, between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 4 o'clock P. M., of said day, you be hanged by the neck until you are dead.

“(Signed) SAMUEL MAXWELL, Judge.”

December 20th Sheriff Anderson delivered Jordon P. Smith to Samuel McClay, sheriff of Lancaster County, for safe keeping in the jail of Lancaster County.

The evidence in this case, as recalled by jurors, seems to disclose that Milton M. Collins, a farmer living south of Kearney Junction, in Buffalo County, in the morning of the 17th day of September, found a bunch of cow ponies in his corn-field and drove them into his corral. During the forenoon Jordon P. Smith, accompanied by some of his herders, came to Collins' place and claimed the ponies. Collins demanded \$50 as damages, refusing to deliver the ponies until the damages were paid. They had a wordy quarrel, Smith claiming the damage did not amount to \$50, and refusing to pay that much. Smith finally proposed to arbitrate the matter, he to choose one arbitrator, Collins to name one, and the two so named to choose the third, Smith agreeing to pay the award of the arbitrators. This proposition Collins would not accept and Smith and his party rode to the city and during the day visited the saloons, drinking and talking about the ponies, and on one occasion Smith remarked that he was going back "and have the ponies or have blood." In the afternoon Collins mounted his pony and rode towards the city, and meeting Smith and his party turned and rode back with them and the wordy argument in regard to the amount of damages was renewed. Smith was armed with a loaded revolver, while Collins was unarmed. The corral was back of the Collins house and as they rode by the house Collins stopped and Smith ordered him not to dismount. Collins dismounted from his pony and Smith shot him twice through the body, the wife of Collins standing in the doorway when her husband was shot. Collins staggered towards the house falling on the outside cellar. Smith claimed that he feared if Collins dismounted he would go to the house and get a gun and shoot him.

Milton M. Collins was aged twenty-four years at the date of his death. His widow died in June, 1876.

Writing in reference to this trial Judge F. G. Hamer says: "Hamer and Connor defended Copeland and Roach, who were tried in Buffalo County and acquitted. Copeland was a young printer from San Antonio, Tex.; he had never been a cowboy and came along with the herd for the pleasure of the trip. Roach was a full blooded Indian. There was very little testimony against them. About the most that could be said was that they were in the party with Smith when the shooting was done." These two men had no means; Copeland gave Judge Hamer a valuable saddle in payment for services. Jordon P. Smith's people were well-to-do and paid liberally for his defense.

SECOND TRIAL OF JORDON P. SMITH

On the 21st of March, 1876, the Supreme Court set aside the judgment resulting from the first trial and granted a new trial. On petition a change of venue was granted removing the cause to Kearney County and the trial was held at Lowell, the county seat, beginning on May 16, 1876.

The writer is indebted to Hon. I. D. Evans for a copy of the Lowell Register, dated May 19, 1876, giving an account of the second trial of Jordon P. Smith, Mr. Evans being at that date editor of the Register.

The following is the Register's account of the trial:

"Judge G. W. Post of the Fourth Judicial District, whose home is at York, presided under an arrangement made by Judge W. Gaslin. District Attorney

Dillworth was assisted in the prosecution of the case by Attorneys McNamar of Plum Creek, Hamer & Connor and Swizer of Kearney. Judge Gray of Fremont, and Warrington & Hewett of Plum Creek, were counsel for the defense. John T. Bell, of Omaha, the official reporter.

"The following named constituted the jury, it taking a day to impanel the same: A. R. Harland, Nathan Salsbury, Hiram Nelson, Wm. Harland, Jas. H. Wilson, Daniel Bonge, Daniel Roberts, Charles Alexander, T. A. Cooper, Frank Barnhardt, John Shaffer and Wm. C. Johnson. John Heatherington was sheriff.

TESTIMONY

"Mr. Calhoun testified that Smith came to the store where he was working on the 17th of September, 1875, that in a conversation with Copeland, who was also there, in relation to the ponies, Smith said he would shoot Collins and wear his revolver out over his head unless he gave up the ponies. Afterwards Smith, Copeland and others went to Kelly's saloon to get something to drink. From there they went to Alice McDonald's 'cottage.' Here the matter was again discussed. Alice McDonald swore that during the conversation Smith offered to bet \$50 with one of his companions that he would kill some man before he left town. That he would have the ponies or he would have blood. Leaving the 'cottage' Smith and his friends went south in the direction of Collins' house where the ponies were corralled. On the way they met Milton Collins riding toward town on horseback. Smith asked him where he was going. Collins replied that he was going to see about the damage done by the ponies. Smith after asking as to the amount of the damages offered to leave it to arbitration, when Collins remarked that they had other ways of settling such matters in this country (this was proven by the defense).

"At this Smith drew his revolver, pointed it at Collins' head and kept it in that position while they rode about half a mile to the latter's house, telling him he would shoot him if he said anything. Collins was in his shirt sleeves and unarmed. When they reached Mr. Collins' premises and he was in the act of dismounting, Smith with his pistol still pointing at him, told him to remain on the horse and let the ponies go or he would kill him. Just as Collins reached the ground Smith shot with unerring aim. Collins staggered toward the house and by the time he reached the door Smith had fired four additional shots at him. The other herders who had stationed themselves in a semi-circle around the deceased during the shooting, then liberated the ponies and started for camp, while Smith with a volunteer force of his men constituted themselves a rear guard to protect themselves from any demonstrations which might be made by the citizens. The verdict was murder in the second degree, the sentence thirty years in the penitentiary. The trial began Tuesday and was completed Friday."

At the same term of court John Williams was to be tried for the murder of the Vroomans. The two prisoners, Smith and Williams, were kept in the court room, on the second floor of the courthouse. Tuesday, about 9 o'clock at night, a mob estimated from fifty to one hundred and fifty in number assembled with the avowed object of hanging Williams. Judge Post, Sheriff Heatherington and all the attorneys in attendance at court repaired to the courthouse but it was not

until about 1 o'clock in the morning that the mob was induced to disband and go home. The Register states that Judge Post stood Joel Hull, who it seems was credited with being the leader of the mob, in charge and kept him until after the crowd had dispersed. There has been a story current that an attempt was made by a mob from Kearney to take and hang Smith, and also that the Kearney Guards, a militia company under command of Capt. E. C. Calkins and Lieuts. Ren Julian and James Jenkins, were on guard during this trial, but as the Register makes no mention of the matter it doubtless is mere hearsay.

ACCOUNT BY JUDGE E. F. GRAY

Writing in regard to this trial under date November 2, 1912, Judge Gray says, "That sentence (the one imposed at the trial held in Lowell) was revoked in the fall of 1876; then a change of venue to Adams County and trial had at Juniatta before Judge Wm. Gaslin. The verdict was manslaughter with a recommendation to mercy. But Judge Gaslin sentenced Smith to ten years of solitary confinement. The warden did not obey the solitary part of the sentence. Smith got the good time and actually came out in about seven years.

"I defended Smith in the first two trials and in the third had the assistance of 'Jim' Laird. One evening after supper, during the trial at Lowell, while Smith and another murderer that 'Jim' Laird defended and was waiting to try, were both left in the court room chained to the bar railings, and only one man on guard, Laird learned that an organized mob of some hundreds of men had come in from Kearney Junction to hang his client and mine, and thereupon Laird and I got out our little pocket pistols and started for the courthouse. We managed to get the password and get through the line of sentinels, and up into the court room; we got a prop for the lone guard to put against the door and then we got down in the narrow stairway and as the mob came in and up to the foot of the stairs we cocked our shooting irons and the mob skeedaddled. Judge Post and District Attorney Dillworth collected a posse to guard the prisoners and then the mob dispersed."

The population of Buffalo County at this date (1875) was approximately twenty-eight hundred and of Kearney Junction approximately seven hundred. Nearly 20 per cent of the voters of the county were summoned as grand jurymen or as talesmen from which to select the petit jury and of all of the talesmen thus summoned none lived within ten miles of Kearney Junction.

It is a conservative estimate to make that 80 per cent of the voters of the county were in attendance at the trial of Smith and it is also true that in no criminal event in the history of the county did so large a per cent of the people come in touch, in contact, as it were, as in the trial of Jordon P. Smith for the murder of Milton M. Collins.

The expense of this trial to Buffalo County was \$5,555.35. The first trial in the county being \$3,886.65, the second trial in Kearney County \$693, the third trial in Adams County \$975.70.

In the year 1881 H. C. McNew, editor of The Shelton Clipper, writing of cowboy troubles at Kearney, says: "During the early days of Kearney that town had a good deal of trouble with herders who infested this section of Nebraska at that time.

"It was at that place where Peeler received wounds that made him a cripple for life, and he is now living in Western Texas. He was a crack shot, using either hand with deadly effect, but he got hit twice with needle gun bullets during a midnight call of vigilantes. This knocked all the 'sand' out of him and settled him for life. 'Texas Spence' received deadly wounds during an afternoon's shooting match on the streets of Kearney between citizens and herders. He lived a few days and crossed to—no one knows. This about broke up the trouble and the town settled down to quietude and has ever since retained that state. Bill Bland was the leader of the herders in all this trouble. He was a bad man and met a violent death last summer at Fort Griffin, N. M., being shot down by a company of soldiers sent out into that country to kill off such characters. Robert Stimson, then city marshal, shot a 'tenderfoot' herder named Smith (Brown) whom he was attempting to take up the street."

THE MURDER OF BROWN BY CITY MARSHAL STIMSON

It was a beautiful day in the month of June that the writer and his brother visited the City of Kearney in order to purchase some harvesting machinery. As we drove into the city about 11 o'clock in the forenoon, we saw, south of the track, a young man riding at a rapid gait and making a great deal of unnecessary noise.

We put up our team at "Jimmie" O'Kane's and had started to visit A. L. Webb's implement store on the north side, when, as we were crossing the railroad, our attention was called to the cowboy, whom City Marshal Stimson had arrested near the courthouse, and was, it was stated, taking him to the mayor's office in the north part of the city. The cowboy, unarmed except a quirt hanging at his wrist, was riding his pony and the marshal's revolver glistened in the sunlight as he walked beside the boy on his pony.

The report had quickly spread that the marshal had arrested a cowboy and scores of men had congregated in the vicinity of the railroad crossing awaiting the coming of the marshal and his prisoner.

The first building north of the crossing and on the west side of the street was a law office, a one-story building, with a sleeping room above. In front of this building the cowboy reined in his pony, facing the building, and seemingly addressing a person in the room above the law office, said, "Don't you see this d—d pony don't want to go any farther?" The boy did not attempt to escape. He did not attempt to strike the marshal or his pony. He was dressed in shirt and trousers, unarmed except for a quirt hanging at his wrist. There were scores of men within easy reach to assist the marshal had he called for help. The marshal stood so close to the boy that he had to step backward in order to straighten his arm, which he did, and shot the boy through the body. As the boy lurched in the saddle from the effect of the shot, he exclaimed, "For God's sake, don't shoot me." The marshal shot him a second time as the boy was falling from the horse. With the quirt still hanging to his wrist the wounded boy was carried into the office and laid on a lounge. As recalled, no attempt was made to dress his wounds or relieve his suffering.

When the writer returned from his noon-day lunch the boy was dead.

Immediately after the shooting the writer called on a banker with whom he was well acquainted, Frank S. Trew, stated what he had just witnessed and insisted it was a case of deliberate murder, that the killing was uncalled for, not justified. The banker replied, in substance, "The people of Kearney will stand back of their officers in all matters of this kind."

A grand jury refused to indict the marshal and he was not tried for the killing of the boy. It developed that the boy had come from Pennsylvania the fall before, had helped care for some cattle being wintered west of Kearney and when spring came had worked as "tender" for a mason in plastering a house. Having earned some money he had ridden his pony to the city, doubtless taken a few drinks of beer, imagined he was a truly enough "cowboy," and thus met his death. While he was killed by the city marshal, he was buried at the expense of the county.

It is not believed by the writer that Marshal Stimson should be greatly blamed in the matter. The people of Kearney had been terrorized by cowboys made reckless and dangerous by intoxicating liquors purchased at open saloons in the city. The marshal himself, it is believed, was, as the saying is, "scared to death," imagining he was dealing with a dangerous cowboy. It is recalled and also related that for years Mr. Stimson "toted" a shotgun, day and night, wherever he went.

CHAPTER XLVI

RESOURCES OF BUFFALO COUNTY—FERTILITY OF SOIL—GROWING OF FRUITS—CROP PRODUCTION—IMPORTANCE OF ALFALFA—VALUE OF PROPERTY BY DECADES—TAXES PAID BY DECADES—TOTAL TAXES PAID TO DATE—NUMBER OF FARMS—VALUE OF CROPS—VALUE OF LIVE STOCK—POPULATION OF COUNTY BY DECADES.

(Note—The following article on the "Resources of Buffalo County was published in a "Booster" edition of The Ravenna News in the year 1913.)

OUR BUFFALO COUNTY HOME

The sun is shining bright in our Buffalo County home.
'Tis summer and the roses are in bloom;
The days are bright and joyous and happiness abounds.
There is naught to cause a feeling here of gloom.

The robin and the mourning dove, the blue jay and the thrush,
Are flitting and a singing in the trees.
There's a rustle, and a murmur like a song comes from the leaves,
Gently stirring in a soft, caressing breeze.

The fields of wheat are waving and like billows gently roll;
The rows of corn they show a lighter green;
The purpling alfalfa will soon be in the stack—
Can there elsewhere be a more delightful scene?

Soon the trees within the orchard will be bending with their load,
The cherries are already growing red;
There is happiness and comfort in the shade beneath the trees,
With their branches gently moving overhead.

Oh the sun is shining bright in our Buffalo County home,
The days are full of comfort and delight;
No strife disturbs the day-dreams, so restful to the mind,
Nor the sweet and peaceful slumbers of the night.

S. C. B.

Echo Farm, June, 1913.

Buffalo County contains 985 square miles, and while there were many squatters on land within its borders at the date of this first election, January 20, 1870,

only three claims (homesteads or pre-emption) had been filed upon in the general land office. These claims were the Boyd Ranch in Gibbon Township, pre-empted in 1867 by Joseph Boyd, two homestead claims in what is now Shelton Township, one by Andrew Buest, the other by O. E. Thompson. Between the date of January 20, 1870, and January 1, 1880, a period of ten years, 1,265 homesteads and pre-emption claims located in Buffalo County were filed upon in the general land office.

In discussing agricultural resources of Buffalo County we can, therefore, begin with a fixed date, January 20, 1870, when the county was settled, its agricultural resources unknown and, of course, undeveloped.

The soil of the county is largely a sandy loam of great depth and exceedingly fertile. There are thousands of acres in the county which have been continuously cropped for forty years, the crop yield at the present time equaling that of earlier date. Where proper crop rotations are observed, the fertility of soil seems well nigh inexhaustible.

Next to fertility of the soil the most important agricultural resource is an abundance of wholesome water for domestic purposes. In this respect Buffalo County is supremely blest. In addition to the Platte, the Loup, the Beaver and Wood rivers there is beneath the surface at varying depths, according to surface elevation, a continuous and unfailing supply of water, having an average temperature of 52°. The waters of this underflowing river are easily and cheaply brought to the surface to be made use of for domestic purposes and to some extent irrigation purposes.

In 1870 Buffalo County was a treeless plain, the only timber being narrow belts along running streams. Today groves of timber are seen in great abundance and in every direction. In the forty-two years trees have been planted which have grown to such size and maturity that they have been sawed into lumber suitable for building and other commercial purposes.

While not advising that the growing of commercial orchards would prove profitable, yet it is easily possible to raise all the fruits needed for home consumption. In its virgin state in the county there were numerous orchards of plums, large in size and delicious to the taste; white grapes abounded, and at any early date one writer in describing Wood River said, "Wood River is a vast serpentine vineyard, literally festooned with wild grapes."

Apples, cherries, plums, peaches and small fruits, such as gooseberries, raspberries, etc., thrive and yield good returns. There are in the county orchards of apple trees planted in the early '70s in which the trees are still healthy, vigorous and bearing fruit annually, some of these trees yielding thirty bushels of matured fruit in a season. The varieties which seem to have best stood the test for all these years and are still bearing annually are the Ben Davis, Whitney, Wealthy, Winesap, Duchess, Red June, Early Harvest, Jonathan and Siberian crab. There need be no lack of abundant fruit for all family purposes on any Buffalo County farm if the owner will plant suitable varieties and properly care for them.

In the matter of crop production, such as corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye and vegetables, it can be said that for forty years the farms of Buffalo County have been producing these in great abundance. Totaling these crops into millions of

bushels gives no adequate idea of their value and importance, but when we take into consideration that Buffalo County has at the present time a population of 21,907 people, that vast improvements have been made, that great wealth has been accumulated, public buildings been erected, rivers and streams bridged, thousands of happy homes established, that the people are prosperous, happy and contented, and that real poverty is practically unknown in our midst, and when we consider that all of these things are dependent on the one question, profitable crop production, it is self-evident that our agricultural resources in this respect are great and can be depended upon in years to come.

In a natural way, ours is a grass country, that is, natural grasses cover our bluffs and valleys and the tame grasses and clovers are easily cultivated and prove profitable.

Since first settlement, the greatest discovery in the development of our agricultural resources is that of the alfalfa plant and its adaptability to our soil and climatic conditions. Buffalo County is in the very heart of that portion of our state and nation in which the alfalfa plant seems best to thrive. There are in our county fields of alfalfa which for more than twelve years have produced annually three, and sometimes more, cuttings a year. This without re-seeding, cultivating or fertilization of the soil. It would seem that there is almost no limit to time in which profitable crops of alfalfa can continuously be produced from our soil. When our people come to realize the importance of the value of this crop and its cultivation becomes more general it will add an annual income of millions of dollars to our agricultural resources.

It seems to the writer that the increase in population in the county and the growth and development of its agricultural resources can most correctly and forcibly be expressed by comparisons based on valuations of property in the county for assessment purposes and comparisons showing amount paid for public purposes. It is generally conceded that the real value of our property is at least seven times that value taken for purposes of taxation. On this basis let us illustrate the increase in wealth in the county by decades. The following table shows the value of all real and personal property in Buffalo County by decades since 1870:

Year.	Value of Real and Personal Property.
1870	\$ 5,522,916
1880	8,522,521
1890	25,687,403
1900	19,333,233
1910	50,695,799
1912	52,951,385

The following table shows the amounts of state, county, township, village and school taxes paid in Buffalo County on certain specified years since organization of county:

Year.	Total Tax.
1870	\$ 7,868
1880	52,650

HISTORY OF BUFFALO COUNTY

Year.	Total Tax.
1890	243,381
1900	176,680
1910	330,133
1912	369,403

The total state, county, township, village and school district taxes paid in Buffalo County since its organization in 1870, including the year 1912, amounts to \$7,747,803.

Buffalo County has 604,800 acres. Two thousand four hundred and forty-six farms and the value of all crops produced in 1909 (U. S. census) amounted to \$3,725,724. The value of all livestock in 1909 (U. S. census) amounted to \$4,305,243.

The population by decades in Buffalo County is as follows:

Year.	Inhabitants.
1870	193
1880	7,531
1890	22,161
1900	20,254
1910	21,907

CHAPTER XLVII

PRECIPITATION AND TEMPERATURE RECORDS IN BUFFALO COUNTY—RECORDS DATING FROM THE YEAR 1849—RECORDS KEPT AT FORT KEARNEY, KEARNEY, RAVENNA, ELM CREEK AND WATERTOWN—A CONTINUOUS RECORD KEPT BY ERASTUS SMITH AND MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY FROM 1878 TO DATE, 1915—HIGHEST TEMPERATURE; LOWEST TEMPERATURE; AVERAGE TEMPERATURE—AVERAGE DATE OF KILLING FROSTS IN SPRING AND AUTUMN.

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL PRECIPITATION IN BUFFALO COUNTY

Through the courtesy and kindness of Director G. A. Loveland of the Nebraska section of the climatological service of the weather bureau, United States Department of Agriculture, herewith is presented the monthly and annual precipitation, also mean temperatures as relate to Buffalo County. The keeping of a record of precipitation was begun at Fort Kearney in the year 1849, and in later years a like record has been kept at the City of Kearney. The keeping of such a record was begun by the late Erastus Smith at Ravenna in the year 1878 and continued until his death in 1909, and the record is still being kept by members of his family.

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL PRECIPITATION AT FORT KEARNEY AND KEARNEY.

Elevation, 2,147 feet.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1849.....	....	....	6.12	7.86	10.74	4.00	7.70	6.05	0.27	1.80	0.10	0.10	.....
1850.....	0.47	0.06	1.06	1.07	2.88	9.93	5.38	1.66	0.43	0.26	1.57	0.30	25.07
1851.....	1.15	0.97	0.14	0.73	9.43	3.50	2.86	2.78	2.60	0.52	1.00	0.76	26.44
1852.....	0.12	0.25	0.28	0.73	5.23	3.02	2.69	1.84	2.17	1.35	2.24	0.73	20.05
1853.....	0.00	0.02	0.08	6.10	8.46	2.47	8.28	2.21	0.94	0.26	1.00	0.08	29.90
1854.....	0.23	1.33	1.87	2.56	4.15	5.40	3.51	1.18	4.60	1.07	0.75	0.00	26.65
1855.....	1.00	0.25	1.35	0.68	4.91	2.20	3.90	4.69	....	0.18	2.12	1.48	.....
1856.....	0.27	0.52	0.64	3.44	3.18	4.65	5.09	2.14	1.92	5.50	0.40	1.35	29.10
1857.....	1.06	0.00	0.12	1.21	1.56	0.49	8.50	4.39	2.65	5.88	2.56	0.20	28.62
1858.....	1.45	0.24	1.94	4.04	3.55	3.02	4.41	1.76	2.10	3.35	0.21	0.07	26.14
1859.....	0.20	0.37	2.99	0.65	3.95	0.66	1.80	2.76	2.03	0.38	0.21	0.10	16.10
1860.....	0.27	0.34	0.00	1.01	0.68	4.82	3.82	0.75	3.52	1.08	0.08	0.48	16.85
1861.....	0.75	0.62	0.27	0.20	3.66	4.13	3.06	2.13	2.49	0.32	1.01	0.70	19.34
1862.....	0.86	0.43	....	1.41	1.35	3.37	5.41	3.50	4.00	0.00	0.39	0.13	.....
1863.....	0.40	0.73	0.14	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	.....
1864.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	.....
1865.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1.75	.....
1866.....	0.76	0.26	1.75	2.25	0.75	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	.....
1867.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	T.	....	....	....	....	....	.....
1868.....	0.03	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	.....

