

bind in covers  
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# The Prairie Venture



Fremont, Nebraska  
Centennial History  
1856-1956

Mangold-56





FREMONT CENTENNIAL ASSOCIATION, INC. <sup>c</sup>

1856 - 1956  
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## Centennial Celebration

The Story of Fremont's First Century

— FEATURING —

### *“Prairie Venture”*

A Grand Historical Spectacle

HISTORICAL MATERIAL AND ORIGINAL SCRIPT

By Carroll W. Thompson

“PRAIRIE VENTURE” COVER DESIGN

By Norman W. Mangold

## Memorial Field Stadium

FREMONT, NEBRASKA

*July 22 thru 28, 1956*

Production

JOHN B. ROGERS PRODUCING CO.

Fostoria, Ohio

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Lehr M. Knowles

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Walt Williams

CENTENNIAL MUSIC

Walter R. Olsen

## *Dedication*

This book is dedicated to those pioneers who founded and built Fremont, and to those whose hard work and visions will continue to make it a better place to live.

They came, as men and women  
After food and warmth and land,  
Leaving the roofed home and fenced farm  
For the sky and the prairie  
That only dreams could fence.  
They saw a vision on the land,  
And they mixed and stirred,  
They poured and pounded that vision  
Into the city they built  
To answer the needs of the land.





## ***FOREWORD***

Compiling a history must usually be an imperfect piece of work because it must act to be complete and it can seldom be so. This one is no exception. It skips much that should be told. In compiling and writing we sought to include the most meaningful information. We have tried to present a quick survey picture of the first 100 years in Fremont. Much must be left to the readers' imagination.

We are grateful for the many kind assistances given us in the work by the Fremonters whom we contacted for information and aid. We are grateful for the special contributions made by Mrs. Malcolm Torgerson, the Rev. G. Gieschen, and Mrs. Ruby Dunn. We thank Norman Mangold for his work in designing the cover. A special note of appreciation is due David Zimmerman. From his thesis on the business and economic life of Fremont until 1900 we have gained a great deal of material for this book.

**Carroll Thompson**

**Centennial History Editor**

## *Settlement in Indian Country*

The history of Fremont began at about mid-morning on August 23, 1856, when two settlers from Des Moines, Edwin H. Barnard and John A. Koontz, drove a claim stake on a rise of ground that is now the corner of D and First Streets. After driving the stake and claiming the site for a company in their name, the men went on two miles west to the Seth P. Marvin home, first house they had seen west of the Elkhorn River. The Marvin family welcomed the visitors for lunch. After the meal Mr. Marvin talked of his faith in the possibilities for the development of the Platte Valley area. He and his family had arrived three weeks earlier from Marshalltown, Iowa, and were as impressed with the country as were the two claimants.

Like all pioneers the first Fremonters were dreamers. They had to be to leave their homes to the east and look for new lands on what many still thought was the "great American desert." But it was much more than a desert they saw when they stood on the hills to the east of the city and saw the Platte and the Elkhorn Rivers sweeping down, and the fertile lands between. Mr. Barnard and Koontz had seen "so goodly a landscape" that it filled them "with rapture and made the blood fairly bound within" their veins.

"In all my life," Mr. Barnard said later, "I had never seen its like before, and I never expect to again. Here was this grand and beautiful and fertile country spread out like a map at my feet. And what made it the more fascinating was the fact that it was unoccupied except by Indians and wild beasts."

After driving their claim stake Mr. Barnard and Koontz decided to explore further west up the Platte River, along what was then the California and Mormon trails. When they returned two days later they found that four other Iowans had staked a conflicting claim at their site. The new claimants were George M. Pinney, James G. Smith, and Robert Kittle of Des Moines, Iowa, and Robert Moreland, a hack driver from Iowa City. Mr. Kittle had originally lived near Buffalo, N. Y. At Mr. Marvin's suggestion, the six men met at Marvin's cabin on August 26 and resolved their conflicting claims by forming the town company that was to become Fremont. They called it Pinney, Barnard and Company's Town Plat. The town was named Fremont after the first Republican presidential candidate, John C. Fremont. The founders probably picked the name for their square mile claim to challenge settlers 30 miles to the west who had started a town which they named Buchanan, after the Democratic presidential candidate. It later was named Schuyler.

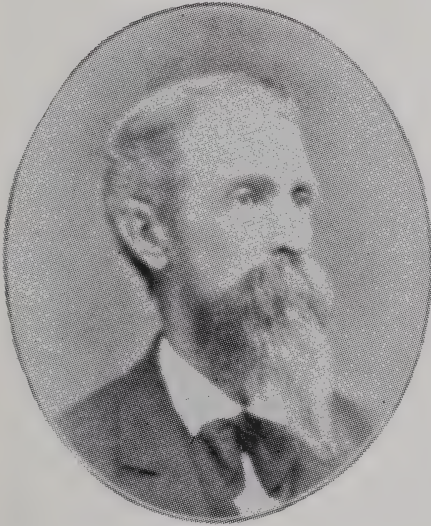
On that same day, August 26, the city founders also took precautions to protect their new-found home. They established the Platte Valley Claim Club with Mr. Marvin as president. The clubs were watch-dog unions of claimants who banded together to protect themselves against claim jumpers.