HISTORY OF BUFFALO COUNTY

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1869.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1870.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1871.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1872.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1873.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1874.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1875.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1876.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1877.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1878.....	....	....	....	....	2.64	2.44	3.65	4.30	3.40	....	0.90	0.37	....
1879.....	0.77	0.50	0.05	2.87	3.15	5.02	11.80	1.10	2.10	0.50	0.75	0.17	28.78
1880.....	0.15	0.20	0.33	0.85	1.22	5.12	4.50	4.05	4.00	1.50	0.40	1.20	23.52
1881.....	2.40	2.60	2.65	2.05	9.30	4.35	3.90	1.80	4.65	2.90	0.55	0.25	37.40
1882.....	0.95	2.70	0.00	2.95	7.15	2.40	3.45	1.60	2.10	2.85	....	....	....
1883.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1884.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1885.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1886.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1887.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1888.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1889.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1890.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1891.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
1892.....	....	....	0.71	2.51	4.75	0.97	4.39	3.68	0.39	1.71	0.30	0.60	....
1893.....	0.16	1.10	1.37	0.40	7.49	4.99	2.89	1.37	1.46	0.42	0.04	1.17	22.86
1894.....	0.81	0.99	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	0.00	0.70	....
1895.....	0.20	....	....	2.00	2.55	3.55	2.30	0.71	1.77	0.25	0.80	0.10	....
1896.....	0.30	T.	2.10	4.96	6.90	3.26	3.49	3.49	1.98	1.25	1.55	0.54	29.82
1897.....	0.32	0.99	1.08	6.52	1.18	3.34	4.01	1.60	2.51	5.70	0.82	1.68	29.75
1898.....	0.17	0.25	0.04	3.60	4.11	4.18	1.76	2.53	3.40	0.65	0.45	0.10	21.24
1899.....	0.00	0.60	0.60	0.25	4.77	7.93	4.90	5.10	0.85	0.45	1.20	1.00	27.65
1900.....	T.	0.65	0.40	4.92	2.03	1.70	3.32	2.94	2.10	3.70	T.	T.	21.76
1901.....	0.10	0.32	2.15	4.00	1.64	3.15	2.05	4.17	6.32	1.30	0.82	0.10	26.12
1902.....	0.75	0.60	2.09	0.66	5.42	4.71	8.66	2.57	4.98	4.13	0.03	0.55	35.15
1903.....	0.22	2.25	1.21	1.78	8.64	4.63	8.40	7.19	0.52	1.04	0.58	0.02	36.48
1904.....	0.21	0.01	0.14	2.51	2.78	6.69	4.73	3.54	2.01	3.86	0.19	0.11	26.78
1905.....	0.98	0.87	0.88	3.85	8.69	8.17	5.22	2.29	5.88	0.76	1.45	0.00	39.04
1906.....	0.72	0.46	1.18	5.84	3.86	1.30	5.05	5.02	4.27	2.76	....	....	....
1907.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2.66	2.95	2.10	0.43	0.13	0.48	....
1908.....	0.10	0.97	0.19	0.64	2.86	6.04	5.33	3.25	0.27	2.17	0.70	0.05	22.57
1909.....	T.	0.59	1.49	0.61	1.98	2.15	3.65	1.00	3.31	1.49	1.72	1.12	19.11
1910.....	0.70	T.	0.05	0.55	2.39	4.46	1.81	3.44	2.61	0.74	0.30	0.50	17.55
1911.....	0.15	0.40	0.10	1.75	1.45	1.28	3.15	5.38	3.29	2.31	T.	0.55	19.81
1912.....	T.	0.72	2.90	1.68	0.54	2.05	4.55	1.35	1.90	1.61	1.00	0.10	18.40
1913.....	0.30	1.15	1.44	3.58	1.95	3.05	0.96	0.97	1.98	0.05	0.58	4.62	20.63
1914.....	0.05	0.95	1.39	1.57	1.25	4.89	2.86	2.28	1.84	0.96	T.	1.40	19.44
1915.....	0.98	1.40	2.25	3.06	6.04	8.44	7.96	6.84	....	....	....	....	....
Means.....	0.49	0.69	1.14	2.44	4.08	3.95	4.47	2.89	2.54	1.69	0.72	0.63	25.40

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL PRECIPITATION AT RAVENNA.

Elevation, 2,028 feet.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1878.....	0.24	0.32	3.50	1.36	2.71	2.37	4.59	1.40	2.16	0.06	0.60	0.33	19.64
1879.....	0.65	0.44	0.10	2.69	4.14	2.23	9.20	2.10	2.28	0.83	0.61	0.41	26.68

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1880.....	0.27	0.06	0.67	0.99	1.17	6.80	2.19	2.86	2.15	1.72	0.19	0.64	19.71
1881.....	0.98	2.22	1.75	2.13	7.32	6.00	6.14	1.27	5.10	3.76	0.88	0.17	37.72
1882.....	0.54	0.45	0.00	2.90	6.87	3.37	4.76	0.99	1.28	2.49	0.06	0.37	24.08
1883.....	0.59	0.74	0.41	2.60	4.29	4.44	2.62	3.39	0.80	3.98	0.04	0.50	24.40
1884.....	0.36	0.49	1.31	2.76	3.83	1.72	6.34	3.55	0.59	1.38	0.13	1.09	23.58
1885.....	0.39	0.87	0.29	3.41	2.97	2.24	4.12	5.86	1.92	0.97	1.48	1.07	25.56
1886.....	1.57	1.13	3.16	2.84	3.61	1.57	3.91	2.76	3.05	0.00	1.40	0.93	25.93
1887.....	0.45	1.15	0.11	4.01	2.71	5.83	4.18	4.55	2.35	0.13	0.70	1.17	27.34
1888.....	0.34	0.79	3.46	3.53	4.55	2.01	5.28	4.22	0.48	0.31	0.09	0.60	25.66
1889.....	1.02	0.03	1.45	2.03	1.43	4.02	8.76	1.79	1.35	1.04	0.95	0.25	24.12
1890.....	1.83	0.52	0.83	2.76	2.85	2.75	1.66	1.98	0.86	2.04	1.03	0.04	19.15
1891.....	2.21	1.21	2.29	5.16	2.86	9.09	5.10	3.40	1.54	1.03	0.08	1.98	35.95
1892.....	1.69	1.93	2.79	2.78	4.77	2.28	1.64	4.17	0.88	1.83	0.49	0.35	25.60
1893.....	0.05	1.27	1.87	0.99	4.27	2.92	2.39	0.85	1.26	0.66	0.21	1.39	18.13
1894.....	0.73	0.52	0.81	1.97	0.99	3.28	1.38	1.49	1.37	2.49	0.12	0.51	15.67
1895.....	0.31	1.56	0.42	2.28	2.05	5.05	1.16	3.09	2.62	0.40	1.14	0.18	20.26
1896.....	0.35	0.12	1.67	5.72	4.58	2.66	5.37	0.89	3.25	1.45	1.30	0.14	27.50
1897.....	0.60	0.88	1.61	5.21	1.94	5.82	1.73	6.54	1.63	4.96	0.30	1.53	32.75
1898.....	0.33	0.68	0.23	2.23	3.15	3.25	2.19	1.72	3.10	0.56	0.69	0.37	18.50
1899.....	0.05	0.89	0.90	0.86	1.93	8.91	2.11	5.33	0.45	0.58	0.94	1.14	24.09
1900.....	0.01	1.40	0.37	3.56	2.25	1.90	4.36	1.74	2.43	3.17	0.30	0.25	21.74
1901.....	0.25	0.90	3.42	2.71	1.39	3.63	2.37	2.88	6.76	1.67	0.84	0.33	27.15
1902.....	0.80	0.70	1.51	0.46	6.82	3.89	8.96	3.42	5.35	3.95	0.17	1.03	37.06
1903.....	0.37	2.55	1.50	1.45	6.73	3.94	9.58	7.62	0.51	1.87	0.74	0.03	36.89
1904.....	0.16	0.02	0.88	2.05	2.50	2.79	7.48	4.50	2.34	4.47	0.12	0.14	27.45
1905.....	1.25	0.98	0.88	3.97	6.94	4.76	2.61	4.65	4.49	1.10	1.65	T.	33.28
1906.....	0.51	0.82	1.52	6.39	2.27	2.12	4.00	4.57	2.35	2.70	0.85	1.60	29.70
1907.....	0.31	0.84	0.20	1.35	1.93	2.51	2.54	4.11	2.82	0.17	0.04	0.75	17.57
1908.....	0.20	1.19	0.19	1.25	2.62	9.68	3.90	5.16	0.78	2.89	0.49	0.07	28.42
1909.....	0.26	1.20	0.53	1.10	2.55	1.78	5.47	2.74	1.57	1.52	1.77	1.41	21.90
1910.....	0.81	0.04	0.19	1.80	2.05	4.70	2.02	3.73	2.31	0.72	0.23	0.87	19.47
1911.....	0.55	0.77	0.23	2.18	2.72	1.56	3.74	4.26	1.70	3.47	0.36	0.79	22.26
1912.....	0.77	0.69	1.95	2.56	1.61	1.43	2.16	0.58	1.90	0.99	1.60	0.18	16.42
1913.....	0.30	0.78	1.55	3.24	4.83	3.17	2.34	1.55	2.12	0.20	0.80	4.99	25.87
1914.....	0.17	0.68	1.02	1.49	1.96	7.79	0.83	3.28	2.64	0.76	0.00	0.84	21.46
1915.....	0.95	1.64	2.52	2.18	4.05	6.39	5.98	3.89	....	....	....	....	....
Means.....	0.61	0.88	1.27	2.60	3.37	3.96	4.08	3.23	2.18	1.68	0.63	0.77	25.08

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL PRECIPITATION AT WATERTOWN.

Elevation, 2,299 feet.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1906.....	....	....	....	....	1.04	1.95	4.41	3.74	1.90	3.92	1.36	1.04	....
1907.....	0.80	0.70	0.15	0.56	2.59	2.61	2.97	2.93	2.15	0.37	0.09	0.30	16.31
1908.....	0.02	1.26	0.23	0.73	2.95	5.88	4.55	2.94	0.99	1.73	0.55	0.00	21.89
1909.....	0.16	0.61	0.58	0.77	1.07	1.53	3.50	2.52	1.13	1.24	1.11	1.45	15.47
1910.....	0.56	0.02	0.20	0.60	2.70	3.64	1.40	3.12	2.39	0.54	0.22	0.75	16.14
1911.....	0.40	0.38	0.21	1.98	2.94	1.52	3.48	4.10	2.68	5.22	0.01	0.62	23.54
1912.....	0.33	0.31	0.92	1.91	1.59	0.87	2.23	1.05	2.47	1.10	0.75	0.15	13.08
1913.....	0.30	0.70	0.60	3.35	2.87	3.06	2.85	0.90	1.70	0.00	0.82	4.53	21.68
1914.....	0.08	0.56	0.43	2.86	2.28	5.73	0.83	2.42	1.73	1.71	0.00	0.52	19.15
1915.....	0.42	1.82	2.40	3.89	4.27	5.85	5.16	4.87	....	....	....	....	....
Means	0.34	0.71	0.64	1.85	2.43	3.26	3.14	2.86	1.90	1.76	0.55	1.06	18.95

HISTORY OF BUFFALO COUNTY

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL PRECIPITATION AT ELM CREEK.

Elevation, 2,268 feet.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1908.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4.69	5.91	3.32	0.36	2.44	0.67	0.00	.....
1909.....	0.00	0.49	1.50	1.21	2.82	2.26	5.76	1.42	2.93	1.35	1.85	1.17	22.75
1910.....	1.18	0.00	0.32	0.31	3.24	4.23	4.17	4.28	2.38	0.60	0.17	0.79	21.67
1911.....	0.29	0.75	0.44	2.10	3.00	1.64	4.10	5.86	3.94	3.51	T.	1.15	26.78
1912.....	0.32	1.47	2.47	1.87	1.51	2.24	1.77	1.09	2.37	1.04	0.90	0.31	17.36
1913.....	0.17	0.63	1.12	3.97	4.73	5.38	1.26	0.83	1.02	0.00	0.69	5.60	25.40
1914.....	0.32	0.92	0.93	2.61	4.08	5.57	2.36	2.72	1.25	1.45	0.00	0.84	23.05
1915.....	0.71	1.56	2.17	3.22	8.70	10.34	8.93	5.09	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Means.....	0.43	0.83	1.28	2.18	4.01	4.54	4.28	3.08	2.04	1.48	0.61	1.41	23.13

MONTHLY AND ANNUAL MEAN TEMPERATURE AT RAVENNA.

Elevation, 2,028 feet.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Ann.
1889.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	51.4	32.6	36.4	.....
1890.....	16.0	25.0	34.1	52.4	59.0	72.0	78.8	70.4	60.1	50.4	39.3	32.9	49.2
1891.....	28.2	16.2	27.8	51.5	58.6	64.6	68.5	69.5	66.2	50.5	33.2	29.9	47.1
1892.....	16.2	26.2	33.5	47.2	52.2	67.2	73.1	73.9	65.4	53.0	36.3	22.1	47.1
1893.....	23.7	21.4	32.0	48.0	56.8	70.7	74.7	70.6	66.1	51.2	35.0	28.5	39.9
1894.....	21.5	20.3	41.4	54.0	62.9	72.0	79.8	75.4	66.0	51.8	36.8	31.3	50.6
1895.....	19.4	21.3	38.0	56.4	61.0	67.2	70.4	72.5	69.0	48.2	35.4	29.5	49.0
1896.....	30.2	34.5	30.5	54.0	63.2	69.3	75.2	73.1	60.7	49.4	27.8	35.2	50.3
1897.....	24.4	28.4	35.4	49.0	59.6	68.2	75.8	70.6	71.5	55.0	35.6	23.6	49.8
1898.....	29.2	32.2	37.2	48.6	56.8	70.0	74.2	75.0	64.7	48.0	32.5	25.8	49.5
1899.....	24.4	12.8	27.3	50.2	60.0	70.0	71.8	74.8	64.8	54.2	43.0	25.7	48.2
1900.....	30.2	19.8	36.7	51.8	62.7	72.0	75.5	76.9	66.3	57.7	36.0	33.2	51.6
1901.....	26.3	20.4	37.0	49.2	59.9	72.2	83.0	75.8	64.0	55.2	39.7	25.0	50.6
1902.....	24.8	21.8	39.8	50.1	63.6	65.8	72.6	71.8	59.5	54.0	38.8	20.6	48.6
1903.....	27.2	19.8	35.5	50.1	58.5	64.2	72.8	70.8	61.5	54.1	37.7	28.8	48.4
1904.....	23.4	24.8	38.8	46.2	59.8	67.2	71.3	71.2	63.6	54.3	42.9	28.0	49.3
1905.....	.....	15.4	44.0	47.6	57.0	69.6	70.6	73.6	66.4	48.8	42.3	30.8	48.6
1906.....	.....	30.0	25.5	53.2	61.8	67.0	69.8	73.0	64.9	49.6	36.4	30.3	49.3
1907.....	.....	29.5	43.0	42.2	54.8	68.6	74.6	75.2	64.4	53.4	37.7	29.2	49.3
1908.....	.....	28.2	40.4	51.2	57.4	67.6	72.3	70.6	69.3	50.4	40.0	30.0	50.8
1909.....	.....	28.8	35.8	45.6	59.0	70.2	74.2	77.8	63.8	51.6	40.8	17.7	49.0
1910.....	.....	25.8	51.8	53.6	55.6	69.2	75.6	71.0	66.2	56.8	38.6	26.6	51.0
1911.....	.....	29.2	45.0	49.1	62.5	77.4	74.9	71.2	68.0	49.0	32.4	25.0	50.9
1912.....	.....	28.4	24.4	49.6	62.7	65.9	75.9	73.4	61.7	53.0	41.8	31.0	48.3
1913.....	.....	20.8	34.2	51.6	60.2	71.4	76.6	78.7	64.4	48.0	43.0	28.8	50.1
1914.....	.....	22.8	36.2	50.3	60.6	73.4	76.5	73.8	65.5	54.3	42.4	14.8	50.3
1915.....	.....	26.8	24.6	54.5	56.0	64.0	69.2	66.4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Means.....	.....	24.2	35.8	50.7	59.3	69.1	74.0	73.0	65.0	52.0	37.6	27.7	49.1

In a record kept at Ravenna of twenty-four years of "highest temperature," twenty-four years of "lowest temperature," nineteen years of "mean temperature" and for thirty-one years of "average number of days with one-tenth inch or more of precipitation," there is herewith given the result by months:

Month	Highest	Lowest	Mean	Days Precipitation
January	66	—38	24.4	5
February	77	—36	23.6	5
March	89	—10	35.7	6
April	96	11	50.1	6
May	100	24	59.2	10
June	104	35	68.7	10
July	107	38	73.7	10
August	106	36	72.9	8
September	104	24	65.0	6
October	92	9	52.0	5
November	82	—30	37.0	3
December	76	—25	28.8	5
Annual	107	—38	49.3	79

FROST DATES.

Average date of first killing frost in autumn.....	September 30
Average date of last killing frost in spring.....	May 10
Earliest date of killing frost in autumn.....	September 12
Latest date of killing frost in spring.....	May 30

CHAPTER XLVIII

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN BUFFALO COUNTY IN 1871—GEORGE H. SILVERNAIL PRESERVES RECORD IN HIS DIARY—NOMINATE A FULL COUNTY TICKET—A SPIRITED ELECTION—150 VOTES POLLED—PATRICK WALSH ON AN INDEPENDENT TICKET ELECTED PROBATE JUDGE.

The first steps taken, looking to an organization of the republican party in Buffalo County, was on September 15, 1871.

It is a matter of tradition that when Patrick Walsh, Sergt. Michael Coady and Martin Slattery sent to Governor David Butler a petition for the organization of Buffalo County in December, 1869, that in the body of the petition they declared that the petitioners are "good and true republicans," but it must be remembered that all three petitioners were born in Ireland, and those who enjoyed the privilege of an acquaintance with Patrick Walsh will also bear witness that "Paddy," as Mr. Walsh was called by his friends, had surely kissed the "Blarney stone" before leaving "Auld Ireland," and as Governor Butler was a republican, he doubtless thought it "wise" to belong to the governor's political party during the negotiations for an organization of the county. As a matter of fact, party lines cut no figure in the county until the coming of the colony to Gibbon in 1871.

Mr. George H. Silvernail has happily preserved a record of the birth of the republican party in the county. Under date of September 15, 1871, he wrote: "The republicans gathered at LaBarre's Hall (the LaBarre Building, a store with a hall on the second floor, stood where is now located the Babcock Opera House) and organized, elected an executive committee of five (5) who are to arrange a caucus for the nomination of a county ticket." The names of this executive committee are not given.

On September 23, 1871, Mr. Geo. H. Silvernail again wrote: "Went to county convention (the convention was held in LaBarre's Hall, at Gibbon); had quite a spirited time; (Jacob) Booth, chairman; S. C. Bassett, secretary. The ticket nominated was: (Rev. J. N.) Allen, probate judge; (Aaron) Ward, county clerk; Ed Oliver, county treasurer; C. Putnam, county superintendent; C. Clifton, sheriff; B. F. Sammons and W. F. McClure, commissioners; (A.) Collins, county surveyor. Dr. I. P. George, coroner. Precinct (Gibbon) ticket, D. P. Ashburn and J. M. Bayley, justices of the peace; Wm. McKinley and ———, constables and myself (George H. Silvernail) assessor." On October 30th, Mr. Silvernail again wrote: "Went to Gibbon, qualified as assessor of Precinct No. 1, Buffalo County."

The "spirited time" to which Mr. Silvernail refers to, was a fight, led by Mr. Ashburn in opposition to the nomination of Rev. J. N. Allen as probate judge.

There was already considerable feeling against Mr. F. S. Trew, who had taken an active part in the colony affairs and it was charged, had assisted his personal friends to file on claims along Wood River and adjoining the town site of Gibbon, making the land office records show that these claims had been previously taken and thus depriving other members of the colony of an equal chance to secure these most desirable claims, when choice was determined by lot; also Mr. Trew was either deputy or acting county treasurer, having the use, as it was charged, of the county funds (there was no bank in the county at that date), Mr. Ashburn charged that the nomination of Mr. Allen was not being made in good faith; that Mr. Allen was then in Pennsylvania and would not return for some months, and therefore could not qualify and that the plan was for Mr. Trew to be appointed by the county commissioners to fill the vacancy. The office of probate judge was, with the possible exception of county treasurer, the most lucrative in the county for the reason that acknowledgments of legal papers were made before the probate or county judge, the bond required of a notary public that bondsmen should be freeholders and each sworn to be worth \$2,000 above all exemptions, made it practically impossible to give such a bond, for there were there very few freeholders and a much less number that could qualify for such an amount as \$2,000.

At that date, 1871, all voters were required to register in advance of the election, which for state and county was held on the second Tuesday in October.

There was some question as to whether some members of the colony could vote at this election, as they had not been residents of the state for the required six months, especially those who did not arrive at Gibbon on April 7th, but Judge Maxwell, to whom the question was referred, advised that a voter leaving another state with the intention of making settlement in Nebraska, and actually making such settlement, could reckon his date of citizenship in Nebraska from the date of leaving his former home. Under this ruling voters who drove through from Wisconsin and even more distant states and who did not arrive in the county until June, 1871, registered and voted.

The election was held on Tuesday, October 10th; an independent ticket had been placed in the field. On this ticket was Patrick Walsh for probate judge, Oliver E. Thompson for sheriff and A. Collins for county surveyor. In those days candidates or their friends wrote the ticket, and early in the day it was discovered that the Trew party was fighting Ashburn for justice of the peace, and it also appears that the Ashburn party had placed A. Collins on the ticket for probate judge, and left his (Collins) name off the ticket as county surveyor. There was, as recalled, about one hundred and fifty votes polled and resulted in the election of Patrick Walsh, probate judge; Aaron Ward, county clerk; Ed. Oliver, county treasurer; O. E. Thompson, sheriff; B. F. Sammons and W. F. McClure, county commissioners, and Dr. I. P. George, coroner. In Precinct No. 1, D. P. Ashburn and J. M. Bayley were elected justices of the peace; William McKinley and, as is recalled, J. S. Chamberlain, constable, and George H. Silvernail, assessor. The county commissioners appointed C. Putnam county surveyor, and before the next election Patrick Walsh resigned as probate judge and A. Collins was appointed or elected to fill the vacancy.