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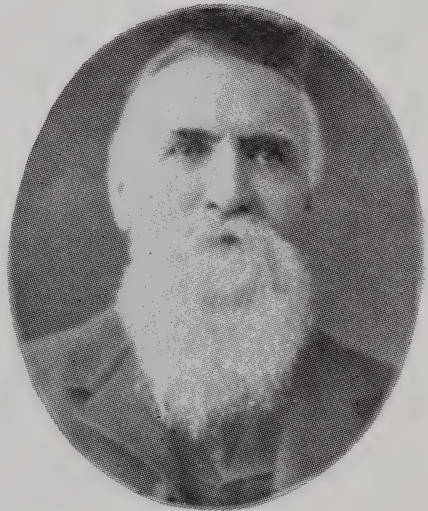
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**KAVICH'S**



Two other men also took part in the founding of the city. They were William B. Lee and William E. (Commish) Lee, who had left their Grant County, Wisconsin, home in the summer of 1856. They had intended to join an army regiment in Council Bluffs, Iowa, but found it had left when they got there. So they crossed the Missouri River and spent one night in the village of Omaha, then about 100 population, and came on west to Elkhorn City. They walked on past the Fremont site and west about as far as where Columbus stands now. Returning to the site of Fremont August 25, they made plans with the other men to officially stake out the town. The next day they did, and William E. (Commish) Lee held one end of the rope, for want of a surveyor's chain. William B. Lee, his cousin, is credited with planting the first tree in Fremont at the corner of Sixth and Union Streets. It is said to have stood until 1917. Tree planting became a hobby of his, and he planted hundreds in the city. The Lees were to become leaders in the development of Fremont. William E. (Commish) was elected the first county commissioner from Fremont in November after the town was founded, thus the nickname that was to identify him in the town from then on.



E. H. Barnard



John Koontz

Less than a month after the founding date, on September 10, Mr. Barnard and Koontz completed building the first home in Fremont. It was made of poles cut from islands in the Platte, and thatched prairie grass. It was not an auspicious living quarters, but demonstrated the ingenuity of the settlers. Robert Kittle built the first house. He bought peeled cottonwood logs from a settler west of Fremont and constructed a house at what is now Broad and Military. He made the roof of red cedar shingles

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saved from logs he had cut west of town and floated down the Platte. With this start the town was on its way. As other settlers began to build cabins east of the Kittle cabin along the Military road the first Fremont skyline appeared.

That two groups of claimants in three days had picked the city site as an ideal town location was evidence of its attractiveness to the land-seekers looking westward from the Missouri River. Three things made the location unusually favorable to settlers: precious timber that grew in plenty along the banks of the Elkhorn and Platte Rivers; waters of the Platte and Elkhorn and under-ground water that could be reached with wells only a few feet deep; and the fact that it was on the government road from Omaha to the new Fort Kearney. Since the land in the area had not yet been surveyed, the town was platted using the military road as a baseline. Military Avenue, which today marks the route of the old road through Fremont, did not run true east and west, therefore many of our north and south streets today do not run true.

Though the area seemed advantageous in many ways and today is counted among the most favorable locations, it did not appear inviting even two years later to one settler. Mrs. Theron Nye quoted one unidentified settler who first saw Fremont on April 26, 1858. The old-timer remembered it as "a country, and it was all a country, with a smooth, level, gray surface which appeared to go on toward the west forever and forever. South of the little town site of Fremont the Platte River moved sluggishly along to meet and to be swallowed up in the great Missouri. Ten or twelve log cabins broke the monotony of the treeless expanse that stretched far away, apparently to a leaden sky. My heart sank within me as I thought but did not say, 'How can I ever live in a place like this?'"

Fremont's founding within ear-shot of Pawnee teepees was a representative culmination of a series of fortunate events which pushed the flag of the 80-year-old American republic steadily westward. Fittingly enough it was named for the man who led in showing the way for that advance. Fremont, the adventurous pathfinder, had gone down the Platte River past the site of our town with Kit Carson and the Fremont party of explorers late in September, 1842. His trip through Kansas, into Colorado, and back down the Platte and his brilliant and authentic report exploded the "great American desert" idea of the territory. Through his report, which was published as a book, the bristling, land-hungry new nation learned of the fertile lands yawning away to the west from the Missouri River.

Fremont the man was to lead a life that brought him much controversy, unhappiness and several near misses to greatness and riches. His reports written about our area and the land to the west stand as his distinguishing accomplishment. Born under the clouds of illegitimacy and poverty, the dapper youngster rose above them to be swept up into the midst of the greatest turmoils of his country. His father was an adventurous Frenchman and his mother a Virginia girl who had been forced to marry a man old enough to be her father when she was 17. After a stormy

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married life, she became the wife of Charles Fremont without the benefit of ceremony of marriage or divorce from her husband. Young John Charles was quick and brilliant and caught the eye of officials so that he was given a good education and offered the chance to lead the important expedition to the west in 1842. His mother had added the T to his name when he was a young boy. Then in 1856 he was nominated as the first presidential candidate of the Republican party. Later he was to squabble with Lincoln about his civil war assignment, to make millions and lose it all, and to die bankrupt. But he left his mark as the great pathfinder of the west and had nine cities and four counties named for him.

The pathfinding of John Charles Fremont was the second step in the series of events that brought the great American expansion west. The first was taken on April 30, 1803, when the 27-year-old Republic made the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon Bonaparte. This transaction, the largest real estate deal in history, doubled the size of the nation, adding territory that was to become 12 states. The purchase cost the U.S. over 23 million dollars. But it flung open a new empire for the making and the town of Fremont represented one of the earliest footsteps into the vast, new reservoir. Less than twelve years after Fremont had gone past where the Motter Memorial bridge now stands, the United States Government opened new political gates into the western country that was Nebraska. On a March morning, 1854 the controversial Kansas-Nebraska Bill was passed by the U.S. Senate. Nebraska, which became a territory, was then five times its present size and sprawled from Kansas to Canada and from the Rocky Mountains to Minnesota and Iowa. A governor was sent to the village of 200 at Omaha to organize the area and the stage was set for the founding of Fremont two years later.