In regard to the caucus mentioned by Mr. George H. Silvernail, so far as

can be learned, the first meeting of republicans on September 15th, was entitled to be termed a caucus and the executive committee selected was delegated to select and present a ticket to be voted for at the county convention held on September 23d, and that the county convention was not a delegate convention but a mass convention of republicans of the whole county, and therefore was not only the first political convention held in Buffalo County, but also the first republican convention held in the county.

CHAPTER XLIX

MY FIRST STATE CONVENTION IN 1876—ELECTED DELEGATE AT COUNTY CONVENTION—INTRODUCED TO FREE PASS SYSTEM—JUDGE N. H. HEMIUP CANDIDATE FOR ATTORNEY-GENERAL—GENERAL ROBERTS AND THE “TROJAN HORSE”—T. J. MAJORS NOMINATED FOR CONTINGENT CONGRESSMAN—BITTER FIGHT BY RAILROADS TO CONTROL CONVENTION—CONVENTION IN SESSION FROM TUESDAY TO SATURDAY—EDWARD ROSEWATER ATTACKED AND KICKED DOWN HOTEL STAIRS—LIST OF BUFFALO COUNTY DELEGATES.

On Saturday, September 23, 1876, the Buffalo County Republican Convention for the election of delegates to the Republican State Convention, was held in Kearney and greatly to the surprise of the writer he was chosen as one of the delegates to the state convention. For months there had been a bitter factional strife in the republican party and usually designated Hitchcock and anti-Hitchcock, United States Senator Hitchcock being a candidate for re-election to the Senate and opposed by the railroad interests. Nebraska at that date had one congressman and the nomination for congressman was made at the state convention. Also there was to be nominated a “contingent” congressman, and I smile to myself as I write the word “contingent;” how ambitious we all were in those days. Delays were intolerable; tradition, precedents, insurmountable legal obstacles were brushed aside as of little or no importance when additional recognition of our importance as a state was to be attained or another representative in the national Congress secured. I have often wondered how our “contingent” congressman lived and paid expenses when thus serving the state at the national capital. He was never “recognized” by the speaker and of course was not on the congressional payroll. Doubtless it is best for all concerned that the unrevealed secrets as to how he lived and paid expenses be not revealed even in this generation. In the preliminary canvass in the county, L. R. More, a banker in Kearney, had been mentioned as a possible candidate for state treasurer. Mr. More was classed as a railroad candidate. N. H. Hemiup was also a candidate for attorney-general. Immediately after adjournment of the county convention the writer was approached by the deputy county clerk and informed that in electing the writer as a delegate to the state convention it was understood that I should give my proxy to the station agent of the Union Pacific Railroad at Kearney and the deputy county clerk had the proxy made out and ready for signature. While the writer was pleased at being chosen a delegate he at once realized that he could not afford to go, as this was the year following the grasshopper raids and the expense of the trip would be too great under the circumstances, railroad fare being 5 cents a mile, making about fifteen dollars for the round trip. As the

writer had voted with the Hitchcock faction, he at once felt that this was a railroad scheme and refused to give a proxy to a railroad employe. This was on Saturday and the state convention was called to meet on the Tuesday following. On the next day, Sunday, Judge Hemiup sent word that transportation for the delegates had been arranged for and as this was the largest item of expense, arrangements were made to go. (Never to be forgotten even though left unwritten, in relating incidents of this character in the early settlements of the state is, that included in the word "arrangements" is the encouragement of the good wife and the personal sacrifice incident to such "arrangements" on her part and of the other members of the family, not only of the comforts but often of necessities of life.) Monday morning the pony was mounted and ridden to Lowell, some ten miles distant, and there left until the return, and taking the B. & M. at Lowell the writer was handed a round trip pass—his first introduction to the free pass evil. Judge Hemiup had secured headquarters at the Commercial Hotel but the writer being a member of the grange went direct to the office of the secretary of the state grange and arranged with the secretary, P. E. Beardsley, to make his headquarters there and to sleep on a table in the office and Mr. Beardsley was so kind as to bring blankets from his own home for covering. This delegate was not the only delegate to that convention who slept on the floor in a convenient office. Sleeping on the floor was no novelty to homesteaders in those days.

The Buffalo County delegates were Rice Eaton, A. L. Webb, L. A. Groff, L. B. Cunningham and S. C. Bassett. The convention was held in the academy of music, a hall on the second floor, lighted at night with numerous kerosene lamps and when filled with perspiring politicians and clouds of tobacco smoke is it any wonder that stomachs of homesteaders used to the broad prairies, fanned by gentle breezes, rebelled? The convention was called to order on Tuesday, at 2.30 P. M. There had been a spirited canvass by C. H. Gere and T. M. Marquette for chairman of the convention, resulting in Mr. Marquette being chosen temporary and Mr. Gere permanent chairman. A. G. Kendall and George L. Brown were named as secretaries.

There was also chosen a sergeant-at-arms and later additional sergeants-at-arms were appointed in order to protect the delegates from the numerous lobby which at times so swarmed about the delegates that it was impossible to proceed with the business of the convention. At 4 P. M., the convention took a recess until 7.30. L. R. More was balloted for as one of the candidates for lieutenant-governor, receiving twenty-two votes, but none from the Buffalo County delegation. The ballot on nomination for attorney general was not reached until long after midnight. The candidates were George H. Roberts, N. H. Hemiup and others. On the first ballot Judge Hemiup received seventeen ballots out of a total of 259. After the first ballot the Buffalo County delegation wished to withdraw Judge Hemiup's name, but to this the judge would not consent, saying that the "plan" was for him to get a few votes on the first ballot and then begin to gain and that he was "dead sure" of being nominated. On the second ballot Judge Hemiup received twelve votes and his delegation got into the band wagon, voted for General Roberts, who was nominated. It was then 3 A. M., but General Roberts being called for mounted the platform and made a speech of an hour's length and of this speech I can still recall the story which he told of the "Trojan

Horse." It cannot be recalled that the "Trojan Horse" story had any application to circumstances surrounding his nomination but whether it had or not we were all too tired and sleepy to care and at the close of his speech, 4 A. M., adjournment was taken to 9.30 A. M.

The most bitter fight of the convention was over the nomination of congressman, the principal candidates being Frank Welch, Gen. J. C. Cowan, C. A. Holmes, Guy C. Barton of Lincoln County and Leander Gerrard of Platte County. A majority of the Buffalo County delegation supported Gerrard and on the third ballot attempted to change from Gerrard to Welch, but were ruled out. On the fourth ballot Welch was nominated. T. J. Majors of Nemaha County was nominated for "Contingent" congressman.

It is believed that the intense interest manifested and the extreme bitterness of feeling often exhibited at this convention has not been equalled at any succeeding political convention held in the state. It was at this convention that the railroad interests obtained a grip, a control of, an influence and a power in the politics of the state which was not loosened or relaxed for any appreciable length of time, no matter what political party was in power, until the abolition of the free pass evil in 1907. This convention did not adjourn until Friday, it being in session four days and all of one night, the last act of the convention being to adopt a party platform.

There were no end of caucuses held by the politicians in the headquarters room at the Commercial Hotel, and in connection with the holding of one such caucus the writer first "met" Edward Rosewater, editor of the Omaha Bee. Mr. Rosewater was not a delegate to the convention but took an active interest in all its proceedings. Going to the headquarters of Judge Hemmip in the Commercial Hotel during an evening recess of the convention the incident of "meeting" Mr. Rosewater occurred. The stairway in the Commercial Hotel at that date was at the rear of the office with a broad landing midway to the second floor. When I reached this midway landing Mr. Rosewater was being pushed and kicked by a large and powerful man from the head of the stairway, landing in a heap on the midway landing. I assisted him to his feet and inquired if he was hurt or injured. He said no and passed on as though nothing serious had happened. The man who did the kicking claimed that Mr. Rosewater had been listening at a door of a room where a political caucus was being held.

At this convention acquaintances were made and friendships formed, some of which have continued to the present time; others only terminated when the friend "passed over the river." Some of these men have been prominent in the state (were prominent at that time) and their friendship has not only been greatly prized but has been useful and helpful in many ways not at all concerned with political affairs.

Nebraska was young as a state in 1876, and was being rapidly settled so that no one, be he a political leader or not, had then what might be called a state acquaintance, hence it was, the men who aspired to leadership in the state, and more especially in the republican party, exerted themselves to become acquainted with delegates from out in the state in attendance at this convention. Not only did these would-be leaders welcome an introduction to such delegates but some of them sought such introductions and exerted themselves to further the acquaint-

ance. There was no cold formality on their part, but the greetings were hearty and genuine. Thus it was that the writer was introduced to scores of delegates, the names of only a few of whom can be recalled and these only for the reason that friendships dating from that time were formed, the value of which can not be determined or estimated, nor the time and place forgotten. Of the Buffalo County delegation Rice Eaton was editor of the Central Nebraska Press; L. B. Cunningham, editor of the Kearney Junction Times; L. A. Groff, an attorney-at-law; A. L. Webb, a dealer in hardware; and the writer, then and still a farmer.

S. C. BASSETT.

CHAPTER L

POLITICAL PARTIES IN BUFFALO COUNTY

In the year 1871 there was created an organization of the republican party in the county and such an organization has continued to the present time (1915), and at each election the party has had a ticket in the field under the heading "Republican Party." From the beginning the republican party had a regular precinct (at first, township later) committee and a county central committee and county chairman located at the county seat. Until the primary law was passed in 1907 delegates were elected at precinct caucuses, who attended a delegate county convention at which republican candidates were nominated for election to office. The republican party was a regularly organized political force in politics. Just when the democratic party became an organized force in politics in the county can not be recalled. For many years the county was overwhelmingly republican.

It is recalled that in Gibbon Precinct in the early history of the county there was only one democratic vote cast, and as election day approached this voter would write Dr. George L. Miller, editor of the Herald, a democratic daily published at Omaha, and Doctor Miller would mail a national and state democratic ticket on which this lone voter would write the names of local candidates. Until the Australian ballot was adopted in 1897 each political party looked after the printing and distribution to voting precincts of its own party ballots. There were instances where members of the opposition party stole the tickets after they were printed and, as in those days there was no telephone or quick means of transportation, distant country voting precincts were without ballots on election day. And strange as it may seem to the reader in his day and generation, such tactics were deemed not dishonorable on the theory "all is fair in love and war."

From the beginning there were two tickets in the field at each election, one republican, the others usually styled "Independent." The independent party for several years was largely made up of dissatisfied and disgruntled members of the republican party, dissatisfied and disgruntled because their friends were not nominated for office, for in local (county) politics the struggle was for county office, there being no principle at stake, on which the people were divided, as regards county government or county affairs.

The records seem to disclose that until the year 1891 the republican party regularly elected its candidate for county treasurer and it appears that of twelve men who have served as county treasurer since 1871, nine were republican, Lyman Carey being elected on the independent ticket in 1891. Of fourteen men elected as county commissioners from 1871 to 1883 (when township organ-

ization was adopted), with one exception, Patrick Walsh, all were nominated and elected on the republican ticket. Beginning with the year 1872, it appears that thirty-one men have served from Buffalo County as representatives in the State Legislature, and of this number it appears that twenty were nominated and elected as republicans, eleven as peoples independent or democratic.

The first to be elected on the independent ticket was Simon C. Ayer, who having been elected as a republican and served two terms as county clerk, ran as an independent candidate for the Legislature and defeated the regularly nominated candidate on the republican ticket, F. G. Hamer. This was in the year 1880.

It appears that sixteen state senators have served from the senatorial district comprising Buffalo County since the year 1872, and of this number ten were nominated and elected as republican, six as anti-monopoly, people's, independent or democratic. In the year 1888 Gen. A. H. Connor, who as a republican had been elected state senator in the year 1882, ran as an independent candidate on the independent ticket, as it might be termed, and was elected.

It appears that in the judicial district of which Buffalo County has formed a part since the beginning, there have been twelve district judges, of whom seven were elected as republican and five populist or democrat, the first of the latter to be elected being Silas A. Holcomb in the year 1891. At an early date in the history of Buffalo County both the Union Pacific and Burlington railroads took an active part in local as well as state politics. At the county seat town each company retained an attorney a part of whose duties was to take an active interest in local politics, this attorney often serving as the county chairman of a political party. On the recommendation of this attorney free transportation was given parties, in the county, of what is termed standing and influence, especially those of influence in matters political, and at times this attorney was supplied with such passes duly signed officially, all needed being to write the individual's name. It is recalled that in 1876 N. H. Hemiup of Kearney was a candidate for attorney general at the republican state convention, held at Lincoln, and to the delegates from Buffalo County as well as to Judge Hemiup and such friends (helpers) as he desired free transportation was issued by the Burlington. This is not mentioned as an isolated case, but rather to illustrate that the free pass system, and the interference of railroad corporations in Buffalo County affairs—politics—began at an early date in the history of the county and continued until the abolition of the free pass evil in 1907.

It is recalled that at an early day a republican rally was held at Shelton, and the county chairman, who was also pass distributor in the county for the Union Pacific, took a delegation of republicans from the county seat town to Shelton to attend the rally, and, as the saying is, "enthuse the boys." When the rally was over, hotel accommodations at Shelton not being ample, the county chairman and his party boarded an east-bound passenger train, rode to Grand Island, there took the west-bound passenger to Kearney, the passenger cars of the Union Pacific serving as a warm and comfortable lobby in which to lounge for a few hours, all free—to those of influence in affairs political.

For years in the history of the county rebates were granted by the railroads

to large shippers of grain and live stock as compared with the individual who shipped only an occasional car of each.

This rebate was of such advantage that grain elevators, for instance, had a virtual monopoly of the buying and shipping of grain and were enabled to take undue profits in the business.

Business men of influence, to whom free transportation was issued, had a distinct advantage over competitors not thus favored.

For instance, a man engaged in the milling business and selling his product over the state and having free transportation with which to seek customers, had a great advantage over a competitor not thus favored.

The railroad corporations made no discrimination as between political parties in the distribution of free transportation. It mattered not to the corporation whether the officer elected to office or the citizen of the county active and influential in political affairs was a member of the republican, democratic, populist, farmers' alliance or independent party.

A representative or senator-elect of the Legislature received in his mail a free pass over the railroads of the state good for a year. A judge in our District Court was tendered free transportation over lines of railroad in the state. The county sheriff, county treasurer, all state officers, officers of the State Board of Agriculture, of the State Horticultural Society, speakers at farmers' institutes, and with scarce an exception such free transportation was accepted and made use of.

In the year 1884 Joseph Scott, who had served as clerk and treasurer of Buffalo County, was a candidate for state commissioner of public lands and buildings at the republican state convention held at Omaha.

The delegates to the convention from Buffalo County, some fifteen in number, Mr. Scott and the Midway Band of Kearney were accorded free transportation by the railroads to attend the convention.

And as an illustration pertaining to methods and customs in politics in those days, as showing how political conventions were run, nominations made, Mr. Scott related that officials of the republican state committee informed him he could have the nomination as state land commissioner on condition that he would contribute \$500 to the campaign fund of the committee. Mr. Scott agreed, and as soon as nominated he gave the treasurer of the state committee his personal check for that amount.

Under the caucus and convention plan of making nominations of candidates, the Republican County Central Committee of Buffalo County expended from five hundred to fifteen hundred dollars in a campaign to elect the nominees of the party. This money was contributed not only by candidates for office, but by active and enthusiastic members of the party who took great pleasure and delight in the success of the party.

This money was expended in what was recognized to be a legitimate manner, expenses of campaign speakers, holding of campaign rallies, rent of halls, advertising in newspapers, means and methods to enthruse the voters and the hiring of teams on election day to haul voters to the polls. Like expenditures were made by the opposition or independent or democratic party, but as a rule in much less amounts.

The interference of corporations in the political affairs of the people, as the years came and went, became a great and growing evil, and in Buffalo County, as in other counties of the state, there grew up a party pledged to oppose such abuse of power and influence.

At the first the party was known as the anti-monopoly or populist party. In a county history it is not possible to go into the merits of the controversy which involved other questions, such as the free coinage of silver on the ratio of sixteen ounces of silver to one of gold as a basis of money value; the question of the general Government loaning money on grain warehouse certificates. This party was largely made up of farmers, but the democratic party, being a minority party, fused with the populist party in the election of county officers and it might be added, state officers as well. In Buffalo County the leaders of the anti-monopoly party movement were (as recalled from memory) J. E. Miller, C. A. Borders (familiarily known as "The Tall Cottonwood of the Divide"), Emory Wyman, A. Steadwell, David Nichols, George N. Smith, A. J. Scott, W. L. Hand, Phelix Hayes, John A. Hogg, Dea Wenzell, Fred A. Nye, John Stebbins, F. Gaylord, L. L. Hile, Lyman Carey, A. H. Boltin and W. L. Green, and the movement gained such headway as to result in the election of H. H. Seely county clerk in 1891, John Nutter sheriff, Lyman Carey treasurer, and in 1892 George N. Smith state senator and John Stebbins and David Nichols representatives in the Legislature.

The power and influence of the anti-monopoly, farmers' alliance, populist party in the county was not of long duration, but later much of the strength of these parties fought their political battles in the county under the leadership of the democratic party, giving to that party strength and prestige.

In the history of partisan political parties in Buffalo County, in a general way, it can be said that in all the years the republican party has been the dominant party, maintaining year by year a county organization; that the democratic party, while in the minority, has at all times had the courage of its convictions, maintained a county organization, striven to elect of its members to county and state offices, ever willing to fuse with other organizations in the effort to defeat, for office, the nominees of its traditional enemy in politics, the republican party.

The records seem to disclose that since the year 1871 there have been elected to office in Buffalo County, of members of the State Legislature, board of county commissioners (not of the board of county supervisors) and of county officers, approximately one hundred and sixty-eight officers. Of this number the records seem to disclose that 70 per cent were elected as republicans on a republican ticket. Of the remaining 30 per cent (which might be classed as nominated and elected on an independent ticket) the records seem to disclose that approximately eight per cent were nominated and elected as democrats on a county democratic ticket.

The following is a copy of a letter written in the year 1899 by Hon. J. E. Miller, a state senator representing Buffalo County. It is of great value as a matter of political history both in Buffalo County and the State of Nebraska. The suggestion as to the abolition of the free pass evil thus made in 1899 became the law of the land in Nebraska in the year 1907:

"Senate Chamber, Lincoln, Neb., January 28, 1899.

"Mr. Geo. F. Bidwell,

"General Manager F., E. & M. V. R. R.,

"Omaha, Neb.

"Dear Sir—Enclosed please find complimentary ticket which has been presented to me by a representative of your road and which I herewith return unsigned and unused, and I would most respectfully request that you make a record to such effect on your books.

"While I take this action I do not wish to infer that I am ungrateful for this distinguished favor. In explanation of my action I have to say, first, there is a constitutional provision for defraying the traveling expenses of the members of the Legislature equal to the cost of three trips to the capital.

"I am led to believe that the quite general custom, prevalent for many years, of public servants accepting free passes on the railroads, has not to any appreciable extent saved to the state the cost of transportation. On the other hand, it has no doubt been a source of revenue to the members of the Legislature not contemplated in the constitution.

"Second—It has been affirmed, and generally believed, that the acceptance of free passes by public officers and legislators is intended to have, and does have, a soothing influence on those who make or enforce the laws regulating freight and passenger rates in the state.

"Whether public opinion is right or wrong, I shall not attempt to say. But you will readily see that the practice leads to a great public scandal, involving the managers of our great railways as well as the government of our fair state.

"It is further alleged that a great host, commonly called 'visiting statesmen,' importune the railroads for free transportation that they may congregate at the capital, where, 'tis said, they confuse the minds of the legislators, and cause them to do things they should not do, and leave undone the things they should have done. The custom of honoring public officials and prominent men with complimentary tickets, while probably small in the beginning, has grown to such proportions that I verily believe the railway managers would welcome a law that would relieve them of that which is surely a great source of loss to them, and which would compel each individual to bear his just share of the operating expenses of these public highways.

"I would not prevent you from making reduced rates to excursionists (other than visiting statesmen), or from transporting free the employes of the roads, or those in destitute circumstances.

"I would respectfully suggest that you petition the Legislature, now in session, to enact such a law with suitable penalties attached.

"Should this suggestion meet with your approval, I am at your service, and shall be glad to be honored as your spokesman in presenting the same to the Senate, of which body I have the honor to be a member.

"Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) "J. E. MILLER."

CHAPTER LI

THE ANTI-MONOPOLY MOVEMENT IN NEBRASKA AND IN BUFFALO COUNTY

Hon. James E. Miller

In order to properly understand the conditions that gave rise to this movement it can best be described as a protest against railroad domination. It began in the early '70s and soon swept over this and other western states.

In order to induce railroad building through a sparsely settled country, the United States Government donated to the Union Pacific and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad companies each alternate section of land for twenty miles on each side of their right of way. At that time Nebraska had few settlers, and these were mostly near the Missouri River.

When these roads were pushed west, settlers took homesteads and timber claims on the remaining sections. A junction of the roads on the north side of the Platte, a few miles west of old Fort Kearney, was effected, at the present site of the City of Kearney. This caused a rush of settlers to Buffalo County in the early '70s. They were generally people of limited means. Very few eastern men with good homes could be induced to sell out and invest in the great American desert. Those of us who still remain can compare our present prosperous condition with that of the earlier years of drouth, grasshoppers, hail and chinch bugs and gold bugs, and can tell our children and grandchildren some great tales of those early days.

At this date there were no laws regulating freight and passenger rates, and the roads were determined that there should not be so long as they could prevent it. In order to accomplish their purpose it behooved them to take charge of the political machinery of the state, which was done after the fashion which worked so well with the United States Congress in the Credit-Mobilier scandal. They dictated who should fill the state offices, the court judges, members of the Legislature, and especially who should represent us (them) in the United States Congress. To accomplish this required concessions to a number of easy-going politicians who would be useful in controlling the nominating conventions of the dominant party. These "concessions" were granted according to the ability of the men to use them. The most common was the free annual pass on all roads in the state. This made it an easy matter for them to attend conventions. The elevator companies had to be protected from the competition of private shippers. If any shipper should complain as to the rates, he could be easily put out of business. The elevators were permitted to trade unsight and unseen for a private shipper's grain in course of transit and substitute a lower grade and quality, and generally of less weight.