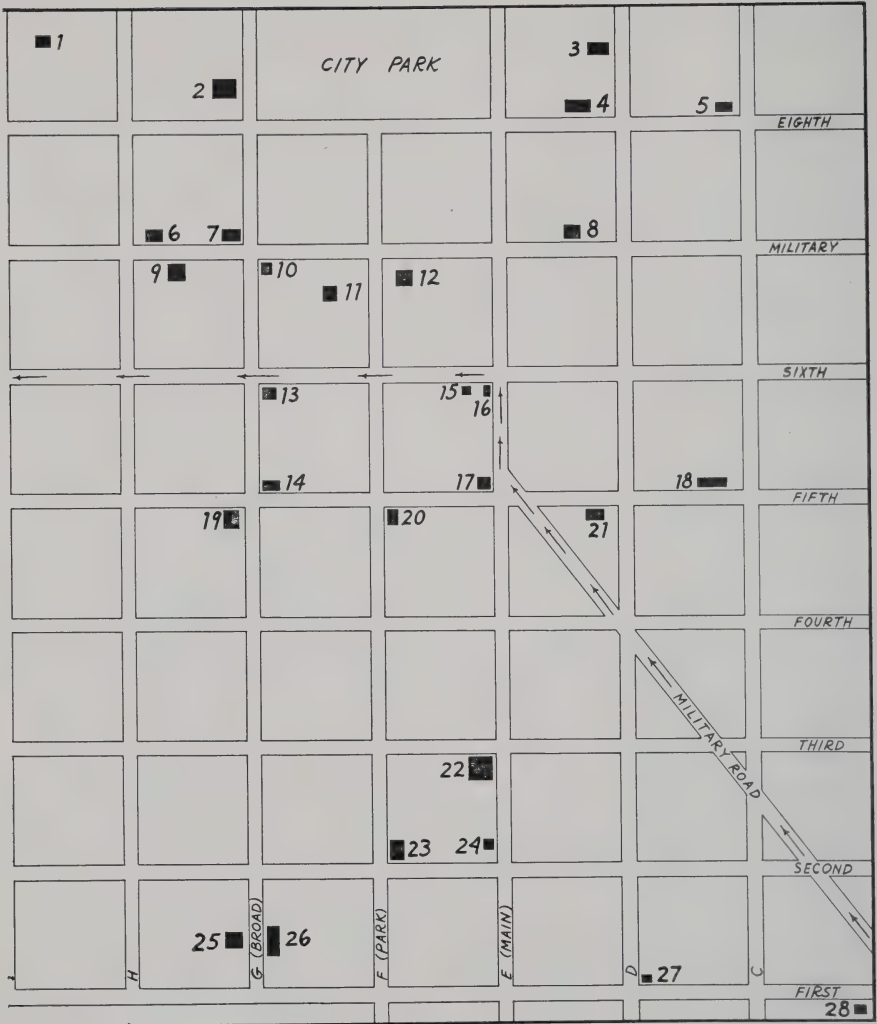
One of the gravest threats to the pioneer was the unpredictable Indians, who knew the land as their home and resented newcomers. The slow confiscation of their land by the whites had made the Indian inherently suspicious. They had taken lots of punishment and had killed and been killed and they did not trust the intruders from the east. While no armies of Indians greeted pioneers, the knowledge that they were in the area was enough to make life dearer. To Fremonters the stark truth of the aroused Indian's wrath was brought home clearly by an incident of 1850. By the time Mr. Barnard and Koontz drove their stake the story was told as folklore around both Indian fires and the white man's dinner table. It was the Raw Hide Creek incident. The creek running north and east of Fremont got its name from the event.

The story has become a part of the tradition of Fremont and in the early part of the 20th century it was proposed that the town build a monument at the skinning site. But an investigation of the incident brought to light several versions of the story and the monument was never erected. In the files of the Nebraska State Historical Society there are letters from relatives of eye-witnesses to the event, substantiating the skinning and giving details.

Later Pawnee warriors were to tell the story around their tepee fires while the pioneers were crowding onto their former hunting grounds in the

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Map of early-day Fremont . . . The above map, showing some of the buildings in Fremont in the 1860's and 70's, is taken from a drawing by Ed G. Turner, an early-day resident of Fremont. Locations shown are: 1, a dug-out; 2, Methodist church; 3, Joseph Reynolds house; 4, bachelor's hall; 5, a residence where Congregational church services were held; 6, Isaac Heaton house; 7, E. H. Barnard house; 8, E. H. Rogers house; 9, Kittle house; 10, J. G. Smith store; 11, J. G. Smith house; 12, Flor house; 13, J. G. Smith's second store; 14, Herald building; 15, Turner store; 17, Valley House hotel; 18, first school building; 19, hardware store and first bank; 20, Tribune building; 21, Episcopal church; 22, Fremont House hotel; 23, broom factory; 24, West log house; 25, first flour mill; 26, Nye-Colson warehouse and lumber yard; 27, first claim staked; 28, Ed G. Turner log house.



plains areas of Nebraska. In 1868 an aged and blind Pawnee chief told the story to Captain L. H. North, then a commander of Pawnee Indian Scouts. The chief, who was proud that Pawnees could claim to be the only plains Indians who never were at war with the United States, would not admit that they had skinned the man alive. He told Captain North that the warriors were so enraged, though, that they held him and cut chunks of flesh off his body. The story, as told by Captain North, and by the eye-witness to the skinning, goes this way.

In the spring of 1850 a party of 20 men in four oxen-drawn wagons left Nodaway County, Missouri and came up to Omaha to cross the Missouri River on the ferry so they could head straight west on the California trail. Included among them was Isaac Hogan, who had farmed in Missouri with little success and had decided to try the gold fields. He is described as a "dapper young easterner" who had come west with a hatred of Indians. "He rashly declared that he would shoot the first Indian he saw," an account of the incident reads.

Soon after leaving Omaha the party of four wagons came into Pawnee country. The Pawnees were traditional natives of the Platte Valley in eastern Nebraska. Under their great chief, Petalascharo, they had kept the peace with the white men who were using their home for a highway and hunting ground. It was a Pawnee claim that they never yet shed the blood of a white man.

After a day's travel past Omaha the immigrant party camped near the trail at the edge of the California and Mormon Trails where they crossed the little creek. Shortly after they had made ready for the night a young squaw came into camp begging. The Indians looked upon this as a way to get partial payment for the lands and the buffalo the white men were taking from them. Hogan shot the squaw, thinking that the Indians would never know about it because the village was more than a mile away. An Indian boy, hiding nearby to watch the train, saw the shooting and hurried to the camp.

The chief of the village, who later talked with Captain North, dispatched 300 of his warriors to surround the party in the dark. When the morning light came, the small wagon train was circled with a ring of Indians, ready to massacre the whole train. The chief persuaded his men to hold their attack while he counseled with the wagon train. He told the train master that if he did not give up the man who had killed the squaw he could not keep his warriors from annihilating the party.

Since Hogan had killed the squaw in an unprovoked shooting and had not thought of the welfare of the train, the group decided he should have to take his punishment, not knowing it was to be so horrible. The Indians took him a short distance away from the camp and stripped him of his clothes and tied him to a tree. Then the braves took their knives and made skin-deep cuts all over his body, so that his skin was chopped into a patch-work of rectangular strips. They then took bullet-molds and pulled the sections of skin off his body.

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During the skinning process the warriors kept watch on the rest of the wagon train so they could not help the victim. The chief told Captain North that Hogan did not live through the skinning. Other versions of the story say he lived four hours after it was over. As soon as it was done the Indians motioned the wagon train to go on, and they harmed no one else in the party.

When the wagon train passed on through settlements along the trail the immigrants told the story. Other trains coming behind them on the well-worn trails picked it up, and soon it was being told wherever men and women talked about the Indians on the frontier.

The Pawnee tribe, who in the long run proved to be the most understanding of white men among all the Indians, were close-mouthed about the incident. But white settlers and wagon trains up and down the middle of the country knew it by heart and mothers recited it to their children when they wanted to impress them with the ferocity of the Indian.

Out of the Indian dissatisfaction came the first and worst Indian scare for the brave little outpost town on the frontier. During the first settling summer the early Fremonters worked hard cutting timber, breaking ground, digging wells, and planning for the town that was to be. They were not unaware of the Pawnee chiefs watching from the Platte River bluffs on the south side of the river. The chiefs ruled a city that some early settlers estimated to be as many as 4,000 Pawnees. Others wrote that it was only 2,000. But to the settlers the teepee town on the bluffs away to the south, the smoke plumes of the Indian fires, and the curious Indians who came to beg, bargain, borrow, and steal and threaten, were a constant threat to life.

The threat took shape soon after the Indians saw the Robert Kittle house go up and knew Fremont was planned to be a permanent settlement. The Pawnees had been pushed off much of their hunting grounds. They had held the lands around Omaha and to the south before the white men came. The Pawnees had seen the government make a treaty with the Omaha tribe, paying them for their share of the hunting lands. But the government had not paid the Pawnee for their share of the lands, yet had sent soldiers to clear them off. Resentment ran deep and quietly in the veins of the chiefs.

While Mr. Marvin was away from home one day in October helping others cut timber for homes, about 200 Indians surrounded his log cabin, which stood about a mile and a half west of Fremont. Mr. Kittle, Mr. Marvin and the rest of the company grabbed their guns and went out to talk to the Indians. Mr. Kittle spoke for the settlers. He asked the chief why the Indians were there, and if they were only trying to frighten the Marvins. The chief, known to the settlers as How-E-Tat, told the whites to stop cutting the Indian timber and grass or they would kill their cattle, the people and destroy the settlement. Mr. Kittle is credited with speaking strongly to the Indian chief, and telling him that by Indian treaty with the government the land no longer belonged to the Indians. He told the Indians that if a single settler was harmed the "Great White Father in Washington" would send an army to destroy them.

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The talk went on until dark, and many of the Indians had by that time gone back to their camp across the Platte. But they left no doubt of their threatening attitude. As he rode off, one of the last Indians to leave the Marvin site, Young Spotted Horse, a chief of the Pawnee, told Mr. Kittle he would give the settlers three days to leave. That night the Fremonters counceled and decided to send James Smith to Omaha to appeal to Governor Mark W. Izzard for help. He went that night and returned the next night with a box of muskets, ammuniion and eight men. Together with the settlers, the eight soldiers made up an army of about 25 ready to face an Indian attack if it came. It didn't. They barricaded a partially completed log shanty and used it as their fort. The next morning the Indians on the bluffs across the Platte saw a brave little group of men marching and countermarching, with rifles and bayonets flashing in the sun and with the "fort" in readiness behind them. No Indians appeared until about mid-afternoon when Young Spotted Horse and two braves on ponies rode out of the timbers along the river and came up toward the settlement. The Indians saw the men and guns and the fort and wheeled to ride away. As they did one of the men called them back.