The writer shipped the first car of wheat from Poole. It was of his own raising. It was very good wheat, clean and dry. When it reached Chicago it was in another car, had been exchanged, probably at Omaha. It was smutty, damp and dirty. Sold as rejected. This was no isolated case, as I found by inquiry of other private shippers, who said that any car of good grain that they shipped was sure to be exchanged and often fell short in weight.

The farmers were familiar with these conditions, and vigorous protests were made to the Legislatures, and laws to prevent discrimination and for lower freight rates were demanded. These protests brought relief only in platform promises. Legislators, with annual passes in their pockets, had very dull teeth. It was soon discovered that protests and demands had but little effect; that it would be necessary to take political action.

The earliest concerted action that I can discover was a secret gathering of alliance delegates from this and surrounding counties at Kearney to consider what action to take. The Knights of Labor were called in. A rather stormy session was held, one part favoring the securing of control of the dominant party (then republican), pointing to the fact that the grangers of Iowa, led by Governor Larrabee, had succeeded in passing drastic laws and overthrowing railroad domination. The other faction said that that could not be done in this state, and they won out by a small majority. All of the alliances in the state were notified of this action, and all but one endorsed the plan and organization was pushed all over the state. The movement was called, in derision, "moon-shiners." It soon took the name of anti-monopolist, and was afterwards officially named "The People's Independent Party." As indicated above, it was a fight to loosen the grip the railroads had on the business and politics of the state; to lower freight and passenger rates and secure better service. In order to build up a strong party, conventions were held and tickets nominated. Literature was distributed. A general campaign was started. Public meetings were held and good speakers secured. The farmers flocked to the school-houses and groves to hear what the party proposed to do. All realized that conditions were very bad, yet many were attached to their party ties, and had all confidence that these wrongs could and would be righted by their party. The first campaign was a defeat. But, like the suffragists, they were not discouraged and kept up the agitation, and finally became a power to be reckoned with. However, the enemy was strongly entrenched. Free passes were distributed to the legislators, state officers and in some cases even to the district judges. It was a notorious fact that when a United States senator was to be elected, a large company of trained lobbyists were quartered at the capital to work for the railroad candidate. What was accomplished? Very much locally, in the state and in the nation. We secured control in the county, senatorial district, elected the district judge, and by 1897 swept the state, electing the state officers. Had a majority in both branches of the Legislature. We also elected the congressman from this (Sixth) district five times in succession. Also elected William V. Allen to the United States Senate. At one time there were six members of Congress from this and other states. We were responsible for the reduction in freight and passenger rates. Passed laws preventing discriminations, and cut off pass bribes.

It required years to accomplish this. It has added to the good name of the state. Increased its prosperity. The two railroads are not in the hands of receivers. They, too, are prosperous. Perhaps they found it good policy to deal fairly with their patrons. We are now friends, and are proud that we have two of the finest and best equipped railroads on the continent.

Nationally, we led the fight against the giant monopolies controlling the large industries of the country. We forced both old parties to gradually adopt our principles and almost duplicate our most radical platforms. We accomplished the reforms that we desired. We are proud of our record. We have now virtually dissolved. Like the once despised abolition party, which was responsible for the overthrow of slavery, our work of agitation brought results.

CHAPTER LII

CAPITAL RELOCATION—COUNTY OPTION THE CAMPAIGN ISSUE—CAPITAL REMOVALISTS DRAFT A BILL—THE CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR, ON THE PART OF LIQUOR INTERESTS, INDORSES SUCH A MEASURE—LIQUOR INTERESTS USE CAPITAL RELOCATION BILL AS A CLUB TO DEFEAT COUNTY OPTION—BUFFALO COUNTY CITIZENS A THOUSAND STRONG PETITION IN FAVOR OF THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL—ANALYSIS OF THE VOTE ON CAPITAL RELOCATION AND COUNTY OPTION—LETTER OF E. P. COURTRIGHT—LETTER OF W. L. HAND—OFFICIAL ACTION OF BUFFALO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

CAPITAL REMOVAL

In the political history of the county, no incident, for a brief period of time, created more intense interest than the vote on that so-called capital removal bill, known as House Roll No. 246, in the 1911 session of the Legislature.

The leading issue in the political campaign in the state in 1910 was county option. S. C. Bassett as candidate for representative in the Legislature from Buffalo County had publicly pledged to do all possible to secure the passage of county option legislation.

A bill looking to the relocation of the state capital had been drawn and published during the campaign and James Dahlman, a citizen of Omaha, candidate for governor and supported by the liquor interests, had publicly announced himself in favor of such a measure and in the light of subsequent events there is little doubt that capital relocation was instigated and encouraged by the liquor interests, to be used in the legislative session, should occasion offer, to assist in the defeat of county option legislation.

It is not questioned that the people of Buffalo County, who advocated the relocation of the state capital, who assisted in the drawing of and introduction in the Legislature of such a measure, were honest in their intentions, which were, to secure a relocation of the capital and if possible at Kearney. It is not believed they were advised of or in any manner a party to the plan of the liquor interests to use the measure to help defeat temperance legislation—county option.

The City of Lincoln had abolished the open saloon which greatly angered the liquor interests of the state. The County of Lancaster had sent to the Legislature a county option delegation with one exception. Both branches of the Legislature were about equally divided on the question of county option. To help insure the defeat of county option legislation, the liquor interests conceived the plan of using the capital relocation bill as a club to punish the people of Lincoln for driving out the open saloon and to compel the Lancaster delegation to defeat county option.

If by any possible means the capital relocation bill could be passed in the house, the people of Lincoln would be offered the choice of defeat of county option or relocation of the state capital.

In the campaign preceding the legislative session and during the session, there was no pronounced public sentiment in the state in favor of capital relocation. When the liquor interests, as represented in the house began to advocate the passage of House Roll No. 246, the people of Buffalo County became greatly excited, being led to believe that the relocation of the state capital at Kearney was practically assured in case the bill passed the House.

Delegations of citizens living in Kearney, in autos, canvassed the county to secure signatures to a so-called petition urging Representative Bassett to support the capital relocation bill. And just as the roll was being called in the house on the final passage of House Roll No. 246, one C. E. Oehler, a transient resident of the county, handed to Representative Bassett, so-called petitions containing, as he stated, the signatures of more than one thousand citizens of Buffalo County.

The official records of the 1911 session of the Legislature, as disclosed in the house journal, make plain the full intent and purpose of the liquor interests in supporting this measure. The county option members in the house realized that a vote for House Roll No. 246 was, in effect, a vote to defeat county option legislation.

Herewith is an analysis of the vote on this measure as well as on county option:

CAPITAL REMOVAL AND COUNTY OPTION

In this analysis of the vote on the capital removal bill and on the county option bill, those members who voted for county option are listed "dry" and those opposed to county option are listed "wet."

Legislative Record of the Capital Removal Bill, House Roll No. 246.—The capital removal bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 26, the sixteenth day of the legislative session.

On the twenty-seventh day of the session it was placed on its passage; third reading, a period of eleven days from its introduction.

The house records seem to disclose that of 703 bills introduced in the house no one of these bills required so brief a length of time from introduction to a vote on third reading as did the capital removal bill with the exception of bills introduced by standing committees and a very few bills to which there was no objection or opposition. On page 236, house journal, can be found the record vote on the capital removal bill. On page 458 of the house journal can be found the record vote on the county option bill.

The record discloses that in the vote on the capital removal bill, thirty-eight votes were in the affirmative, fifty-eight in the negative, excused and not voting four, a total of 100.

The records disclose that of the thirty-eight members who voted for the capital removal bill, thirty-one were listed "wet" and seven "dry."

The records disclose that over eighty-one (81.6 per cent) of the vote in favor of the capital removal bill was a "wet" vote.

The records disclose that 80 per cent of the total "dry" vote in the house was cast against the capital removal bill.

The records disclose that of the total vote cast for the capital removal bill, more than 23 per cent, all "wet," came from counties adjoining the County of Lancaster in which is located the capital city.

The records disclose that of the total vote cast in favor of the capital removal bill, 58 per cent, all "wet," came from counties having territory within fifty-five miles of the City of Lincoln.

The records disclose that twenty-seven members were introducers of the capital removal bill. Of this number fourteen were "dry" and thirteen "wet." Of the fourteen "dry" members, four voted FOR the bill; of the thirteen "wet" members, twelve voted FOR the bill.

The record discloses that in the House of Representatives fifty votes were cast in favor of the county option bill, Roll No. 392, and of this number seven voted for the capital removal bill.

The records disclose that the county option bill was introduced in the House on the twenty-seventh day of the legislative session and was placed on third reading on the forty-fourth day, a period of seventeen days from introduction to the final vote.

As ours is a representative form of government it seems pertinent, and not out of place to call attention to the somewhat divergent views entertained as to the duties of a representative in matters of legislation. There are those who believe the greater obligation of a representative in our Legislature is to the larger interests of the state even when they seemingly conflict with the comparatively smaller interests of his district. In short, that the interests of the state are paramount as compared with the interest of any one locality.

There are those who deem the interests of their district or locality as paramount to any or all others as a claim upon the time, efforts and vote of their representative.

There are those who deem it the duty of their representative to secure for his district or home town, the location of a state institution or an appropriation for one already located, but are not concerned as to any means he may use therefor.

There are those who believe that pledges made during a political campaign are binding on both the candidate and the people who accept the pledges by electing the candidate to office; that party platforms, and campaign pledges are not simply "hot air" to secure votes or mere "scraps of paper" of no binding force.

County option represented a moral principle; the candidates for the house, in Buffalo County, who had publicly declared in favor of county option, and pledged to support such a measure, had been elected by substantial majorities. The principle of county option was the leading issue in the county and in the state.

A student of history is inclined to question: Had the people of Buffalo County, a substantial majority of them, been fully advised that the liquor interests of the state were using the capital relocation bill in the Legislature as a club to help defeat county option, would they have supported the capital relocation bill and paid as a price for support the defeat of county option?

As a result of his opposition to the capital relocation bill Representative Bassett received hundreds of letters from constituents, a few commendatory, a large majority condemnatory.

As a matter of history, representative of the expressed views of individuals as to the duties of a representative in our State Legislature, herewith are included three communications bearing on the question:

"Kearney, Neb., November 21, 1911.

"Hon. S. C. Bassett, Gibbon, Neb.

"Dear Sir: If you had been in Kearney the day the message came that you had defeated the capital removal bill, I fear you would have been mobbed and roughly handled.

"I was as indignant at you as anybody, but on a sober, second thought, I tried to put myself in your place. Knowing your strong temperance sentiment, knowing that all good laws must be made at a place as far removed from the saloon influence as possible, I could not be honest and vote to take the state capital from a dry town and put it in a wet one. Now that the conditions are likely to change, Lincoln wet and Kearney dry, perhaps in this case you would have voted different.

(Signed) E. P. COURTRIGHT."

W. L. Hand has been for years one of the most active, outspoken opponents of the open saloon in the state.

In the political campaign of 1910, as an officer of the County Option League of Buffalo County, in company with Candidate Bassett he campaigned the county in support of county option.

The following from W. L. Hand of Kearney:

"W. L. HAND

"Lawyer—Title Examiner.

"Kearney, Neb., February 11, 1911.

"Hon. S. C. Bassett, Lincoln, Neb.

"Dear Mr. Bassett: It is never too late to correct a mistake, tho' sometimes it is too late to cure all the results of the mistake.

"You have made the big mistake of your life in opposing the capital removal bill. That mistake is now blighting your standing and reputation among your old friends and neighbors. You will never recover from its awful effects, unless you speedily, while there is opportunity, do all in your power to correct it.

"You have made this terrible mistake because you do not understand your duties as a representative and your relations to the people of this county and the people of the state. This is plain talk, Mr. Bassett, but I speak the sober truth when I say it. You have acted from a mistaken understanding of your duties, if you are correctly quoted in what you said in defense of your action.

"You are not entitled to act on your own judgment in the matter. You are not sovereign, but only a servant. Your own judgment should be subordinate to that of the people of Buffalo County. Herein lies your mistake, that you think you should be governed by what you suppose the people of the state will approve. You do not represent the state. I repeat, you do not represent the state.

"You Represent Buffalo County

"Let this idea sink deeply into your heart.

"You have no right to represent Douglas County or to speak for Douglas County on this question or any other that comes before the Legislature. Douglas County has its own representatives who are commissioned to speak for them. So with every other county in the state. Each representative represents the people who elect him and he speaks for them. He knows their sentiments, or is supposed to and he is, therefore, in position to be their agent, their servant and carry out their will. You can not know the will and demands of the people of other and distant counties like you know it of Buffalo County.

"Here is the foundation of our legislative system. The state is divided into districts and each district given a representative, or sometimes more, in order that each man elected may be close to the people who elect him and in position to carry out their will. The aggregation of these men thus elected, sitting in the Legislature, may thus speak for all the people. Each man speaks for the people of the district he comes from and all acting together speak for the entire state. But whenever any man refuses to obey the will of the people of his district he deserts his trust, he betrays the people whose servant he is, he assumes duties belonging to the representatives of other districts.

"Moreover, in your case you have opened the way for a vicious attack upon yourself, to the effect that you are controlled by a few personal friends in Lincoln. Nor can you escape the effects of this attack. No matter what excuse you give, how much you try to hide behind the claim that the state does not want capital removal, you can not escape from the effect of this action. In other words, the accusation is that you have forsaken your people, deserted them, and betrayed their interests for what seem to you your personal advantage.

"This is a terrible accusation and no man can hold his head up under it very long. I do not make it, but the people of this county do make it. It behooves you to retrieve yourself by undoing all you have done so far as may be possible. You can either move a reconsideration of the vote and then advocate the bill or, you can support a new and amended bill. I shall do what I can to have another bill introduced with some important changes in it. Just what the new bill will contain I do not know. But if one is introduced it stands you in hand to support it and do all in your power to get it through.

"You need not doubt that the people of this county want the question of capital removal submitted. I undertake to say there are not a dozen voters in the county against it.

"If you really want to represent the people of this county there is but one thing for you to do and that is to do your utmost to pass the bill. Remember, as I have said, that you are only an agent of the people of this county; you are selected as their servant to do their will and you have no right to set up your will against theirs.

"This is plain talk, Mr. Bassett, but I want you to understand, that I am just one of the people who sent you to Lincoln. In what I say I do not speak for myself alone. I know I speak the sentiments of the great majority of the people who voted for you. I know what they want and what they expect of you. I know they expect you to stand by their interests and obey their commands, to be their servant, not their master, nor dictator.

"It is better for you to take some plain talk now, even if it does hurt your feelings, than for you to go down to disgrace and oblivion here among your old friends where you have had an honorable standing all your life.

"You can redeem yourself if you will, in large measure. But if you refuse to make the effort the results upon yourself will blight and perhaps shorten your life. Act at once before it is too late.

"Yours truly,

(Signed) "W. L. HAND."

As relating to this history, the following is copied from the record of the proceedings of the board of county supervisors:

"At the February 9, 1911, meeting of the county board of supervisors, the following action was taken:

"Moved by Higgins that:

"The board of county supervisors of Buffalo County, Nebraska, in session the 15th day of February, 1911, desire to express the unanimous opinion of the board that Representative S. C. Bassett, in opposing the capital removal bill, known as House Roll No. 246, has voted contrary to the sentiment of practically all of the voters of this county; and we further believe he is no longer qualified to represent this county in the Nebraska Legislature now in session and should resign at once.

"Motion carried.

"Moved by Higgins that the clerk be instructed to send copies of the foregoing resolution to State Senator C. F. Bodinson, Representative S. C. Bassett and Representative Willard F. Bailey.

"Motion carried."

The members of the board of supervisors adopting the foregoing resolutions were: John Conroy, J. W. Higgins, Pat Fitzgerald, Phil Bessor, Jacob Sitz, E. L. King, Charles Grassman; J. H. Dean, county clerk.

CHAPTER LIII

LIST OF PERSONS HOLDING OFFICIAL POSITIONS—MEMBERS OF TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE REPRESENTING BUFFALO COUNTY—MEMBERS OF STATE LEGISLATURE REPRESENTING BUFFALO COUNTY—MEMBERS OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION—JUDGES OF DISTRICT COURT—DISTRICT ATTORNEYS—COUNTY ATTORNEYS—COUNTY CLERKS—COUNTY TREASURERS—COUNTY SHERIFFS—COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS—COUNTY JUDGES—CLERKS OF DISTRICT COURT—REGISTER OF DEEDS—COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND SUPERVISORS.

TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE

Names of representatives from territory embracing Buffalo County in the Territorial Legislature of Nebraska:

	House	Council
1858— 5th session.....	E. Brewer	"
1859— 6th session.....	E. Brewer	"
1860— 7th session.....	E. Brewer	"
1861— 8th session.....		"
1864— 9th session.....	Frederick Hedde	"
1865—10th session.....	Frederick Evans	Isaac Albertson
1866—11th session.....	John Wallich	Isaac Albertson
1867—12th session.....	John Wallich	F. K. Freeman

STATE LEGISLATURE

Names of representatives in the State Legislature, Senate and House, from territory which embraced Buffalo County:

Year	No. of Session	Senators	Representatives
1867.....	1	F. K. Freeman	James E. Boyd
1869.....	2-3-4	Guy C. Barnum	Wells Brewer
1871.....	5-6-7	Guy C. Barnum	Enos Beall
1873.....	9-10	Guy C. Barton	D. P. Ashburn
1875.....	11-12-13	Guy C. Barton	M. V. Moudy
1877.....	14	Elisha C. Calkins	S. W. Switzer
1879.....	15	J. D. Seaman	James H. Davis
1881.....	16-17	Sidney Baker	Simon C. Ayer
1883.....	18	A. H. Connor	H. H. Haven, A. Steadwell
1885.....	19	J. N. Paul	S. C. Bassett, R. E. Barney
1887.....	20	W. H. Conger	H. C. Andrews, S. W. Thornton
1889.....	21	A. H. Connor	H. Fieldgrove, R. K. Potter
1891.....	22	George N. Smith	John Stebbins, D. Nichols
1893.....	23	George N. Smith	A. J. Scott, John Wilson

1895.....	24	Joseph Black	A. J. Scott, John Brady
1897.....	25	J. W. Heapy	F. Gaylord, L. L. Hile
1899.....	26	James E. Miller	J. M. Easterling, E. Wyman
1901.....	27	James E. Miller	J. E. Harris, William Jordon
1903.....	28	Aaron Wall	James H. Davis, Oscar Knox
1905.....	29	Aaron Wall	James H. Davis, Oscar Knox
1907.....	30	R. M. Thomson	George W. Barrett, Thomas F. Hamer
1909.....	31	C. F. Bodinson	George W. Barrett, A. L. Armstrong
1911.....	32	C. F. Bodinson	S. C. Bassett, W. F. Bailey
1913.....	33	Peter Wink	Max A. Hostetler, J. E. Harris
1915.....	34	Peter Wink	Max A. Hostetler, J. E. Harris

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTIONS

First Constitutional Convention, 1871, B. I. Hinman, representing Buffalo County.

Second Constitutional Convention, 1875, A. H. Connor, representing Buffalo County.

JUDGES OF THE DISTRICT COURT

List of judges of the District Court in territory which embraced Buffalo County, also list of district attorneys for same territory:

First ....1873—Samuel Maxwell	Seventh .1896—W. L. Greene
Second ..1875—William Gaslin	H. M. Sinclair
Third ...1883—Samuel L. Savidge	Eighth ..1900—H. M. Sullivan
Fourth ..1883—F. G. Hamer	Charles B. Gutterson
1889—A. H. Church	Ninth ...1904—B. O. Hostetler
Fifth ....1891—Silas A. Holcomb	1908—B. O. Hostetler
Sixth ....1895—H. M. Sullivan	1912—B. O. Hostetler

DISTRICT ATTORNEYS

E. F. Gray.....1868	C. J. Dillworth.....1876
E. F. Gray.....1870	T. D. Scofield.....1878
M. B. Hoxey.....1872	V. Bierbower .....1880
M. B. Hoxey.....1874	J. W. Bixler.....1882
C. J. Dillworth.....1875	H. M. Sinclair.....1884

SHERIFFS OF BUFFALO COUNTY

John Oliver .....1870-1871	John N. Nutter.....1892-1895
O. E. Thompson.....1872-1875	D. E. Wort.....1896-1897
David Anderson .....1876-1879	S. B. Funk.....1898-1901
S. V. Seeley.....1880-1881	Logan Sammons .....1902-1905
D. B. Ball.....1882-1883	Walter Sammons .....1906-1911
P. F. H. Schar.....1884-1887	E. H. Andrews.....1911-1914
John Wilson .....1888-1891	S. B. Funk.....1915-

COUNTY CLERKS OF BUFFALO COUNTY

Martin Slattery, Feb. 26 to April, 1870	R. M. Rankin.....1888-1891
Michael Coady .....July, 1870-1871	H. H. Seeley.....1892-1893
Aaron Ward .....1872-1873	W. S. Hormel.....1894-1895
Joseph Scott .....1874-1875	S. E. Smith.....1896-1899
Simon C. Ayer.....1876-1879	L. M. Welsh.....1900-1901
Emory Peck .....1880-1883	A. V. Offill.....1902-1905
G. H. Cutting.....1884	E. A. Miller.....1905-1909
to August 18, 1887	J. H. Dean.....1910-
J. W. Shahan ...August 18, 1887	
to December 31, 1887	

COUNTY ATTORNEYS

George E. Evans.....1886-1890	N. P. McDonald.....1900-1904
Judge J. E. Gillispie-Ira D. Martson .....1890-1892	Ed Squires .....1904-1906
Norris Brown .....1892-1896	J. M. Easterling.....1906-1910
Fred Nye .....1896-1900	Ed B. McDermott.....1910-1914
	Albert B. Tollefsen.....1914-

Judge J. E. Gillispie died during his term and Ira D. Martson was appointed to fill the unexpired term.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS

Patrick Walsh .....1870-1871	N. P. McDonald.....1890-1894
C. Putnam .....1871-1872	F. P. Wilsey.....1894-1898
Dan A. Crowell .....1873-	H. F. Carson.....1898-1902
J. J. W. Place .....1874-1875	T. N. Hartzell .....1902-1906
John Swenson .....1876-1880	S. A. Reasoner.....1906-1909
John T. Mallalieu .....1880-1884	E. E. Hayes.....1909-1911
T. N. Hartzell.....1884-1888	J. S. Elliott.....1911-1915
Albert Snare .....1888-1890	A. R. Nichols.....Apr. 1915-

COUNTY TREASURERS

Henry Dugdale .....1870-1871	Lyman Cary .....1892-1893
Edward Oliver .....1872-1873	P. E. Stuckey.....1894-1895
James Van Sickle.....1874-1879	Lyman Cary .....1896-1899
Joseph Black .....1880-1881	C. F. Bodinson .....1900-1903
Joseph Scott .....1882-1883	M. N. Troupe .....1904-1907
Homer J. Allen.....1884-1887	G. E. Haase .....1908-1911
R. M. Grimes.....1888-1889	M. N. Troupe .....1912-
H. Fred Wiley.....1890-1891	

COUNTY JUDGES

Patrick Walsh	1870-1871	J. M. Easterling.....	1894-1897
Frank S. Trew	1872	E. Frank Brown	1898-1899
Asbury Collins	1873	Charles E. Yost.....	1900-1901
D. Westervelt	1874-1875	F. M. Hollowell.....	1902-1905
J. J. Whittier	1876-1879	Ira D. Marston	1906-1907
John Barnd	1880-1883	F. M. Hollowell....	1908 to June, 1913
Frank W. Hull	1884-1887	J. E. Morrison.....	June, 1913
J. E. Gillispie.....	1888-1889	F. M. Hollowell.....	1914
Thomas N. Cornett.....	1890-1893	F. J. Everitt.....	1915

In the year 1913 the board of county supervisors, by court proceedings, attempted to remove County Judge F. M. Hollowell from office, appointing, as county judge, J. E. Morrison, who served from June, 1913, until F. M. Hollowell again resumed the office, serving to the end of the term for which he was elected. From the year 1870 when the office of county judge was established until the close of the year 1914, the number of marriage licenses issued totaled 6,048.

CLERKS OF THE DISTRICT COURT

In the year 1883 the office of "Clerk of the District Court" was created by act of the Legislature. Previous to that date the county clerk also served as clerk of the District Court.

George D. Aspinwall.....	1884-1887	George A. Nixon.....	1900-1907
W. G. Nye.....	1888-1891	E. Bowker	1908-
Peter O'Brien	1892-1899		

REGISTER OF DEEDS—OFFICE ESTABLISHED IN 1894

Thomas J. Scott.....	1894-1897	Victor B. Wheelock.....	1906-1914
David R. Mathieson.....	1898-1901	Thomas J. Scott.....	1915-
Thomas G. Spencer.....	1902-1905		

COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS—1870 TO 1883

From the organization of the county in the year 1870 until the year 1883 the county board consisted of three members elected by the county at large, one from each commissioner district, of which district the commissioner must be a resident, and each commissioner elected for a term of three years. Vacancies in the board were filled by appointment until the next general election; then by an election for the unexpired term. The year opposite a member's name indicates the year in which his service began; an asterisk (*) following a member's name indicates that he served less than one year. The records seem to disclose that no one of the members served more than one term (three years) in succession:

Thomas K. Wood*	1870	Dan A. Crowell.....	1872
Edward Oliver	1870	J. E. Chidester.....	1873
Samuel Boyd*	1870	George Flehearty	1874
Charles Walker*	1870	Harry A. Lee.....	1876
William C. Booth*.....	1870	Henry C. Andrews.....	1878
Henry Dugdale	1871	Edward Oliver	1879
B. F. Sammons.....	1871	W. C. Tillson.....	1880
W. F. McClure.....	1871	D. I. Brown.....	1880
John P. Arndt.....	1872	Henry Cook	1882
Patrick Walsh	1872	D. B. Jones.....	1883

COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS—NOVEMBER 21, 1883, TO JANUARY, 1896

In the year 1883 Buffalo County adopted township organization to take effect November 21, 1883. Under the provisions of this law the county board consisted of a supervisor elected by and from each voting precinct, with power, when organized, to divide the county into townships and name the same. The county was divided into twenty-five townships, each electing township officers, including a supervisor, who served as a member of the county board, together with two supervisors elected from the City of Kearney. These supervisors were elected for a term of one year. In the twelve years under this law the records seem to disclose that 159 men were elected as supervisors and served as members of the county board, and of this number sixty-nine served one year only, forty-six for two years, twenty-one for three years, fourteen for four years, six for five years, one (L. S. Deets) for six years and one (H. H. Bowie) for eight years, each year thus served being one term.

In the following list of supervisors the names are arranged in alphabetical order, the figure following the name indicating the number of years of service as supervisor:

Allen, D. B. (1)	Bickwell, B. H. (2)	Day, Walter A. (3)
Abel, John (3)	Cook, Henry (3)	Dengler, J. G. (1)
Ashburn, D. P. (4)	Caswell, Warren (1)	Edson, Jesse (2)
Aron, Charles (3)	Campbell, Nathan (3)	Eaton, Rice H. (4)
Bailey, C. S. (2)	Calkins, N. O. (1)	Evans, J. J. (1)
Brown, A. (1)	Campbell, Eli (1)	Elliott, C. A. (3)
Borders, C. A. (2)	Carpenter, E. W. (3)	Evans, George E. (1)
Bell, Thomas (1)	Coid, W. M. (1)	Fieldgrove, Henry (3)
Billingsly, J. (1)	Casewell, J. W. (1)	Frame, Perry (2)
Bernett, Paul (4)	Clark, I. D. (1)	Forrest, J. W. (2)
Brown, J. W. (2)	Cary, Lyman (2)	Fisher, Fred (2)
Boyle, Henry (1)	Cocks, Charles (2)	Ferris, A. H. (3)
Bowie, H. H. (8)	Crossley, A. J. (2)	Fritz, Herman (2)
Bush, I. (1)	Craven, Wm. (1)	Gitchell, B. S. (3)
Broadfoot, James (2)	Collard, C. (2)	Green, H. C. (1)
Baker, J. K. (2)	Duncan, G. W. (2)	Greenwood, J. S. (2)
Black, J. W. (2)	Downing, W. A. (5)	Griffith, S. C. (1)
Brady, Phil (4)	Deets, L. S. (6)	Grammar, Joseph (2)

George, Jason R. (3)	Mundle, Thos. E. (1)	Snavelly, J. H. (1)
Gardner, Geo. L. (2)	Musser, C. O. (2)	Scott, Benjamin (1)
Grimes, Nathan (3)	Morse, W. H. (1)	Scott, C. H. (1)
Greer, R. R. (4)	Mohring, Geo., Sr. (5)	Scott, W. C. (1)
Graffius, T. L. (2)	Miner, Chas. (5)	Smith, James (1)
Hartman, J. P. (1)	Miller, Jacob (2)	Sibley, T. W. (1)
Hutchinson, R. W. (1)	Mortimer, Geo. (5)	Spencer, Thos. G. (1)
Huston, G. (1)	Melletts, John E. (2)	Schars, P. F. H. (3)
Hughes, Richard (4)	McCann, James (1)	Scott, John (2)
Hanson, C. E. (1)	McNeal, Charles (3)	Scott, A. J. (2)
Holmes, K. O. (2)	Norris, Geo. E. (3)	Snyder, A. (3)
Hedges, J. S. (1)	Newberry, N. (1)	Salsbury, J. S. (1)
Harse, John (4)	Nethery, W. (2)	Stuckey, Peter (1)
Henninger, S. F. (2)	O'Brien, Peter (2)	Steven, Walter J. (1)
Haag, A. (2)	Oliver, E. (1)	Tritt, J. W. (1)
Hinote, A. (1)	Putnam, C. (1)	Taylor, F. E. (2)
Hunker, F. H. (1)	Peck, Geo. K. (1)	Taylor, J. D. (1)
Ihde, Fred (1)	Potter, R. K. (2)	Tuttle, C. Ira (2)
Jones, N. (1)	Peake, A. H. (2)	Troupe, N. M. (1)
Johnson, J. E. (5)	Peck, Emory (1)	Tussing, B. F. (4)
Jones, John A. (2)	Plumb, L. (1)	Trott, S. T. (4)
King, J. R. (1)	Post, George (1)	Towers, H. S. (3)
Kendall, L. (1)	Pickett, W. O. (4)	Urwiller, F. (1)
Kenagg, D. T. (1)	Pokorny, M. (2)	Veal, J. S. (1)
Loughry, W. (2)	Pickett, J. H. (2)	Varney, J. B. (1)
Loft, H. P. (1)	Peters, John (1)	Williams, D. J. (1)
Luchr, Wm. (1)	Rice, Frank (2)	Waters, H. (2)
Lunger, G. C. (3)	Reedy, J. W. (2)	Walker, R. A. (1)
Lambert, P. T. (5)	Reynolds, R. A. (2)	Whitney, W. A. (2)
Long, J. M. (4)	Richards, R. (3)	Wilson, Perry (3)
Larimer, J. A. (1)	Rodgers, W. A. (1)	Waite, J. D. (1)
Landis, D. (1)	Swenson, John (1)	Witmer, Geo. W. (2)
Mack, H. J. (3)	Scott, J. L. (1)	Weaver, W. O. (2)
Mackey, J. F. (1)	Salisbury, W. H. (4)	Wallace, C. W. (2)
Morrow, W. H. (1)	Shahan, J. W. (1)	Young, M. A. (1)

COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS—1896 TO 1915

Under the provisions of the township organization law, as amended in the year 1895, the county was divided into seven supervisor districts, each such district electing a supervisor for a term of two years, the seven district supervisors constituting the county board.

This act went into effect in January, 1896.

The following is a list of such supervisors, serving as members of the county board, arranged in alphabetical order, the figure following the name indicating the number of terms (two years each) which each member served:

Ayers, H. R. (1)	Higgins, J. W. (3)	Puttergill, William (1)
Ashton, J. T. (1)	Hlava, Albert V. (2)	Roe, W. A. (4)
Bessor, Phil (5)	Jones, W. R. (1)	Reiter, Herman G. (1)
Brown, J. W. (2)	King, E. L. (4)	Richard, Eber (2)
Brown, J. L. (3)	Keys, Wallace T. (1)	Reedy, John (1)
Black, Joseph (1)	Kellogg, F. O. (1)	Salisbury, A. H. (1)
Bearss, E. A. (1)	Krassman, Charles (4)	Snively, J. H. (1)
Clayton, Joseph (1)	Lambert, Phil (1)	Sitz, Jacob (3)
Conroy, George (5)	Larimer, J. A. (1)	Smith, H. P. (1)
Dengler, J. G. (3)	Mellett, J. E. (1)	Shafto, Everett (1)
Fitzgerald, Patrick (2)	McCurry, O. S. (3)	Tussing, B. F. (2)
Funk, S. B. (1)	McCormick, Reese (1)	Tillson, W. C. (1)
Hall, James (1)	Osborn, W. A. (1)	Weaver, W. O. (1)
Hervert, Chas. V. (1)	Owen, Joseph, Sr. (2)	

CHAPTER LIV

DEFALCATION OF JAMES VAN SICKLE, COUNTY TREASURER—H. C. M'NEW IN SHELTON CLIPPER—INTEREST ON PUBLIC FUNDS DEEMED THE LEGITIMATE OFFICE INCOME OF A COUNTY TREASURER—UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY EVADES PAYMENT OF COUNTY TAXES—HOMESTEADERS COMPELLED TO PAY TAXES ON LANDS BEFORE MAKING FINAL PROOF—COUNTY MONEY BUILDS BRIDGES AND FURNISHES STAGE-LINE EQUIPMENT FOR STAGE LINE FROM KEARNEY TO BLACK HILLS—COUNTY TREASURER JAMES VAN SICKLE TAKES A HUNTING TRIP—METHOD OF CONDUCTING COUNTY BUSINESS—MONEY HIRED OF AN OMAHA BANK TO MAKE SETTLEMENT WITH COUNTY BOARD—REMOVAL OF TREASURER VAN SICKLE FROM OFFICE—AN EMPLOYEE OF THE UNION PACIFIC COMPANY INSTALLED AS DEPUTY COUNTY TREASURER—EX-COUNTY TREASURER JAMES VAN SICKLE EARNS A PRECARIOUS LIVING BY HUNTING AND TRAPPING.

Editor H. C. McNew of the Shelton Clipper, date December 31, 1881, writes as follows of the Van Sickle defalcation:

"It was during the year 1879 that the county treasurer, James Van Sickle, proved to be a defaulter in the sum of \$14,000. This defalcation has never been settled, and a lawsuit is now in the Supreme Court between the county and the last term bondsmen, who claim that a portion of the defalcation occurred during the previous terms. What will become of it is hard to say. Probably a long law suit, putting the county to a great deal of expense will be the result. The last term bondsmen claim that they should not be held responsible for all of the lost money, as there is positive proof that a portion of it occurred during Van Sickle's second term. The commissioners settled with the treasurer before beginning the third term, and he counted out the money, but it has been ascertained that the money was only secured for the occasion of settlement with the county. Such was the game practiced by some of Kearney's leading citizens."

It is not pleasant to write of the history of the defalcation of James Van Sickle, treasurer of Buffalo County. James Van Sickle was not a deliberate and intentional thief. He was as honest in his intentions and purposes as were many of the people of Buffalo County at the date when he served as county treasurer. He was of kindly disposition, generous and trustful to a fault, one who found it well-nigh impossible to say "No," to a personal friend. It was at a time when a large majority of residents of the county were sorely pressed for ready money to meet outstanding indebtedness and to establish themselves on their claims and in business. As a defaulter he was largely a victim of circumstances and conditions.

To many men, deemed honorable and upright, James Van Sickle loaned

money, both parties knowing it was the money of the county. It was not deemed so great a sin to misappropriate public funds in that day and generation as in the year 1915.

Interest on public funds was deemed the legitimate office income of a county or state treasurer. At that date the Union Pacific Railroad Company was evading the payment of taxes in Buffalo County on some one hundred and forty thousand acres of its land within the limits of the county.

This company had secured a decision from the courts that, as the general Government had not issued patents for these lands, they were not taxable, and yet the company had mortgaged these among other of its lands for \$10,000,000 and sold the bonds on the general market, the lands being the only security.

To illustrate how flagrant and unjust this decision of the court was to taxpayers in Buffalo County let us cite a specific instance. Section 7, town 9, range 13, in Shelton Township, was railroad land, and all of this section except the east half of the southeast quarter had been purchased of the railroad company by settlers who were paying taxes on same. The state auditor notified the clerk of Buffalo County to strike from the assessment rolls of the county the east half of the southeast quarter of section 7, town 9, range 13, the same being not taxable.

A homesteader in Buffalo County had seven years in which to make proof on his homestead and secure a patent from the general Government, and yet the courts had held that at the end of five years the lands of a homesteader were liable for taxation (and homesteaders were compelled to pay taxes on homestead claims) at the end of five years, although they did not make final proof and secure a patent until the end of seven years. These instances are not cited as any justification on the part of James Van Sickle, county treasurer, or of men who borrowed knowingly of him of county funds, but simply to illustrate public conditions and public opinion as to use of public funds.

Promoters induced Treasurer Van Sickle to invest of county funds in schemes which seemed to promise profitable returns, but which proved a financial loss. As an instance, take the promoter's scheme to establish a stage line from Kearney to the Black Hills in which was invested county money to build bridges and furnish stage-line equipment. Stage lines had been established from North Platte and Sidney, and it was hoped to reap a profit by making Kearney an out-fitting point for such a stage line, but as a financial venture it was a failure.

James Van Sickle was in no sense fitted to be trusted with the duties of so responsible an office as county treasurer. He was not efficient as a collector of taxes; he was not competent as an accountant or a keeper of public records. He was an easy dupé of designing individuals. He was compelled to give a personal bond (bond signed by individuals—friends) which tended to place him somewhat at the mercy of dishonest bondsmen. He was modest, unassuming and exceedingly popular with the mass of the people. He was an active member of the Grange, and the Grange movement being in a flourishing condition in the county, he used his Grange acquaintance and influence to further his political aspirations. (The meddling of politics and politicians was a death blow to the Grange movement in the county.)

His delight was to hunt and trap, and during his three terms of office he

often spent weeks at a time on hunting trips, entirely out of touch with the county treasurer's office.

His methods of conducting the office of county treasurer is well illustrated by an incident connected with one of his hunting trips.

The trip had been arranged for, the other members of the party in waiting, the team with the wagon loaded with supplies of food, ammunition and camping equipment stood waiting on the street of the county seat, when Treasurer Van Sickle, who had been engaged during the day in his office, entered a bank in which he deposited county funds, took from pockets in his clothing rolls of county money, placed it uncounted on the bank counter, requested that it be counted and he be given credit—and at once departed on his hunting trip, to be gone weeks.

It was the duty of the board of county commissioners to settle with the county treasurer. In a settlement during his last term of office it was notorious that the cash to make settlement with the commissioners was hired for the occasion of an Omaha bank, brought to the county seat, counted out to the members of the county board as county money, at once placed in a handbag and returned to the Omaha bank.

County Treasurer James Van Sickle was not competent to originate and carry out a scheme of this character, and hence should not be held wholly responsible for the shortage of county funds which occurred during his term of office.

No steps being taken by the county board to proceed against the county treasurer for defalcation in office, his removal came about in the following manner: The Union Pacific Railroad Company at that date paid a major portion of county taxes. It made comparatively little difference to the county whether individuals were prompt in payment of taxes or not. Should the Union Pacific refuse to pay its county taxes, the financial affairs of the county would be at a standstill. A taxpayer of the county wrote officials of the Union Pacific company, stating that it was well known that the treasurer of Buffalo County was short in his accounts, that the county board seemed not disposed to take action, and requested the company not to pay its county taxes, then about due, until some satisfactory arrangement could be made to safeguard the county funds. The result was that John G. Taylor, an employe of the Union Pacific company in the auditor's department, was installed as deputy in the county treasurer's office, having full charge of the office, and served to the end of Van Sickle's term. It appears that the prosecution against Treasurer Van Sickle was abandoned. The county records do not seem to disclose that the county recovered any part of the shortage from either Van Sickle or his bondsmen. Some of the bondsmen offered to pay whatever the court found them holding for, but it appears the court could not determine the amount.

It did not appear that Mr. Van Sickle profited in any marked degree by reason of his defalcation as county treasurer. He lived for many years after retiring from office, earning a precarious living by hunting and trapping.

CHAPTER LV

PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY—GRANGES ORGANIZED IN NEBRASKA IN EARLY '70S—
ENGAGE IN MANUFACTURE OF FARM IMPLEMENTS—NOXIOUS WEED SEED IN
GRAIN SHIPPED DROUTH SUFFERERS—GRANGES ORGANIZED IN BUFFALO COUNTY
IN 1875—LOCATION OF GRANGES AND THOSE ACTIVE IN THE MOVEMENT—POLI-
TICS DISRUPTS THE GRANGE—THE GRANGE MOVEMENT IN BUFFALO COUNTY IN
1912-15—TWENTY-ONE GRANGES ORGANIZED, WITH 687 CHARTER MEMBERS—
GRANGE MEMBERSHIP 1,000 IN COUNTY IN 1915—LIST OF GRANGES—NUMBER
OF MEMBERS—NAMES OF MASTER AND SECRETARY.

PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

In the early '70s granges were established and the movement spread rapidly over the state. A State Grange was organized, with Church Howe as master, and an office opened and maintained at Lincoln in charge of P. E. Beardsley as secretary. A stock company, on the co-operative plan, in which many members of granges took stock, was organized, and under the supervision of the State Grange, engaged in the manufacture of farm implements (more largely corn plows), the buying, in wholesale lots, of family supplies and the handling and shipping of farm products. During the grasshopper invasion the officers of the State Grange were active in shipping many carloads of grain both for seed and as feed for farm teams out into the state for the relief of drouth sufferers. Unfortunately like relief sent out by the state, such grain (for seed purposes) was purchased at grain elevators, a mixture of the different varieties of wheat, oats and the like, and without being cleaned as it came from the threshing machine and containing many kinds of noxious weed seed, was shipped to the needy in all the newer portions of the state, thus seeding, for all time to come, thousands of newly opened farms with such noxious weeds.

The social feature of the Grange was of great and lasting benefit to the agricultural population of the state. The Grange meetings were attended by practically the entire rural population of the locality and visits were made to other granges. The members met on common ground, became acquainted, discussed questions in which all were more or less interested, such meetings going a long ways in helping to overcome the monotony and isolation of homesteaders in sparsely settled localities, often with oxen only as a means of travel.

The business ventures mentioned did not prove profitable. Whether conducted locally or those under the patronage of the State Grange, as before noted, the latter entailing considerable loss which was finally satisfactorily adjusted, in large part, at the personal expense of Church Howe, master of the State Grange.

BUFFALO COUNTY GRANGES

Granges were first organized in Buffalo County about the year 1875 by Maggie G. T. Mobley as state organizer. One of the largest granges was in Shelton Precinct and met in the schoolhouse in District No. 8. When organized V. Armbus was its first master, and S. C. Bassett secretary. A Grange was organized at Gibbon, but soon abandoned. There was a flourishing Grange in Centre Precinct, the more active members, as recalled, being William F. McClure, George N. Smith, James Van Sickle, T. J. Mahoney and Robert Haines. At Crowellton (now Odessa) a Grange was instituted at the home of John D. Seaman, its meetings being held in the nearby schoolhouse. A Grange was also instituted at Elm Creek, of which George Miller was "master" and a most active member. One of the most flourishing granges was located in Buckeye Valley (later called Butler), in Valley Township. As recalled, T. B. Williams was "master" of this Grange, and N. Morris one of its very active members. This Grange continued to hold regular meetings for many years after all other granges in the county had surrendered their charters.

There was a "Pomona" Grange, which met at the county seat (Kearney). This, the county Grange, was attended by representatives of the local county granges.

POLITICS DISRUPTS THE GRANGE

The flourishing condition of the Grange movement was a tempting bait to designing politicians who made use of membership in the Grange for their own political advancement, not only in Buffalo County, but in other counties of the state. This caused dissension among the members of the Grange, and the Grange movement in Buffalo came to a speedy end.