Young Spotted Horse came forward on his pony alone. He shook hands with the guard. The guard asked him if the Indians were going to attack the whites. The Indian said no and quietly left.

Another version of the story says that the Indians sent a flag of truce after seeing the Fremont army preparing for them to attack. But whatever story is true, the main fact is that Fremonters had the courage and good sense to stand firm against the Indians, and yet to refrain from antagonizing them into attack. The little settlement had won its first and biggest contest with the Redman and not a man was hurt on either side.

This peaceful resolution of the Indian threat typified the relationship between the Fremonters and Indians that was to exist all through the wild days of early Fremont. There is no recorded incident of Indians attacking Fremont. There is no further great dispute recorded. This early show of fearlessness by the plucky settlers may have won them the respect of Indians that was to endure until the Redman threat faded from the plains area. And credit must be given to the cool-headed settlers for their resolution to keep the peace. It is to that peaceful intent, communicated to the Indians by peaceful actions, that historians credit the failure of the Indians to attack Fremont in 1859. In that year the Pawnees were still fuming over ill treatment by the government treaty that in 1857 had moved them west from Fremont to a reservation. They left their reservation for an attack on settlers in the Elkhorn valley, their former homes. But they passed through Fremont without destroying property or harming a person. They saved their tomahawks and bows and arrows for attacks on settlers on up the north and east.

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## *Building A Town*

In describing the men and women who went west to build a new nation on the frontiers, historians Allen Nevins and Henry Commager divided them into three groups. And the last were the "frontier settlers," people such as those who rode or walked into Fremont in the late 1850's to make it their home.

"The third body (of frontier people)", the historians wrote, "included not only farmers, but also doctors, lawyers, storekeepers, editors, preachers, mechanics, politicians, and land speculators—all the materials to furnish the fabric of a vigorous society."

Here the two historians described the early Fremonters well. They were the town fathers and mothers, the home builders, the planters and harvesters, the fighters against the north wind and the cold and the heat and the insects. They built slowly because they had little to do with and everything to do. But there was a sincerity about them, a poetic determination that overcame hardships and was able to understand and cope with problems and tragedies.

Problems were plentiful, too, in the dusty little settlement in October, 1856. They had just lived through an Indian scare that might well have wiped them out. Now the grass was browning and leaves were falling from the trees and the wind had a tint of winter in it. They faced the cold months and knew that they could be as savage as the Redmen. Back east they had heard about the western winters and how the north wind whipped snow at hurricane speed and they knew there was not even a fence post or a wire to catch the brunt of it. In houses quickly built, with a supply of food that was meager, they stood between the coming cold and the hordes of hungry Indians away to the southwest on the cedar bluffs across the Platte.

They worked hard to store up their defenses for the winter and looked ahead to the summer that would bring more settlers, adding spirit and drive and an air of permanency to the town.

In the days of hardship that they had seen, and those that were to come, it was natural for the pioneers to look to God to give thanks and to seek comfort. The Rev. Isaac E. Heaton, following in the footsteps of the Congregationalists who had already established a church in Omaha, came as a missionary minister to Fremont in October of the first year. He brought his family with him, Mrs. Miranda Heaton, and their two daughters. Mr. Kittle let them have the house he had built and they set up house-keeping and established the first home in the town. Nearly a year was to pass before a church was to be organized, but the settlers had a minister in their midst and it was a source of satisfaction to them.

Mr. Kittle had brought some supplies with him from New York and sold food stuffs from his cabin. About the same time James G. and J. Towner Smith set up a small general merchandise store in a dug-out. This store, and another owned by Finley Riggs, were the only stores in Fremont until 1865.

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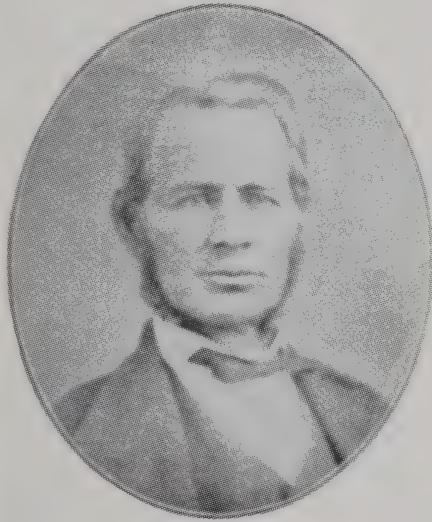
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The first winter was one of the most difficult trials the settlers were to have to face. Known from then on as the "hard winter," the hardest part of it began in early December when a heavy snow came with blizzard force. It snowed for three days and there was little the settlers could do but watch it. Elk and deer, a main supply of food for them, floundered in the deep snow and froze to death. Some reports say the wintry weather was so intense that there was no sun in Dodge County for two months. Snow accumulated to three feet on the level and the temperature plunged to near 30 degrees below zero.

Describing the first winter, William B. Lee wrote later that "by Christmas (1856) our circle (of settlers) had grown larger and, oh, how heartily we welcomed each newcomer, only a pioneer can say. That year came December 2nd, with snow falling three nights and three days and on the level was three feet deep. I made a pair of snowshoes in order to get around, going to the island to hunt deer and wild turkey, of which I killed many. In February the snow disappeared only to be followed in April by a heavier fall adding greatly to our misery. It was a winter that none of us could ever forget.