THE GRANGE MOVEMENT REVIVED

About the year 1912 the Grange movement in Nebraska was revived under the leadership of Hon. J. D. Ream of Broken Bow, who was elected master of the State Grange, and in the reorganization of the Grange members of the order in Buffalo County took an active part, the following being officers of the State Grange: C. E. Bishop of Riverdale, steward; J. S. Cooper of Kearney, treasurer; Mrs. Belle Crosby of Kearney, chaplain; Mrs. George Bischel of Kearney, ceres; Miss Gladys Eichmeir of Kearney, lady assistant steward; George Bischel, chairman bureau of information.

George Bischel of Kearney served as organizer of granges in Buffalo County, and under his inspiration and leadership twenty-one granges were organized in the years 1913-15, with a charter membership of 687, and since their organization has a largely increased membership.

With two exceptions these granges meet in schoolhouses in rural school districts. Herewith is given a list of granges in Buffalo County in the year 1915, the school district in which located, the number of charter members, the name of the master and secretary.

The membership of granges in Buffalo County exceeds one thousand, December 1, 1915:



CONCORD SCHOOL.

Name	No. school district	No. charter members	Name of master	Name of Secretary
Buckeye Valley.....	97	31	N. Morris	R. B. Drake
Buda	—	61	Ed Reynolds	R. A. Larimer
Glenwood	14	43	A. R. Crosby	H. Barney
Enterprise'	3	42	W. A. Smith	W. W. Applegate
Concord	46	51	J. F. Parks	George Richards
Fairmont	26	52	E. E. Humbert	Aug. Gerdts
Riverdale	15	44	Gust Moline	P. A. Nickey
Stanley	13	23	J. E. Kennedy	Henry Rice
Pleasant Home	47	25	J. E. Abbott	C. E. Demming
Banner	94	38	J. E. Higbee	Wm. Wallmeier
Hardscrabble	76	26	J. D. Curd	Frank Long
Majors	20	27	C. H. Payton	E. Schneider
Antelope Valley	103	19	Frank Beanek	Joseph Hervert
Sodtown	48	28	C. W. Jenkins	J. C. Vlack
Sharon	18	19	Henry Wood	Charles Walker
Broadway	5	22	Fred Anderson	K. E. Kirk
Bluff Centre	43	18	Christ Hener	Cleve Hogg
Wood River Valley.	10	40	Max Scheeman	George J. Rinkle
Sartoria	73	16	C. McNeal	O. S. McCurry
Pleasant Valley	33	22	_____	_____
Odessa	12	40	William Jordon	Lucien Siebenaler

CHAPTER LVI

ERIE FARMER'S CLUB ORGANIZED IN 1874—LIST OF CHARTER MEMBERS—SOME OF THE SUBJECTS DISCUSSED—BUFFALO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY—FIRST ORGANIZATION IN 1875 AND A FAIR HELD AT KEARNEY—RE-ORGANIZED IN 1881 AND LOCATED AT SHELTON—BUILDINGS ERECTED AND THREE FAIRS HELD—FAIR MOVED TO KEARNEY IN 1884—SEVERAL SUCCESSFUL FAIRS HELD—RE-ORGANIZED IN 1913.

ERIE FARMER'S CLUB

On the 13th of February, 1874, there was organized the Erie Farmer's Club, the place of meeting being the schoolhouse in District No. 8. The object of the club, "Mutual benefit and improvement," which also included the discussion of farm problems and the conducting of experiments in the growing of grain and vegetables.

The charter members of the club were: E. M. Fargo, B. C. Bassett, L. Worthington, J. E. Judd, S. C. Bassett, D. Stonebarger, Wm. Nutter, L. Plumb, S. V. Seeley, John P. Smith, O. Washburn, W. J. Steven, V. Armbus, T. D. Thatcher, D. Waldron, James Mills, S. R. Traut, George Brown, S. T. Walker. Officers: S. V. Seeley, chairman; S. C. Bassett, secretary; Geo. Brown, treasurer.

Among the subjects discussed, and in which there was a wide difference of opinion among the members of the club was, whether fall plowing had a tendency to produce more smut in small grain crops than where such crops were grown on land plowed in the spring.

This club continued in existence many years with profit to its members. Later a farmer's institute, attended by representatives of the college of agriculture, state university, took the place of the work of the club.

BUFFALO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL SOCIETY

August 7, 1875, there was held in Kearney, a meeting to organize an agricultural and mechanical society. At the preliminary meeting, Judge N. H. Hemmip served as chairman and S. S. St. John as secretary. At this meeting a committee was appointed to solicit memberships in the various precincts as follows: A. Eddy, Gibbon; M. B. Hunt, Grant; C. S. Greenman, Crowelton; S. B. Lowell, Shelton; H. H. Clark, Loup; G. N. Smith, Centre; D. T. Hood, Western; A. Collins, Rev. Wm. Morse, C. A. Borders, H. C. Andrews, Kearney; E. W. Carpenter, Cedar; E. Smith, Schneider; A. L. Armstrong, Buffalo. The meeting adjourned to August 21, 1875, at Kearney.

At the August 21st meeting the organization was perfected by the election of James Van Sickle as president, S. C. Bassett, secretary, and F. S. Trew, treasurer. The following were named as additional members of precinct committee: B. C. Bassett, Gibbon; Hamilton Grant and D. Harpst, Crowelton; H. A. Lee, Shelton; John Magee, Loup; W. F. McClure, Centre; George Miller, Western; Sam L. Savidge, Kearney; Captain Strothers, Cedar; Harvey Brown, Buffalo; Wm. Barrett, Schneider. This meeting adjourned to September 4 at which time C. S. Greenman was elected first vice president, and T. J. Mahoney second vice president. The executive committee was W. F. McClure, D. Harpst, C. A. Borders, B. C. Bassett and George Millburn.

The executive committee were authorized to offer premiums "for the leading agricultural products." Messrs. Hemiup and Calkins, who were engaged in the furniture business in Kearney, offered the free use of rooms in their building in which to hold an exhibit of agricultural products, and such an exhibit was held September 18, 1875. First and second cash premiums were offered for the following exhibits: (Note—As this was during the grasshopper raids when no corn was raised, it will be noted no premium was offered for corn.)

Wheat, oats, barley, rye, millet, flax, potatoes, beets, onions, cabbage, carrot, parsnip, beans (navy), turnip, squash, pumpkin, melon, broom corn, sorghum, cucumber, butter, best assortment of flowers, bread hop yeast, bread salt rising.

Committee on general arrangements: N. H. Hemiup, Webster Eaton, Col. John H. Roe.

Committee on grain: S. B. Lowell, A. Collins, Miles B. Hunt.

Committee on vegetables: James W. Wallace, S. W. Thornton, George Hall.

Committee on butter, flowers, etc.: Mrs. Wm. Killgore, Miss Fannie Nevius, Mrs. L. B. Cunningham.

Committee on ways and means: I. B. Wambaugh, George Norris, N. H. Hemiup.

It was a great day in Buffalo County, September 18, 1875, when was held the first county fair; everybody in the county was there and all were surprised at the remarkable showing made of farm products. Officials of the Union Pacific land department from Omaha were present and were so pleased and delighted at the exhibit of grain and vegetables raised in grasshopper times in the county that they bought outright the grain and vegetables awarded premiums and in charge of Col. John H. Roe and R. H. Eaton; these exhibits were taken to Omaha and placed on exhibition in the rooms of the Union Pacific land department.

History does not record to whom premiums were awarded but it is recalled that Mrs. John M. Bayley was awarded first premium on butter and B. C. Bassett first premium on beets. The records disclose that the following named were members of the society, having paid \$1 each membership fee: C. S. Greenman, Geo. D. Aspinwall, George Hall, J. E. Chidester, Daniel Harpst, Dan A. Crowell, T. J. Mahoney, Wm. F. McClure, S. W. Thornton, James Van Sickle, F. S. Trew, H. C. Andrews, J. P. Johnson, C. A. Borders, N. H. Hemiup, Sam L. Savidge, D. Allen Crowell, B. C. Bassett, Simon Murphy, S. C. Bassett, Robert Haines, L. Sturges, Geo. F. Millburn, Asa Fawcett, Geo. N. Smith, A. H. Connor, Geo. Miller, I. B. Wambaugh, Geo. E. Norris, Miles B. Hunt, Wm. T. C.

Kruth, John Magee. The activities of this society seem to have ended with the holding of this one exhibit.

RE-ORGANIZED IN 1881

The Buffalo County Agricultural Society was re-organized in 1881; the officers elected were H. A. Lee, president, E. M. Cunningham, secretary, and John H. Roe, treasurer. The names of the directors can not be recalled, but among the number were Patrick Walsh, W. A. Rodgers, George Meisner, T. J. Mahoney and D. I. Brown. The annual fair was located at Shelton for a term of three years, the citizens of Shelton providing a convenient location, and contributing about seven hundred and fifty dollars in cash; a half mile race track was built, also an agricultural hall and stalls and pens for live stock. A very successful fair was held in 1881, the total receipts being in excess of thirteen hundred dollars, and a balance on hand at the annual meeting in February, 1882, of some two hundred dollars. It is recalled that W. A. Rodgers, of Gibbon, exhibited a fine herd of shorthorn cattle, and W. W. Pool, of Cedar Township, a choice herd of registered Devon cattle.

In the Shelton Clipper of February 18, 1882, appears the following accounts of the annual meeting of the society:

"GOING TO KEARNEY"

"Last Tuesday was the date set for the annual meeting of the Buffalo County Agricultural Society. The people of Shelton and vicinity are greatly interested in the management of the society. Last season the board of directors decided to accept the offer of Shelton and hold the fair here for three years. This move did not meet with universal approval. At a late meeting of the board of directors the matter was again brought up and by a vote of seven to six it was decided to carry out the agreement. Mr. P. Walsh is one of the directors and he has always been on hand at the meetings and kept his eye peeled for breakers ahead, and up to the present time the opposition have been unable to steal a march on him, and they probably never will as Paddy is never asleep when it comes to a fight.

"The Union Pacific put on an extra car to accommodate the parties who wished to attend the meeting. Near one hundred tickets were sold at this place. No. 7 was on time and loaded with a jolly crowd of men, principally farmers. Jake Rice sent a box of cigars just before the train pulled out, and at Gibbon Hank Colby passed another box. At Gibbon about forty more members of the society got aboard, making in all about one hundred and fifty persons attending the meeting from the east end of the county. Just after the train left Gibbon some of the boys discovered an Italian fiddler in one of the coaches and he was immediately brought into the coach occupied by the grangers. He played jigs, clogs and such tunes and the boys danced. First one and another was brought out and was either compelled to dance or give the Italian a quarter. This was kept up until the county seat was reached. During the stay in Kearney the boys behaved well and showed their neighbors what it was to have a good time. The

day was pleasantly spent and a majority of the crowd came home in the evening. About a dozen remained and took in the masquerade ball given by the Kearney cornet band. It was probably the grandest ball ever given in Kearney, and the K. K. B. are deserving of praise for the hospitable treatment of visitors."

"ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

"Pursuant to call issued by the chairman, H. A. Lee, the Buffalo County Agricultural Society met at the courthouse in Kearney last Tuesday at half past 1 o'clock. About one hundred and fifty members were in attendance, the majority coming from Shelton and Gibbon. Considerable interest was manifested concerning who should be elected officers for the ensuing year, and the election of three directors to serve three years. H. A. Lee as president, called the meeting to order. Secretary E. M. Cunningham and Treasurer John H. Roe made their report to the association and by unanimous vote the reports were received. A committee of two, S. C. Ayer and J. J. Saville, was appointed by the chairman to canvass the house for new members which they did with success.

"On motion a committee of three, H. L. Strong, M. L. Phelps and L. D. Forehand, was appointed to examine the report of the treasurer. No material mistakes were encountered and the report was received. The following officers were elected: President, H. A. Lee, of Shelton Precinct; secretary, C. Putnam, of Gibbon Precinct (Mr. Putnam declined to serve and S. C. Bassett was appointed); treasurer, E. M. Cunningham, of Kearney; directors, R. W. Farr, of Gardner Precinct; George Meisner of Shelton; D. I. Brown of Western." * * * "The headquarters of the association was moved from Kearney to Gibbon; this was done in order to accommodate a majority of the members who live in the east end of the county. The meeting was harmonious throughout and the officers elected went in without opposition. The Kearney people did not attend in great numbers, and the feeling of the meeting appeared to be in support of carrying out the contract with Shelton and holding a fair here for three years."

Three annual fairs were held in Shelton, all premiums and other expenses paid in full, and H. A. Lee, who served as president the first three years (writing in 1915) states that the society had a cash balance of about seven hundred dollars at the annual meeting held in February, 1884.

The rules of the society provided that any person might become a member by paying a fee of \$1. The annual meeting in February, 1884, was held at Gibbon, and a large delegation of Kearney business men attended, paid \$1 each, controlled the annual meeting and moved the location of the fair to Kearney; thirty acres of land for fair ground purposes was purchased northeast of the city, the buildings at Shelton moved to the new location, a one-half mile track provided and several very successful fairs held. It is recalled that R. R. Greer succeeded H. A. Lee as president; S. C. Bassett served as secretary from 1882 to 1885 and was succeeded by H. G. Cutting. The site occupied by the fair grounds having greatly increased in value the officers were induced to exchange for another location, as recalled, eighty acres on section 5, 9, 15, a location not at all suited for fair ground purposes. Here buildings were provided and a one mile race track—a one mile race track being of itself enough to insure the

financial ruin of a county agricultural society. On this new location efforts were made to hold a county fair, but with disastrous results financially, and the Buffalo County Agricultural Society, organized in 1881, became a matter of history—not pleasant to relate.

A NEW ORGANIZATION IN 1913

The Buffalo County Mid West Fair Association was organized January 28, 1913. The articles of incorporation were signed by F. F. Roby, E. D. Gould, L. S. Deets, G. H. Williams and O. G. Smith. Its officers: J. W. Patterson, president; G. H. Williams, vice president; O. G. Smith, secretary; C. C. Carrig, treasurer.

The fair grounds comprise forty-seven acres, embracing in part the grounds purchased when the fair was moved from Shelton to Kearney. The first fair was held in September, 1913, and was most successful in its results. The amount of premiums totaled four thousand dollars.

The present officers (1915): F. F. Roby, president; Geo. H. Williams, vice president; G. E. Haase, secretary; H. A. Webbert, treasurer. Board of directors: F. F. Roby, James Boyd, Geo. H. Williams, W. H. Swartz, Frank Brown, J. E. Harris, W. H. Buck, F. H. Redington, L. S. Deets, O. G. Smith, H. A. Webbert, E. D. Gould, J. W. Patterson, Ed Anderson, G. E. Haase.

CHAPTER LVII

MURDER AND BURNING OF MITCHELL AND KETCHUM—THE MOST DASTARDLY DEED COMMITTED IN THE HISTORY OF THE STATE—CATTLE MEN CONTROLLING BY THREATS AND INTIMIDATION LARGE SECTIONS OF GOVERNMENT LANDS—I. P. OLIVE ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST CATTLE-RANCH MEN IN THE STATE—STEVENS (BOB OLIVE) ATTACKS MITCHELL AND KETCHUM—STEVENS IS MORTALLY WOUNDED—MITCHELL AND KETCHUM FLEE TO MERRICK COUNTY—ARRESTED IN HOWARD COUNTY—CONFINED IN BUFFALO COUNTY JAIL—THE PRISONERS DELIVERED TO SHERIFF GILLIAN OF KEITH COUNTY—SHERIFF GILLIAN DELIVERS THE PRISONERS TO I. P. OLIVE—HANGING, SHOOTING AND BURNING OF MITCHELL AND KETCHUM BY I. P. OLIVE AND HIS GANG OF COWBOYS—REMAINS OF THE MURDERED AND BURNED MEN BROUGHT TO KEARNEY AND EXPOSED TO PUBLIC VIEW—ARREST OF OLIVE AND HIS CONFEDERATES—TRIAL AT HASTINGS BEFORE DISTRICT JUDGE WILLIAM GASLIN—COMPANY OF STATE MILITIA IN ATTENDANCE DURING THE TRIAL—OLIVE AND FISHER CONVICTED AND SENTENCED FOR LIFE TO THE STATE PENITENTIARY—A DECISION OF THE STATE SUPREME COURT TURNS THE CONVICTED MEN LOOSE AND RENDERS IT NOT POSSIBLE TO TRY THEM FOR THE CRIME BEFORE ANY DISTRICT JUDGE IN THE STATE—OLIVE SLAIN AT THE HANDS OF AN AVENGING RELATIVE OF ONE OF THE MURDERED MEN.

MURDER AND BURNING OF MITCHELL AND KETCHUM

It is not pleasant to make of record in this history of Buffalo County and its people an account of the terrible tragedy which resulted in the murder and burning of Luther M. Mitchell and Ami Ketchum in the month of November, 1878. It would not here be given space, related, were it not that it illustrates in an aggravated form some of the perils encountered by those who would make homes on the plains of Nebraska in an early day. When it was discovered that cattle allowed a free range on the plains of Nebraska, waxed fat on the nutritious grasses, cattlemen, with great herds of half wild Texan and Cherokee cattle established cattle ranches of thousands of acres on the Government lands and often by threats and intimidation endeavored to prevent the taking of homestead claims which should interfere with the free range of their cattle. The homesteader, as a rule, was a quiet, inoffensive person and of limited means, whose desire and ambition was to make for himself and family a home on a quarter section of Government land, and by the raising of crops provide for his family the necessities of life. The cattle men seized upon all good herding grounds, and built their home ranch on every available water course, which tended to exclude actual settlers. When once in possession the cattlemen endeavored to

retain possession in spite of the herd law, the homestead law, even to the extent, in a few instances, of killing would be settlers if necessary. Only in a very few instances did cattlemen resort to murder in order to hold their range, but by threats and intimidation, and an occasional killing, they created such a reign of terror that many settlers feared to attempt the taking of a homestead claim under such conditions.

It is also true that there were parties calling themselves settlers who made their habitations in the vicinity of these large cattle ranches and made their living by killing off the ranchman's cattle which they disposed of at distant points within driving distance.

While the Olive ranch was in Custer County, and the murder and burning of Mitchell and Ketchum occurred in that county, yet when they were arrested they were brought to Buffalo County, placed in the custody of the sheriff of the county, confined in the county jail and delivered by the sheriff of the county over to what was fully believed, by many people, to be killed by the Olive gang; also when these men had been murdered and their bodies burned, in places to charred crisps, the bodies were brought back to the county seat of Buffalo County and exposed to the view of the general public in the undertaking rooms of F. J. Switz at Kearney. The editor of this history viewed the remains of Mitchell and Ketchum as exposed in the Switz undertaking rooms, and by reading and otherwise was fairly well informed as to the main facts of the tragedy of which it is believed the following is a fairly accurate account:

Some days previous to the trouble which resulted in the killing of Stevens, one Manly Capel had been arrested on the charge of stealing cattle in Custer County, and in his confession had seemed to implicate Ketchum.

Stevens was well known as a desperado, and it was known that he had threatened to kill Ketchum. Even with this knowledge, Sheriff David Anderson, of Buffalo County, made Stevens his deputy for the occasion, and gave him a warrant for the arrest of Ketchum. This warrant had been sworn out by some members of the Olive gang and it had been questioned whether the warrant was asked for in good faith, believing Ketchum to be a cattle thief, or merely as a pretext to get Ketchum into the custody of the Olives. It is now generally believed that Ketchum was innocent of any crime, that he was merely a peaceable settler whom Stevens was anxious to kill because of his enmity, and because he could not be driven from the country. It is also generally believed had he fallen into Stevens hands, even as an officer of the law, Stevens would have killed him on some pretext or other.

Stevens, having a warrant for Ketchum's arrest in his possession, engaged three others to accompany him, all desperate men, among whom was Barney Armstrong, proceeded to the home of Ketchum, arriving there on the morning of November 27, 1878.

Upon personal request Mr. Wm. P. Higgins has been so kind as to contribute, for this history of Buffalo County, the following account of the tragedy:

THE MITCHELL-KETCHUM TRAGEDY

Wm. P. Higgins, University Place, Nebraska.

My father settled on a homestead at Douglas Grove, in the Middle Loup Valley in 1875, in the month of May. I was a lad about twelve years of age.

At that date it was unorganized territory and in what is now Custer County there was not to exceed twelve or fifteen families. In the fall of 1875 and the years 1876 and 1877, a number of settlers from Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin and Illinois came to the Middle Loup and Clear Creek valleys and began in a small way to break out their homesteads and build humble homes and develop the resources of that county that they and their children might enjoy the splendid prosperity that has come to the people of Custer County. About the same time there were settlers who came to the South Loup Valley (it was in the western part of Custer County) and established cattle ranches, and being men of more means than the average settlers of the eastern part of the county, stocked their ranches and began producing cattle from the grasses of Central and Western Nebraska.

The luxuriant blue stem of the valleys and canyons, and the fat producing buffalo grass of the hills made it a veritable paradise for cattle men.

In the autumn of 1876 and the spring of 1877, there was established on the South Loup a cattle ranch owned and operated by Olive Brothers who came from Western Texas, bringing several thousand head of the long-horn breed of Texas cattle, and turning them out to pasture on the hills and valleys of what is now Custer County.

These cattle were raised on the plains of Western Texas and knew nothing of restraint. Hence they roamed the valleys of that county at will. This was before the period of barbed wire pasture and ranchers generally had corrals made of poles and logs sufficient to hold their saddle horses, and part of their cattle that they might run them through the branding chute. These cattle wandered all over the country and became a source of great annoyance to the homesteaders, destroying their crops and rendering it next to impossible for them to stay on their claims. The Olives asserted it was not a farming country. That they would not obey the herd law of Nebraska, and that the homesteader had no rights that they would respect, and threatened dire vengeance on anyone who dared to interfere with their stock.

Such were the conditions which led to the Mitchell-Ketchum tragedy.

I first met Ami W. Ketchum, commonly called Whit Ketchum, in 1876. At that time he was staying with a man by the name of McGee, who lived at Sweetwater, on Beaver Creek, near where the Town of Ravenna is now located. McGee kept a kind of hotel or rather a stopping place for the settlers who freighted their supplies north of Kearney.

During the summer of 1876, citizens of Kearney secured the services of McGee to locate a route from Kearney to the Black Hills that provisions and supplies could be freighted there. If my memory is right an overland stage-coach line was established over this line with C. W. Dake as manager. The route led by McGee's and was known as the McGee short line. When McGee started to locate this route he came to my father's place on the Middle Loup and Whit Ketchum was with him as an associate in the enterprise. They stayed at my father's house nearly all day examining maps and charts, talked with my father about the location of streams and valleys to the northwest of our place.

Ketchum was a quiet, courteous, unassuming young man, probably about twenty-five years of age. No better man than Ketchum could be found for such

a task for he was young, healthy, vigorous and absolutely fearless. After McGee had finished his work and the gold excitement in the Black Hills region partially died out, Whit Ketchum settled on a claim near Myrtle, on Clear Creek. About this time an elderly man by the name of Mitchell, also settled at the same place, and he and Ketchum became neighbors and friends.

They also broke out their claims and planted and raised such crops as are usually grown by pioneers.

Ketchum was a blacksmith and he builded a sod shop and did such work as was needed by the early settlers. He also did gun repairing for the pioneers of that section. At this time the settlers were suffering the loss of crops and otherwise being damaged by Olive's cattle. Many feared the Olives and their cowboys, for as future events showed they were a lawless bunch. Bob Stevens, foreman for Olive, was especially menacing in his attitude toward the homesteaders. After Stevens was killed by Ketchum it was revealed that he was a brother of I. P. Olive, and went under an assumed name of Stevens for reasons best known to himself. But fear never entered the heart of Ketchum and he insisted that Olive must take care of his cattle and respect his rights as a homesteader on Uncle Sam's domain.

One morning on arising, Ketchum found a herd of Olive's cattle in his crops and using his claim as a pasture. He mounted a horse, took two or three rather fierce dogs he and Mitchell owned, and proceeded to move the cattle away from his claim in a style that would not be approved by an experienced cattleman.

Ketchum's attitude of fearlessness and independence, and his insisting on protecting his crops (for there was no court or officers in the county at that time) aroused the ire of Bob Stevens, and his hatred of Ketchum was fanned into a furious passion.

Stevens threatened to shoot Ketchum at first sight. Ketchum quietly remarked that he did not intend for Stevens to shoot him as long as he could prevent it. About this time I had a gun which needed a new spring made, so I went over to Ketchum's to get him to repair my gun.

He was so busy that he could not fix the gun that day, so I left it and returned home. In a week or ten days I took a saddle horse and rode over to Ketchum's place after my gun. It was eight or ten miles from my father's house. When I came on the hill a short distance from the Mitchell and Ketchum homes, I discovered that the hay stacks, outbuildings and the roof of the sod house had been burned and everything of value to a homesteader destroyed. I rode around, looked the place over and wondered what was the trouble. About half a mile from Mitchell's place, near Clear Creek, was another house, part sod, part dugout, and I discovered that there were teams and a number of people, so I rode down and found that a number of homesteaders and also I. P. Olive and his men were there. The homesteader came out and told me that Bob Stevens (Olive) and three of his men had come to the Mitchell house, got into a fight with Mitchell and Ketchum, and that Ketchum had shot Stevens, and that he was in the house dying. They had brought Doctor Dildine from Kearney, but he could not save him.

Stevens had been shot with a large calibre revolver, the ball entering his body just below and a little to the right of the navel, came out on the left side of the

back a little higher than it entered, for Ketchum was on the ground and Stevens on his horse.

The homesteader wanted me to go in the house and see Stevens as he was dying, but I did not care to see him.

After talking to the people there some time, I rode about three miles down the creek to where Mitchell's son-in-law lived. Mitchell and Ketchum, after the fight, had loaded their household goods and such other things as they could haul, into wagons, took their live stock, and left the country, seeming to have a presentiment of what would happen to them if they fell into the hands of the Olives.

The son-in-law was not present at the fight, but was there shortly after, and gave me a detailed account of it as he had it from Ketchum, Mitchell and members of the family.

He said that after breakfast Mitchell and Ketchum decided to take a bull home to a man who lived over on the Loup near my father's place. They had hitched the team to the wagon, put my gun in the wagon to take it home and had a rope around the bull's horns, and Ketchum had the rope around the axle and was underneath pulling the bull while Mitchell drove him out of the corral. This was the situation when Bob Stevens (Olive) with three of his men dashed up on horses, with revolvers in their hands, called Ketchum the vilest of names and opened fire on him. Ketchum straightened up from under the back part of the wagon, jerked his revolver and shot Stevens as I have before described. He then shot at one of the other men and cut a handkerchief about his neck, inflicting a slight wound. Ketchum's revolver had but two loads in it, after which he sprang to the wagon, got my gun and continued the fight. About this time Stevens got dizzy and began to reel. Two of his men, fearing he would fall from his horse, rushed up, took him by the arm and ran his horse over the hill out of sight of the house. One of his men, at the first volley, placed the sod house between himself and the battle. When the fight started Mitchell's children were in the yard. They ran screaming into the house, and Mitchell followed them and got his gun and came back to the door, but the fight was about over, and he was so excited and frightened that he could hardly handle the gun, and really took no part in the fight.

At the second or third volley from Olive's men a bullet clipped about half an inch off the bone of the elbow of Ketchum's right arm and so numbed it that Ketchum said after the second shot he could not handle his arm and it placed him to a disadvantage.

The rest of the story is well known to the people of Nebraska.

(Note—As it is told elsewhere in this history, it is not here repeated.—Editor.)

Now the question naturally arises, what kind of men were Mitchell and Ketchum? Mitchell was a quiet, inoffensive old man, who was connected with the tragedy simply by the force of circumstances; that is, by being present when the collision between Whit Ketchum and the Olive gang occurred.

The Olives and their friends started a rumor that Ketchum was a cattle thief; that he had stolen and killed cattle and peddled the meat. But not one word of evidence was produced to show that these charges were true. In the

publicity given these men, by the crime committed, if anyone knew of a single case of cattle stealing committed by either of them, it would have been definitely stated and proof furnished.

But such were the "stock in trade" charges of the Western Texas cattle men.

I knew Whit Ketchum and knew him to be an honest, courageous young man, and had the fight at Mitchell's house turned the other way and Ketchum been killed, I do not believe these foul charges would ever have been made against him. But the result would have been pointed to as an example likely to happen to any homesteader who had the courage to stand against the unlawful aggressions of the cattle men.

Such are the substantial facts in this now famous tragedy.

The following is from a published account, preserved by the editor as a clipping, its author unknown:

"As soon as the Stevens party had ridden away Mitchell and Ketchum packed up their few belongings of a household nature and started to go to Merrick County, where Mitchell had before lived. When they arrived in Merrick County they drove to the residence of Doctor Barnes to have Ketchum's wound dressed. The next day, after securing a place of safety for Mrs. Mitchell and the children, on the advice of friends, they started on their return to Custer County in order to give themselves up and stand trial for the killing of Stevens, it having been learned that he had died. They went by way of Loup City and engaged the services of Judge Aaron Wall. Acting on his advice, they remained for a few days at Loup City and then went to the home of John R. Baker in Howard County, where they were arrested by the sheriff of Merrick County, William Letcher, and the sheriff of Howard County, F. W. Crew. I. P. Olive had offered a reward of \$700 for the arrest of Mitchell and Ketchum, and several sheriffs, among them Crew of Howard County, Gillian of Keith County, Anderson of Buffalo and Letcher of Merrick, were desirous of making the capture and securing the reward offered. But after they were captured Sheriffs Crew and Letcher were unwilling to assume the responsibility of taking their prisoners to Custer County and turning them over to the bloodthirsty cowboy outfit. The prisoners were finally taken to Kearney and placed in charge of Sheriff David Anderson, and confined in the Buffalo County jail.

"The prisoners were at first held without legal authority, as the warrant for their arrest, issued in Custer County, had been placed in the hands of Sheriff Gillian of Keith County to serve. The prisoners had engaged the services of Thomas Darnell of St. Paul, Howard County, and Elisha C. Calkins of Kearney. Their attorneys made every effort to keep the prisoners in the jail at Kearney, fearing that violence might be done them. The feeling at Kearney at that time was against Mitchell and Ketchum, it having been represented that Stevens was killed while fulfilling his duty as a public officer. A question arose among the sheriffs over the division of the reward offered and which I. P. Olive refused to pay until Mitchell and Ketchum were delivered in Custer County. Sheriff David Anderson was offered \$50 to deliver the prisoners in Custer County. He declined unless enough was offered to enable him to employ a sufficient force to safeguard the prisoners.

"It was finally arranged that since Sheriff Gillian of Keith County held the

warrant for their arrest that he should take the prisoners to Custer County, and he promised to notify their attorneys, Darnell and Calkins, so that they could accompany them. As Gillian was a sheriff, and as his desperate character was not at the time known, even their attorneys did not anticipate serious trouble. They, however, kept a close watch lest the prisoners be taken without their knowledge.

"On the forenoon of December 10th, Attorney Darnell, fearing the prisoners might be spirited away, kept close watch until the Overland emigrant train came in. At that date there were but two passenger trains a day, west bound. One about 10 at night, the other about the noon hour. Mr. Darnell awaited the coming of this train and remained on guard until the train was ready to leave, when he turned away.

"In the meantime Gillian had taken the prisoners from the jail and at the last moment hurried them aboard the train.

"Calkins and Darnell, fearing trouble, telegraphed to Gillian at Elm Creek, the first station to the west, asking if he would hold the prisoners at Plum Creek until the arrival of the next train from the East. This Gillian promised to do. Attorneys Calkins and Darnell also telegraphed to C. W. McNamar of Plum Creek, asking him to keep close watch as to what was done with the prisoners on their arrival.

"Plum Creek was the home of I. P. Olive and here he was surrounded by his friends and employes. On the arrival of the train the prisoners were placed in wagons by Olive and his party of friends and started at once for Custer County. This was about the middle of the afternoon. Attorney McNamar was unable to prevail upon them to await the arrival of the attorneys of the prisoners, and believing it was the intention to murder the prisoners, followed them for some distance, when the Olive party separated. However, he followed the prisoners until after dark, when he lost their trail.

"The Olive party kept on, all coming together on the Loup River, about five miles from the Olive Ranch, where they went through the formal process of transferring the prisoners from Gillian to Olive. Among those who took the prisoners were Bion Brown, Pedro Dominicus and Dennis Gartrell. Gillian and Dufran walked up the road for a short distance while the remainder of the party started on for Devil's Canyon, Olive riding ahead and Gartrell driving the wagon. Olive was riding ahead and stopped under an elm tree, when two ropes were thrown across a limb and Gartrell tied one about the neck of Ketchum and Pedro Dominicus tied the other around Mitchell's neck. The ropes were not prepared with slip nooses, but were simply tied that their agony might be prolonged.

"The prisoners were handcuffed together. Ketchum was drawn up first. Olive caught up a rifle and shot Mitchell. Olive and Gartrell then caught hold of the rope and drew Mitchell up. Fisher and Brown pulled on Ketchum's rope. A fire was then kindled under them. Accounts differ as to whether this was done purposely or not. The party had been indulging freely in drinking whisky, and some of them claim that the fire was started accidentally. However this may be, the bodies were burned frightfully. The next day when the bodies were found, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Ketchum was still hanging, with his legs

burned nearly to a crumbling condition. Mitchell's rope had either burned off or broken, and he was lying on the ground, one arm drawn up to Ketchum by the handcuffs, while the other was burned off at the shoulder.

"As soon as the bodies were found, Attorney McNamar returned to Plum Creek and reported the fact. I. P. Olive lived in Plum Creek and also several of the men who took part in the murder. They were well known as dangerous characters, and no one cared to attempt to arrest them, as on returning to Plum Creek Olive and his men had threatened to kill any one who should attempt to do so.

"A conference was held at the office of Attorney E. C. Calkins at Kearney. This conference was attended by Sheriff James of Dawson County, Sheriff David Anderson of Buffalo County, District Judge William Gaslin, Attorney E. C. Calkins and others. Judge Gaslin expressed a willingness to issue a warrant for the perpetrators of the dastardly deed, but the question was who would undertake to serve it. Sheriff James refused, fearing the murderers could not be captured and that he himself would be hunted down by their confederates. Sheriff David Anderson objected to going into another county to make the arrest, attended with so much danger, but said he would not hesitate to attempt their arrest if they came into Buffalo County. Two warrants were made out, for the law-abiding citizens of both Buffalo and Dawson counties had resolved that the capture should be made. Attorney General C. J. Dillworth, who resided on his farm in Phelps County, had for some time, with the assistance of others, been working up a plan for the capture of the gang. On Saturday, January 5, 1879, he telegraphed to parties at Kearney that arrangements had been made to take the murderers and that the citizens of Plum Creek only awaited assistance. At the former place a well armed and determined party had been organized under the leadership of Lawrence Ketchum, a brother of one of the murdered men. The party had been anxious to attempt the capture of Olive but had been held back by the wiser counsels of Attorney General Dillworth, who sought, by the use of strategy, to surprise the criminals and thus save the loss of life which would necessarily result from an open attack.

"On receipt of the message referred to, Kearney parties took the first train and arrived at Plum Creek about 12 o'clock at night. They were met by citizens of Plum Creek, who took them to places of concealment, and it was decided to wait until morning, when there would be no suspicion, and the murderers could be captured one at a time. On Sunday morning Baldwin was arrested at day-break at his hotel, while starting a fire. A number of the party were concealed at the postoffice, where Olive and a number of others were captured, one at a time, as they came for their mail. Fisher and others were arrested on the street. There was no bloodshed and but little show of resistance. The prisoners were taken to Kearney on a special train. On their arrival Olive, Green and some of the others, fearing they would be lynched, turned pale and showed the most craven fear. At first they were confined in the Buffalo County jail, but soon were distributed to jails in different parts of the state. On Monday morning after the capture of Olive the Mexican, Pedro Dominicus, Barney Gillian, sheriff of Keith County, and Phil Dufran were also captured and brought to Kearney.

"The time set for the trial was in the spring of 1879 and the place selected

by District Judge William Gaslin was Hastings, in Adams County. An indictment was found against I. P. Olive, John Baldwin, William H. Green, Fred Fisher, Barney Gillian, Pedro Dominicus, Bion Brown, Phil Dufran, Dennis Gartrell, Barney Armstrong, Peter Bielec and a party by the name of McInduffer for the murder of Mitchell and Ketchum. The trial of Olive and Fred Fisher began at once and lasted for some time. Brown and Dufran turned state's evidence, which evidence disclosed the murder to have been committed in the manner herein described.

"Olive and his relatives were wealthy and no expense was spared in conducting the case in their behalf. During the trial, which attracted the attention of the entire state, hundreds of indignant citizens from various portions of the state attended the trial, hoping to see justice done. Judge Gaslin was scrupulously honorable, and the criminals had a fair trial. It was known that money was spent freely in behalf of the prisoners. At one time it seemed so apparent that the end of justice would be thwarted that there was talk of lynching the prisoners, and partly on this account, and also for fear of violence on the part of Olive's cowboy friends, who were much in evidence, a company of state militia was kept at Hastings during the trial.

"Although the evidence was strong against the prisoners, showing that they had deliberately planned and executed a most foul and cowardly murder, the jury returned a verdict of murder in the second degree. Judge Gaslin sentenced I. P. Olive and Fred Fisher to imprisonment for life in the state penitentiary.

"Immediately after the sentence of Olive and Fisher their friends began to try to devise plans to secure their release, and the trial of their associates was postponed. The following year their efforts were successful, and Olive and Fisher were released from the penitentiary upon a decision of the Supreme Court of the state ordering them to be set free on account of technical irregularities in their trial in the District Court. Let it be here stated that Custer County had recently been formed from territory that had, before the county organization, been in two judicial districts, but was now understood to be attached to the Western (Fifth) District.

"The Supreme Court held that the prisoners must be tried within the limits of Custer County and at the same time held that this county (Custer) 'was in no judicial district,' and hence that the murderers could be tried before no district judge in the state. This was the decision of two judges of the Supreme Court, but Judge Samuel Maxwell, all honor to his memory, dissented in one of the ablest documents ever prepared in that court.

"The decision of the Supreme Court practically released the convicts, Olive and Fisher, and put an end to the prosecution of their associates, nearly all of whom, however, had been allowed to escape from county jails in which they had been confined."

The editor does not agree with some of the strictures upon county officials and members of the Supreme Court indulged in in the foregoing account of this matter as herein quoted.

In the attempt to administer justice in accordance with law legally enacted, it is never best that judges should override the plain letter of the law. It is not the province of a judge to legislate, to enact law. Nebraska was new as a state

in the '70s and there was much of lawlessness, especially in the central and western portion of the state. If, as a people, we are to be taught to respect and uphold the law, then the officers of our courts must themselves hold the law in highest respect and be at all times obedient to its mandates.

As a finale to the terrible tragedy, the murder and burning of Luther M. Mitchell and Ami Ketchum, I. P. Olive, the chief instigator, the one most responsible for the dastardly outrage, met a just fate at the hands of an avenging relative of one of the murdered men.

Olive, shadowed for years, knowing he was being pursued for purposes of revenge, dreading daily and hourly that the stroke would fall, was shot at a cattle round-up, as recalled, in Southwestern Nebraska in the year 1884.

Mr. F. J. Switz, who was coroner of Buffalo County at the time this crime was perpetrated, writes, in 1916, in reference thereto:

"Whether the fire was started before they were dead I was never quite sure. County Judge Bobblits of Custer County, in which county the crime took place, ordered a man by the name of Sanford to cut the bodies down and bury them near the scene of the crime. About one week later L. L. Ketchum, a brother of one of the men murdered, and a posse of men from Kearney went up to Custer County, exhumed the bodies and brought them to Kearney and turned them over to F. J. Switz, county coroner, who held an inquest and in due time the bodies were disposed of. Mitchell's body was shipped to the eastern part of the state. Ketchum was buried in the cemetery at Kearney."

While the bodies were in the possession of Coroner Switz, he had them photographed, one of which he kindly furnishes as an illustration. The photo is dim from age, but bears out Mr. Switz's statement that the body of Mitchell, especially the left side, was frightfully burned, the left leg and arm being burned off and the left side of the face so badly burned that the features could not be recognized by his relatives. The photo discloses that his boot remains on the right foot and is uninjured by fire.

The photo discloses that Ketchum's body was uninjured by fire. The features are plainly discernible, that of a comparatively young man, the hair on his head plainly showing, his underclothing on the body not burned, and his boots uninjured on his feet. Both men wore boots reaching nearly to their knees. The bodies, when photographed, were laid on planks out of doors, the head and body slightly raised, and Mr. Switz states were "frozen stiff and the worse looking bodies I ever saw." The photo seems to disclose that Ketchum's right arm had been well nigh separated from the body at the shoulder.

CHAPTER LVIII

LAST HUNT OF THE PAWNEES IN 1873—THE TRIBE NUMBERED 2,400—700 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN WENT ON THE HUNT—TOOK 800 EXTRA PONIES TO PACK HOME THE MEAT—HUNTED ON THE SOUTH OF THE PLATTE, ON PRAIRIE DOG, BEAVER AND FRENCHMAN—KILLED LARGE NUMBERS OF BUFFALO—ATTACKED BY THE SIOUX AND 156 PAWNEES KILLED—LOST ALL OF DRIED MEAT AND MOST OF THEIR PONIES—FIFTY OF THE SIOUX WERE KILLED—THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT FINED THE SIOUX \$10,000 AND GAVE THE MONEY TO THE PAWNEES.

LAST BUFFALO HUNT OF THE PAWNEES

By John W. Williamson

A score or more of times I have been requested to write my personal recollections and experiences with the Pawnee Indians on their last buffalo hunt, which ended in a battle with their old enemy, the Sioux. So many stories have been written—all claiming to be authentic—that I have hesitated to pen for publication a true history of the battle which ended so disastrously for the Pawnees, knowing that it will differ, in many respects, from accounts which have been printed heretofore.

In the spring of 1873 the Pawnees at the Genoa Agency numbered 2,400. Of this number 600 were fighting men, or warriors. I had come to the agency three years previous and was working for the Government at the time the Pawnees left on their last buffalo hunt. At that time buffalo were feeding in the valleys of the Platte, Loup, Niobrara and Republican rivers and their tributaries. The nearest buffalo to Genoa were as far west as Plum Creek Station (now Lexington), and a place consisting of a few low houses where Arapahoe now stands.

It was the custom of the Pawnees to hunt buffalo twice a year. The summer hunt was for meat, tent material and moccasin leather, and the winter hunt for robes and meat. The Government, in order to avoid clashes between the Pawnee and Sioux, had divided the hunting grounds. The Sioux were confined to that part of the country north of the Niobrara River, and the Pawnees to the country south of the Niobrara to the Kansas line.

To keep the Indians confined to the territory assigned them and to prevent them from molesting homesteaders who were pouring into the state and filing on land, trail agents were appointed to accompany the Indians.

In May, 1873, the Pawnees held a council meeting and decided to leave the agency on the summer hunt in July. Major Burgess, a Quaker, was agent at

Genoa, and through him the Indians made their request for permission to hunt and also for the appointment of a trail agent to accompany them. Texas Jack (John Omahander) had acted as trail agent the previous year and made application for reappointment. George Clothier, of Columbus, also applied for the position. I did not apply for the place and was surprised when one of the chiefs came to me and informed me that the council had decided to request the Government to appoint me to accompany them.

The Pawnees were made up of four different bands: The Skeedes, the Kitkahas, the Chowees, and the Petahoverats. Each band has its head and sub-chiefs, but Petah La Shauro was the supreme head of the Pawnee Nation, and, if I am not mistaken, was the last chief to have that distinction, the position ending with the death of this noted Indian, who had always been friendly with the white people. It was the custom to allow each band to send an equal number on the buffalo hunts.

On the 2d day of July, 1873, the Indians, to the number of 700, left Genoa for the hunting grounds. Of this number 350 were men, the balance women and children. Most of the men were armed with bows and arrows, old fashioned muzzle loading rifles; a few had seven-shot Spencer carbines and some carried Colts powder and ball revolvers. All were mounted, and in addition took with them 800 extra ponies to pack home the meat and hides.

Two hours before we started for the hunting grounds Chief Petah La Shauro sent for me. As I entered the council hall the old man extended his hand and addressed me in his language, which was interpreted for me, although I understood Pawnee to some extent and could speak the language fluently. In substance the chief said:

"You are a young man. You have never hunted buffalo. I have instructed my people to take good care of you and obey you. I want you to feel at home on this trip. You will be the guest of my son, Sun Chief."

The old chief was about sixty years old at this time, a magnificent specimen of physical manhood for his years. I consider him, intellectually, the greatest Indian I ever met.