Robert Kittle



The Rev. Isaac Heaton

"In early and late fall it was our custom to go on an extended buffalo hunt and secure sufficient meats to last us until spring. These expeditions were full of interest and sometimes vividly thrilling, especially when we would meet a herd of several thousand buffalo running in advance of a prairie fire, and we, soldier fashion, would be compelled to lie down beside our prostrate ponies and let the entire herd pass over us."

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The settlers heard of the November 30th birth of the first white child in the area, Seth Young, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Young, at North Bend. The mother died three weeks later and Fremonters undoubtedly went to the funeral, since about 100 persons are said to have attended.

Prairie hay, which had been cut after a frost in October, was the only feed available for the livestock and many of them died of starvation or froze to death. The Rev. Heaton had eight oxen that had pulled the wagon that brought his household goods and his family to Fremont. Only three of the oxen survived the winter. One settler built a sled for oxen to haul logs on. The bad weather had delayed his work so it was near mid-winter before the sled was done. By that time the oxen had lost weight and strength and could not pull the sled out of its tracks on the frozen ground. It took a week to make the round trip to Omaha to buy provisions.

"Towards spring," Mr. Barnard wrote later, "when there was a crust on the snow strong enough to bear the weight of a man in most places a couple of sacks of flour were brought over from Fontanelle on a handsled to piece out until our regular supplies could be got from Omaha."

The little community managed to stay alive through the winter and when spring came they eagerly set about the business of planting and building. The spring brought more than sun and greenness and hope. New settlers straggled in, ready to help build Fremont. Among those who came in the spring and summer of 1857 were E. H. and L. H. Rogers, both friends of Mr. Barnard back in their home areas near Buffalo, New York, and a party from Wisconsin, the Reynolds and Wests. This group had made the overland journey from Racine in a 19 day journey by wagon. Included in the party was Mrs. Cynthia West, her husband, her daughter, Julia, her brother, Wilson Reynolds, and Mrs. Reynolds.

During the fall of 1856 and the hard winter the town fathers had been making plans for the Fremont that was to be. There were houses to be built and feed to be grown, true enough. But if the little community was to become a town and to attract settlers it must prepare for them and offer attraction for them. The city founders had to be their own Chamber of Commerce, legal counsel, army, carpenters, surveyors, hunters, and what ever else it took to build a town on the prairie. They were not lax in their work as the minutes of the town council show. The day after the final claim was made, August 26, 1856, the town company had set aside 320 acres of the best timbers for the town. E. H. Barnard had set to work immediately surveying and laying out lots for the town. In the spring he submitted a bill of \$75.65 for his work. The town now prepared to use the timber and newly-surveyed lots to attract others. They offered two adjoining lots to any settler who would enclose them with a fence, cultivate shrubbery, dig a well, and erect a frame, brick or hewn log house 16 by 20 feet, one and one-half stories high. This offer was good until January 1, 1858. By April 1858 11 settlers had come to Fremont to accept the offer.

Businesses were needed too. The town company saw that Fremont needed a saw mill, a brick kiln, a hotel, and other establishments. It offered

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Equitable Savings & Loan

two shares in the town company and timber land to anyone who would start a saw mill. In March, 1858, Mr. Chipman and Davis signed an agreement with the town to erect a mill under those conditions. Mr. Rogers and McCartney, by an agreement recorded in October, 1857, started a brick kiln. John C. Hormel started a blacksmith shop by an agreement recorded in August, 1857. Wilson Reynolds, soon after arriving, had made an agreement with the town company to receive two lots in exchange for his intent to build a hotel. The Town company, in August of 1857, also went on record as needing a "harness maker, blacksmith, carriage-maker, miller, and machinist."

In June of 1857 the town got a post office permit and James G. Smith was appointed postmaster. On August 2 the Congregational Church was organized with seven members under the Rev. Heaton. Services were held in a former residence at the corner of what is now Eighth and C Streets. That winter the First Methodist Episcopal Church was organized by the Rev. J. Spillman with five charter members and services were held at the home of E. H. Rogers. The summer that had brought new settlers also brought a surge of pride to the pioneers. On the first July Fourth in Fremont, a hot day in 1857, they turned out for a celebration, and other settlers came in from nearby to take part. The settlers had made a flag from material Mr. Kittle had on hand and they tied it to a cedar pole and "planted it in loyalty" on the military road to Fort Kearny, the street that is now Military Avenue.

In the spring of that year the community had lost one of its guiding lights. Mr. Marvin was drowned while crossing the Elkhorn River in an attempt to bring a cow from Fontanelle. The Fremonters looked forward to their first harvest. It would be the soft "squaw corn" the Indians planted, and squash, potatoes and other vegetables. They got their harvest and buckled up for another winter.

Mrs. Mary E. Reynolds, who came in August, 1857, wrote about it later:

"Few of us possessed carpets; those of us who did not used to buy rush mats which the squaws made, and which answered very well while they lasted. One winter I covered my floor with buffalo robes (of these every settler had a supply), purchasing them from the Indians who lived south of the Platte River. I used also to buy buffalo moccasins of the squaws and wear them over my shoes in the winter, which, though awkward and clumsy, were quite comfortable. Of clothing most of us brought a bountiful supply from the East, so did not suffer in that respect.

"But the larder; to keep that filled with the most common articles of every-day use was beyond most of us. Omaha was the base of our supplies, and it took three days to make the trip—one to go down, one to do trading in, and the third to drive home. So our "shopping" expeditions were few and far between. As long as a cent remained in the purse the first year we lived comfortably, but there came a day, alas, when the purse became empty—not only that, but the flour barrel also; and the coffee canister, and tea canister, also the sugar bucket.

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"In fact we had nothing in the house but potatoes and salt. We had a quantity of corn we procured of the Indians, a much softer variety of corn than the dent corn of today, and it made a fine meal. But there was no mill to grind it nearer than Bellevue, south of Omaha, and we could not wait for a team to make the trip there and back, so an uncle with an inventive turn of mind took a tin milk-pan, and with a nail punched the bottom full of holes, as close together as they could possibly be put. Turning the pan upside down upon the table, the ears were scraped backward and forward over the rough surface and the particles thus scraped off formed the meal, which made all the bread we had for many days.

"I might add, for the benefit of the cooks today, that having no cow, we had no milk or butter; owning no hens, we had no eggs. That corn bread was mixed with water and a little saleratus added. I will not vouch for its lightness! There were plenty of wild plums and grapes on the banks of the Elkhorn and Maple Creek, but as few of us had the sugar necessary to preserve them, we made but little use of them."

Like many frontier towns, Fremont had more men than women, and the men saw no reason to batch it alone in cabins. So they lived together in the town's "bachelor's hall," on Eighth Street near D. The building became the hotel and motel of Fremont at that time and as many as 20 men, either settlers or pioneers passing through, slept in it some nights.

This same "bachelor's hall" became the multi-purpose room for the town and probably had more use than any other building in the town.

In the summer of 1858 when Miss Charity Colson had decided that someone ought to start a school she chose the only building that was not a family home, "bachelor's hall." It was also used as the courthouse and as a community house for parties and dances. The settlers swung across the rough board floors to singing fiddles playing "Virginia Reel," or "Arkansas Traveler."

The sound of fiddle music and the smell of home cooking attracted the travelers to Fremont in the gold rush of 1858. Hundreds of wagon parties passed on the edges of Fremont along the trail leading to the gold fields in Colorado. Nebraska had gained its fame as the gateway to the west, and Fremont was a stopping off station on the edge of the great trails. Business from the gold rush crowds brought the first signs of prosperity to the town. To take advantage of the passing trade, Mrs. Margaret Turner had built a log hotel and stage station in early 1860. She had bought the east half of the block at Fifth and Main Streets from the Fremont Town Company for \$3 in a contract dated November 19, 1859. She called the hotel "The Valley House" and it soon became known to Fremonters and to travelers for its good food and hospitality.

Though it was on the "way west," Fremont did not attract many of the types of pioneers who passed through. They were the gold seekers, to get-rich quickers, and the working, sweating, freezing and loneliness of building a town was not for them. Even by 1860 there were only about 250 people in Fremont. Two years earlier one gold seeker had written that the town was small and growing "beautifully smaller."

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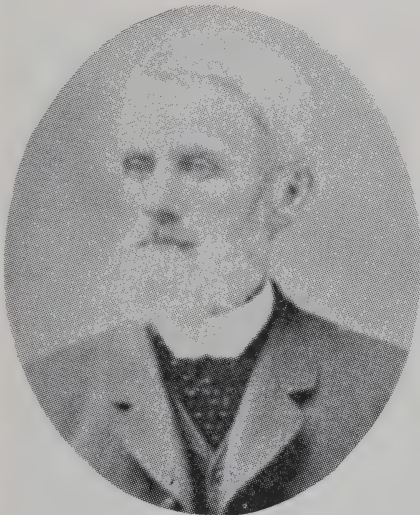
Fremont Recreation Bowling Alleys

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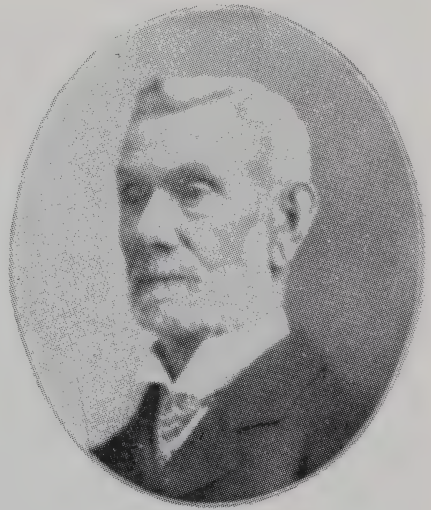


But he did not look deeply enough. The town attracted only a certain type of person—the man or woman looking for a home. There were no gold mines in Fremont. Even to exist was work. But this fact did something to the fibre of the town. Those who did come to stay were durable people. They were builders and they were brave and courageous in a quiet way that gave permanence to whatever they did.

Theron Nye, a 29-year-old native of New York state, was one of this kind. He had owned a general store in Hubbardville, New York for three years. He had heard of the new lands to the west, and of the rich Platte River valley where there was room enough for every man to have a farm. He sold his store, pocketed the \$90 he had left, kissed his wife and baby good-bye, and on April 13, 1857, started for the west. He walked into Fremont May 22, 1857 with \$27.50 in his pocket. He had chosen to settle in Fremont because he believed that if the Union Pacific Railroad was to build west it would go up the Platte Valley through Fremont. Nine years later he was to watch his dream come true.