Had he been an educated white man he would have taken his place as a leader in state and nation. He was kind, considerate, sympathetic, but firm and just in his position as head of the tribe.

After leaving Genoa we followed up the Valley of the Platte beyond Kearney. Near Plum Creek Station we crossed the river and went up the south bank of the stream. Not finding buffalo, we turned south to the Republican River and up the valley to a point called Burton's Bend, where we crossed and went south to the West Beaver, near where Beaver City now stands. Before we reached the Beaver, signs indicated that buffalo had been in that vicinity recently, and scouts were thrown out, and a suitable location selected for a camp and preparations made for the anticipated slaughter. No sooner had a halt been made than scouts came riding in and reported that a herd of 300 buffalo were feeding on the south slope of the divide between the Beaver and Prairie Dog.

Among white men this announcement would have created excitement and confusion. If the Pawnees were excited it was not apparent by any outward signs. There was no confusion, no haste. At the command of the chief presiding that

day the hunters formed in the shape of a letter V. At the point rode one of the scouts with a spear decorated with colored feathers. There was no noise, no disorder as the procession moved over the prairie. The eye of every hunter was on the bunch of feathers on the end of the spear carried by the scout. Suddenly the feathers disappear. It is the signal that the hunt is on. With military precision that V shaped formation straightens out, and 350 Indians and one white man sweep down the valley into that herd of buffalo. Each hunter selects a buffalo as his legitimate prey and cuts it out, and riding up by the side of the fleeing animal shoots it down. Jumping from the pony the hunter plunges his knife into the throat of the buffalo. In a short time the animal is skinned, the meat cut from around the bones, rolled into strips and bound together with thongs cut from the hide and placed on the pony and brought into camp and turned over to the women, who cure the meat and tan the hides. For drying the meat the women erect willow poles, where the meat is placed in strips and in a few days is cured, and when ready for transportation on the backs of ponies, resembles dried lute fish, used by Swedes and Norwegians as a Christmas delicacy.

In this hunt one of the chiefs took charge of me and showed me how to cut out and kill my first buffalo. So expert were the Pawnees in killing buffalo that not one animal escaped death out of the several herds attacked.

That night there was a great feast in camp. What Christian people would call a prayer meeting was held, and the Great Spirit thanked for his kindness in sending his red children a bountiful supply of meat. While the feast was going on a long pole was placed in the center of the camp and on this was hanging a large piece of cooked meat as a burnt offering to God.

After leaving the south slope of the Beaver, we moved to the Valley of the Prairie Dog, then down that stream to the Kansas line, where another herd of buffalo was killed and the meat cured. Retracing our steps, we went up the Valley of the Prairie Dog for fifty miles, killing several small herd of buffalo en route. On the fourth day of August we reached the north bank of the Republican River and went into camp. At 9 o'clock that evening three white men came into camp and reported to me that a large band of Sioux warriors were camped twenty-five miles northwest waiting for an opportunity to attack the Pawnees. They said that the Sioux had had scouts out spying on the Pawnees for several days, anticipating that we would move up the river where buffalo were feeding. Previous to this white men had visited us and warned us to be on our guard from Sioux attacks, and I was a little skeptical as to the story told me by our white visitors. But one of the men—a young fellow about my own age—appeared to be so sincere in his efforts to impress upon me that the warning should be heeded that I took him to Sky Chief, who was in command that day, for a conference. Sky Chief said the men were liars; that they wanted to scare the Pawnees away from the hunting grounds so that white hunters could kill buffalo for hides. He told me I was a squaw and a coward. I took exception to his remarks, and retorted, "I will go as far as you dare go. Don't forget that." The following morning, August 5th, we broke camp and started north up the divide, between the north and south forks of the Frenchman. Soon after we left camp Sky Chief rode up to me and extending his hand said, "Shake, brother." He recalled our little unpleasantness the night previous and said he did not believe there was

cause for alarm, and was so impressed with the belief that he had not taken the precaution to throw out scouts in the direction the Sioux were reported to be. A few minutes later a buffalo scout signaled that a herd of buffalo had been sighted in the distance and Sky Chief rode off to engage in the hunt. I never saw him again. He was killed by the Sioux. He had killed a buffalo and was skinning it when the advance guard of the Sioux shot and wounded him. The chief attempted to reach his horse, but before he was able to mount, several of the enemy were on him. He died fighting. A Pawnee who was skinning a buffalo a short distance away, but who managed to escape, told me how Sky Chief died.

A young Indian who was riding near me when buffalo were reported in sight borrowed my gun and rode off to engage in the hunt. He, too, was killed, and I never saw him or my gun again. We had not proceeded a mile after the departure of Sky Chief when I noticed a commotion at the head of the procession, which had suddenly stopped. I started to ride up where three of the chiefs were talking when a boy of sixteen rode up and stopped me.

Dismounting, he tied a strip of red flannel on the bridle of my horse, and after remounting told me a buffalo scout had signaled that the Sioux were coming. What significance was attached to the flannel tied on the bridle I was never able to learn. We were only about a hundred yards from a large canyon when the Sioux were reported coming and orders were shouted down the line for the squaws, children and pack ponies to take refuge in the canyon. The warriors were preparing to ride forth to meet the enemy. Coming up to Chief Terra Recokens, who was surrounded by several leading men of the Skeedee band, I suggested that we fall back down the canyon two miles, where there was a small grove of timber, and make a stand. The chief was in favor of adopting the suggestion, but Fighting Bear of the Kitkahos rebelled. He had fought the Sioux before and said we could whip them in an open fight, and it was finally decided to adopt his suggestion and make the stand on the ground we were on. It seemed but a short time after the squaws and pack ponies had disappeared over the edge of the canyon when the first Sioux appeared in the distance. Down in the canyon arose a chant. It was the war song of the Pawnee Nation, sung by the squaws as they stood side by side and rocked back and forth. Louder and louder grew the song as the enemy approached. I loaded my two revolvers and made up my mind to do my share in the fighting. As the Sioux kept coming over the hill it became apparent that they outnumbered the fighting men of the Pawnees four to one. I afterwards learned that there was between twelve hundred and fifteen hundred in the band, under command of Chief Snow Flake. I was later informed that he belonged to the Brule band of the Sioux and that most of his warriors were also of that band. The Sioux were about a mile and a half away when the Pawnee chiefs noted that they were greatly outnumbered and suggested to me that I go out and parley with them with a view of warding off the threatened attack. I rode out 300 yards, accompanied by Ralph Wicks, a half-breed interpreter, who afterwards studied law and was admitted to the bar in Oklahoma. He died a few years ago. Waving a handkerchief as a token of peace, I attempted to stop the Sioux, but on they came—the whole bunch of them. Suddenly the war whoop of the Sioux sounded and several puffs of smoke from as many guns

and the whistle of bullets warned me that it was time to beat a retreat. The battle cry of the Sioux was answered with a cry of defiance from the Pawnee warriors, which denoted that a warm reception awaited the enemy. All the Indians were mounted, and as I reached the edge of the canyon the 350 Pawnees had hurled themselves against the enemy. Just as I reached the canyon my horse, which had been struck by one or more bullets, stumbled and fell. It took less than a minute to strip off the saddle and bridle and place them on my buffalo pony a squaw was holding for me. Mounting my horse I rode up from the canyon. The Pawnees were putting up a splendid fight, but the odds were against them. I blazed away with my revolvers, when the chiefs noticed that the enemy was surrounding the head of the canyon and gave orders to retreat. I did not understand the command given, but when I noticed the squaws cutting the thongs that bound the packs of meat to the ponies and mounting with the children, I concluded it was about time to make a dash myself. A moment before the retreat commenced I saw Fighting Bear engaged in a duel with a Sioux chief. I presumed he was a chief from the war bonnet he wore. Both chiefs were fighting with tomahawks. Taking deliberate aim at close range I fired at the Sioux. The bullet struck the mark and wounded the Sioux, which gave Fighting Bear an opportunity to finish him. Jumping from his horse the Pawnee chief scalped his enemy, remounted and grabbing the dead Sioux's horse by the bridle joined in the retreat down the canyon.

It was in the retreat down the canyon that the greatest loss of life occurred among the squaws and children, the Sioux riding down each side and firing down upon them. As the Pawnees reached the river and crossed to the opposite bank, the Sioux succeeded in cutting off 700 ponies and had started down the stream to cross at another point to attack the Pawnees when the sound of a bugle stopped them. Looking across the river I noticed a company of United States cavalry emerge from the timber. When the Sioux saw the soldiers approaching they beat a hasty retreat. In company with Fighting Bear and two other chiefs I crossed the river and conferred with the officer in command, who suggested that the Pawnees return and gather up the meat left behind and bury the dead. But the Pawnees could not be induced to comply with the suggestion. They were firm in the belief that the meat had already been poisoned by their enemies and the wounded put to death.

We camped that night on the banks of Red Willow Creek. There was nothing to eat. All our supplies had been left behind on the battle field. I had always understood that an Indian is devoid of emotion. But that night I was convinced that at times an Indian gives vent to his feelings the same as a white man. Seated on the ground, rocking back and forth, the warriors who had fought so valiantly a few hours previous, pulled hair from their heads, while the tears rolled down their cheeks. While this demonstration was being enacted the squaws kept up an incessant wail for the dead.

A mile from where we camped lived a man named Frank Byfield. He kept a few groceries, flour, bacon and other supplies for buffalo hunters. He freighted all his goods from Plum Creek Station, a distance of seventy or eighty miles. I bought from Byfield thirty sacks of flour and signed a receipt for the same and the Government later reimbursed him.

Shortly after leaving Red Willow Creek we killed a herd of twelve buffalo and then moved on to Arapahoe, which at that time consisted of a few log houses. Here I hired a homesteader for \$5 to haul twelve of the wounded to Plum Creek Station.

At Plum Creek Station a company of soldiers were stationed. Here the wounds of the injured were dressed by the army surgeon. Barclay White, superintendent of Northwestern Indian agencies, had his headquarters in Omaha at this time and to him I wired what had occurred, and he made arrangements with the Union Pacific Company to provide box cars for bringing the Pawnees to Silver Creek. From Silver Creek the Pawnees walked across the country to Genoa—a sad return from the last buffalo hunt in a country that had been their home so many years.

The loss of the Pawnees in the battle on the Republican was 156, including men, women and children.

Several weeks after returning with the Pawnees I received a letter from Nick Jenese, trail agent for the Sioux. He said the Sioux had lost fifty warriors in the battle. Jenese was a Frenchman who married a Sioux squaw and had been adopted into the tribe. He attempted to prevent the Sioux from leaving the Niobrara Valley to attack the Pawnees, but they placed a guard over him and rode away on a raiding expedition which cost them the lives of fifty warriors and \$10,000 in money, for the Government took that amount of money out of the annuity fund of the Sioux and turned it over to the Pawnees to pay for the meat lost and ponies captured. I had in my pack at the time of the battle a memorandum book containing \$7 in money and several letters. Jenese sent the book and letters to me by express, but the buck who went through my pack kept the money.

Some time during the fall I was sent by the Government to the battle field to bury the dead. At Plum Creek Station I hired a liveryman named Coles to assist me. We drove to Arapahoe, where I hired four more men. I recall now the names of only two of them. One was the famous "Wild Bill," who was murdered a few years later by Jack McCall in Deadwood. The name of the other man was Frank Martin.

We arrived on the battle field early in the evening and commenced our gruesome work, finishing before dawn and hurrying back to Arapahoe, as the Sioux were reported to be on the war path. At one place on the battle field were the charred remains of several children, who had evidently escaped injury and had been left behind in the retreat, only to meet horrible death by torture at the hands of the Sioux.

CHAPTER LIX

INTRODUCTION OF ALFALFA INTO NEBRASKA AND BUFFALO COUNTY—REPORT BY DR. C. E. BESSEY—REPORT BY PROF. C. L. INGERSOLL—REPORT BY C. Y. SMITH—ALFALFA PALACE ON STATE FAIR GROUNDS—EXPERIENCE OF C. H. BALLENGER, J. H. NEAD, H. W. M'FADDEN, MARTIN SLATTERY, H. D. WATSON, PAT O'SHEA, ROBERT OLIVER, MICHAEL MOUSEL, JOHN S. MARSH, DR. JOHN E. SMITH, THOMAS M. DAVIS, CAPT. J. H. FREAS, J. H. GISHWILLER, JAMES O'KANE, A. B. CLARK, B. A. ROBERTS, W. S. DELANO, J. C. MITCHELL—STATISTICS.

INTRODUCTION OF ALFALFA IN NEBRASKA AND BUFFALO COUNTY

The plants which we cultivate and grow upon our farms has much to do in the development of our agricultural resources, and also in the growth and development of civilization among a people, a nation.

The history of no people is complete which does not include a history of its cultivated plants, and especially those which have proven most useful and helpful.

No plant has done and is doing more to transform Nebraska from what was in years gone by termed a "short grass country," that is a country producing forage of short growth and in very limited quantities, to a land upon whose cultivated fields there is being produced in great abundance forage of highest feeding value for our domestic animals.

A history of the introduction of this valuable plant into the state and the preservation of such history in the archives of our State Historical Society, that it may be of use to coming generations and in the writing of a satisfactory history of our state, is certainly of importance, and with this object in view the writer ventures to contribute the little which he has been able to learn of the matter with the hope that others may be induced to add of their knowledge of the subject.

In the 1890 annual report of the State Board of Agriculture Dr. C. E. Bessey, writing of alfalfa, says: "It is said the Greeks and Romans grew it, and that to these countries it was brought from Persia, and possibly from regions still farther east. Its cultivation certainly dates back two thousand or twenty-five hundred years.

Dr. Bessey mentions, "Upon the soils of Nebraska it has been shown to grow with great readiness, and when once established is likely to endure for a long time."

In a paper published in the 1894 annual report of the State Board of Agriculture, Prof. C. L. Ingersoll, director of the state experiment station, mentions that alfalfa was first planted on the state experiment station farm in the year 1892.

In the 1895 report of the State Board of Agriculture C. Y. Smith, of the state experiment station, in a paper entitled "Alfalfa in Nebraska," writes, "Alfalfa has no equal today among the forage plants of Nebraska, a statement substantiated by reports on file in the experiment station office of nearly one thousand farmers in the state. Although the last two years have developed a large increase in acreage, alfalfa is by no means a plant of recent cultivation in Nebraska. In 1876 S. P. Baker, of Curtis, Frontier County, received some seed from California costing \$22 per bushel. This he sowed at the rate of ten pounds per acre.

"In 1878 he obtained more seed and experimented on a plat of sixteen acres. In 1878 J. C. Mitchell, of Alma, Harlan County, tried it on upland and got a good 'catch.' From this time on others took hold of it and in 1882-83-84-85 we find it growing with good success in the south and southwestern part of the state." Mr. Smith also adds, "At the present time, 1895, it is found in nearly eighty counties of the state. Boone and Scott's Bluffs counties are well to the front with alfalfa and Valley County is doing well."

In the year 1895 (see 1895 report of State Board of Agriculture), on the state fair grounds, at the suggestion of G. W. Hervey, an alfalfa palace was erected, the building itself being of baled alfalfa, and in the building was exhibited the plant in all stages of its growth, roots of alfalfa more than thirty feet in length, and also alfalfa seed.

The baled hay used in the erection of this palace was largely furnished by C. H. Ballinger, of Dawson County. Mr. Ballinger was at that date engaged in breeding registered sheep of the mutton breeds and found himself unable to compete successfully at the great state fairs of the western states and at the International Fat Stock Show held at Chicago until he began to grow and feed alfalfa to his sheep. No one in the state engaged in the breeding and exhibiting of thoroughbred sheep ever captured as many prizes for sheep exhibited at the great state fairs of the West as has Mr. Ballinger, and he attributed much of his success to the feeding of so succulent and valuable a plant as alfalfa. Mr. Ballinger was among the first to grow alfalfa in Dawson County, he having about the year 1890 some four hundred acres devoted to this crop, and in the growing of which for both forage and seed he made a marked success.

J. P. Nead of Riverton writes that he first grew alfalfa in that county in the year 1882. H. W. McFadden, in a letter recently published in the Independent Farmer, writes: "I saw an ad in a Denver paper (this nearly thirty years ago, making it about the year 1885) of a dry land forage. I sent and got two bushels of alfalfa seed, costing me \$30. I sowed eight acres near the public highway, now near Hollbrook, and got a good stand. Some three or four years later I got a seed crop of eleven bushels per acre, which I sold at \$5 per bushel. I sold twenty bushels to a banker, also several of my neighbors bought one, two or three bushels and that crop of seed brought more money than the land was valued at. I would like to know if any one (in the state) preceded me in the growing of alfalfa as a field or acreage crop. I now have fields of alfalfa sowed over twenty years ago that have never been reseeded and produce good yields of feed and seed."

Martin Slattery, of Shelton, Buffalo County, sowed a field in alfalfa about

the year 1887. This field was both mowed and pastured during the fall and winter months for a period of twenty-six years, the field being plowed up in the year 1913.

H. D. Watson, of Watson Ranch, Buffalo County, found twenty acres of alfalfa growing on this ranch when he took charge in the year 1889. He increased the acreage on the ranch into one thousand and was at one date the most extensive grower of alfalfa in the state. Pat O'Shea, of Stevenson Siding, Buffalo County, sowed five acres of alfalfa in the year 1891. Robert Oliver, of Shelton, Buffalo County, began growing alfalfa in the year 1890. Michael Mousel, Cambridge, Furnas County, began growing alfalfa in 1891.

John S. Marsh, Guide Rock, Nebraska, writes: "Dr. John E. Smith seeded a field to alfalfa in the spring of 1877. This field was about three miles west of Guide Rock, on land forty feet above the level of the Republican River. To my personal knowledge it stood in alfalfa till the spring of 1907, when it was broken up and reseeded to alfalfa."

Thomas M. Davis, president of the First State Bank, Beaver City, Nebraska, writes: "In 1876 Capt. J. H. Freas sowed a small patch (of alfalfa) in his dooryard, obtaining the seed in some way, and it grew from year to year and fell down, they not knowing just what it was, nor understanding its use." (This was about four miles from Beaver City.)

Mr. Davis adds: "I have heard the legend that the first sown in the state was down near the forks of the Sappa and Beaver, seed being sent by some of the Forty-niners from California in a small sack like a tobacco pouch, to a friend who sowed it, and that it was then called lucern."

J. H. Gishwiller, of Carancahua, Texas (formerly of Kearney County), writes as follows: "In the spring of 1875 I sowed one pound of seed which I purchased from the D. M. Ferry Seed Co. Richard, or as he was commonly known, 'Uncle Dick' Curry, of Neighborsville, Norton County, Kansas, did the same. We both lost our seed, which cost us, by mail, 75 cents per pound. During the summer of 1875 I made a trip to Utah and Nevada where I saw the plant growing, and being so highly spoken of by the growers, I secured 100 pounds of seed at a cost of 25 cents per pound. This I shipped to Kearney, Neb., and then took it to Almena, Kans. I sold James O'Kane, of Kearney, seven pounds of the seed and Alexander Kearnes of Nemaha County, Nebraska, eight pounds, but what success they had with it I never heard. The remainder of the seed (eighty-five pounds) I sowed on section No. 13, town No. 2, range No. 22, in Norton County, Kansas, in the spring of 1876. This proved a success and from that sowing I furnished seed to the whole country. Sold seed to Preston & Manning, of Orleans, Neb., in large quantities as early as 1880; also shipped seed to Trumble & Allen at Kansas City in 1881. Sold seed to several of the farmers on the Sappa early, but have forgotten their names. Of my 1876 sowing some of it remained growing on the ground for thirty-two years before it was plowed up."

A. R. Clark, of Red Willow County, sowed two acres in the spring of 1892 and ten acres in 1893. B. A. Robberts, of Boone County, states that Adolph Vincent, of that county, sowed 300 acres to alfalfa about the year 1890. Mr. Robberts sowed nine acres, Mr. Free forty acres and Mr. Brewster nine acres

in 1893. In the 1895 report of the State Board of Agriculture W. S. Delano, of Custer, writes: "Alfalfa is already successfully grown in Gage, Webster, Red Willow, Frontier, Furnas, Dawson, Buffalo, Lincoln, Dundy, Hitchcock, Harlan, Hayes, Nuckolls and Custer counties, without irrigation, and where the permanent sheet water is from 5 to 125 feet below the surface." Mr. Delano first grew alfalfa in Custer County in 1891. Mr. A. J. Leach, in his history of Antelope County, states that Farmer's Bulletin No. 255 of the United States Department of Agriculture relates that alfalfa was introduced into California in the year 1854. Mr. Leach further adds that M. B. Huffman, of Neligh, began experiments in the growing of alfalfa about the year 1892, and that in the year 1900 he had 1,600 acres in cultivation in Antelope County.

J. C. Mitchell, of Alma, Neb., writes of his experience in substance as follows: "Located in Harlan County in 1872. In 1875 sent to California for 100 pounds of alfalfa seed, costing \$25. Sowed the seed in the spring of 1876. By July 1st it stood six inches high and I never saw a finer prospect than that five-acre field was at that time.

"Drouth and the grasshoppers destroyed the crop. In the year 1885 seeded eighteen acres one-half miles south of Alma, the first field seeded in this section of the country. Twenty-five years later this field was producing more than three tons of hay annually."

From information collected and authorities quoted in this brief history, it appears that alfalfa was first introduced into California in the year 1854, and introduced into Nebraska in the year 1875; that in the years 1882-83-84 it was being grown in several counties in the southwestern part of the state; that by the year 1890 its cultivation had extended in an experimental way as far north as Boone County; in 1895 it had been introduced into eighty counties, and as far to the west as Scott's Bluffs County.

The first statistics as to acreage in the state appear to be found in the 1910 United States census returns, which give in Nebraska for the year 1909: Alfalfa grown on 49,495 farms; number of acres 685,282, producing 1,500,000 tons of hay.

The 1914 annual report of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture gives as the acreage in the state for that year 1,022,485, and the number of tons of hay 3,208,955, an increase in acreage of more than 45 per cent in five years.

In 1914 alfalfa is being grown in every county in the state, approximately 7 per cent of our cultivated lands being devoted to this crop, or approximately 3½ per cent of our farm lands.

Buffalo and Dawson counties in the year 1914 were among the leading counties in the production of alfalfa, Buffalo being credited with 45,914 acres, yielding 137,832 tons of hay, 9 per cent of tillable lands of the county being devoted to this crop.

S. C. BASSETT.

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