Theron Nye



James E. Smith

He had walked the last 13 miles from Omaha. After making two claims and giving them up, he settled on 160 acres of land about a mile north of town. He looked for jobs to make money so he could build a home and send for his family. Soon he had made \$8 by digging a basement for one of the settlers. Then he worked in the brickyard and saved his money. That summer he worked with four other men cutting logs on Big Island. They worked three weeks, and got enough lumber to build houses. Mr. Nye, the irrepresable pioneer, had to trade a watch and a shotgun

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to get another settler to haul his logs to the building site on his farm. He built a house 16 by 20 feet one and one-half stories high, and rented it out as living quarters to bachelors in the neighborhood. They lived on a dirt floor through the winter. In the spring of 1858 he put a floor in the house and sent for his wife and baby in New York.

Later he was to joke about his oxen-Indian experience that became a Fremont folkstale. In September he went to Iowa and bought two yoke of oxen. The first night he had them home Indians stole three of them and he thought they had gone back to Iowa. He spent six weeks riding the country between Fremont and Iowa searching for the oxen while the Indians ate fresh meat.

He was named Fremont's first mayor in 1871. He started a freighting business to Denver with Thomas P. Colson in 1861 that was the forerunner of an important freighting business for the city; organized the First National Bank; became a business and community leader; and was the man for whom one of the town's finest streets was to be named.



One of Fremont's first hotels

Corn was even more important to Fremont in its first years than it was to be later. Because of the financial panic of 1857-58 corn could not be sold or traded at the markets in Omaha, so the settlers burned it to

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warm their homes and ground it in coffee grinders or crude home-made grinders to make the main part of their diet. But, in spite of hardships, Fremont was taking shape as a town. There were 16 houses in town in 1858. The first male child, Fred Kittle, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kittle, was born on March 28, 1858. Alice Flor, born in the fall of 1857, was the first white child born in Fremont. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Flor.

Life seemed sweeter to the settlers, too, when in the spring of 1858 the Agriculture Department sent a supply of sorghum seed and the men planted it alongside the corn in the newly-broken sod. The women watched it grow, fancying the syrup it would yield. And at harvest time every able hand in the community turned out to strip the stalks after it had been cut. Mr. Kittle made a mill to crush it in and the settler licked their lips when they watched the juice pour into the shallow pans. Then they boiled it down and felt "rich indeed in the possession of a few gallons of sorghum." For many it was the only sweetening they had that coming winter.



First Congregational Church building

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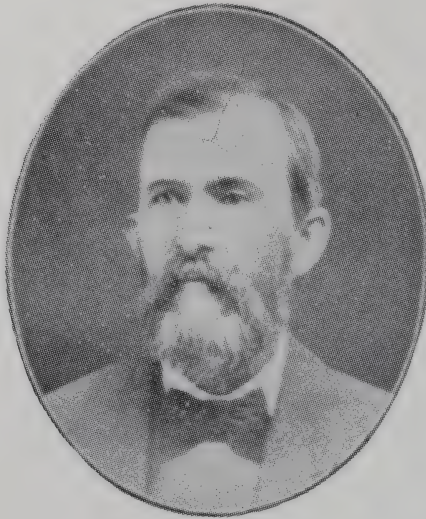


Romance had its place even in a frontier town, and Luther Wilson and Eliza Turner were married on August 5, 1858, by the Rev. Heaton, the first marriage in the city.

Freighting became one of the big businesses after the Nye and Colson company started in 1861, although farming was predominate in the life of the town in the early days. The freighters used oxen to haul goods to Denver and Cheyenne. While Fremont was getting on its feet business-wise, it became the natural county seat. In a vote in February, 1860, it was selected as the county seat of Dodge County, one of the eight original counties in the territory of Nebraska. E. H. Rogers, who was the Fremont representative to the Nebraska Territorial lower house, had worked against moves by Fontanelle to move county boundary lines and jockey Fremont into a corner where she could not wrest the county seat away from Fontanelle.

The new town was stretching its muscles by now and people were hearing about it. A stage had started in 1859 and the telegraph had been built in 1860 and S. B. Colson was its first office manager. The Colson-Nye team had started a shoe shop, too, and were envisioning a building materials firm and the first Fremont elevator.

While the nation was electing Abraham Lincoln president and was busy going into the Civil War, Fremont was getting ready to be a business community.



E. H. Rogers

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## *A Business Community*

The surrender of Robert E. Lee and the armies of the South on April 9, 1865, at Appomattox ushered in an era that was to see a modern day America emerge from the smoke of the war. The war had stimulated industry in the North, encouraged the development of natural resources, brought on a tide of investment banking and extended foreign commerce. It created a new spectacle on the American scene—the captain of industry and the master of capital. It brought on the age of the railroad booms and land booms. Mechanization became the end and aim of industry, and farming and grazing became big businesses and made millionaires nearly overnight of men who owned huge chunks of the new land in the west that had been obtained almost without cost a few years earlier. Immigrants poured into America from the Old World. Everybody and everything had big plans. And most of them came to pass.

Fremont, like many other American cities, was in a position to ride the tide of the boom. It had not been hurt in the war. It was far enough away from the battle areas and from slave country to escape the hostilities that tore other towns to shreds. It was already known as a comfortable stop on the great natural highway west—the Platte River valley. It was a foregone conclusion that the transcontinental railroad that was to be built would go through Fremont. It was a natural for manufacturing and commerce, then. And it was fortunate, too, that it was in the center of a rich farmland area that could support a population much more dense than the western Nebraska areas. The town was certain to become a shopping center for the teaming agricultural section that was growing up around it. And it was near enough to Omaha to be able to develop businesses and industries which could be auxiliary to those in that booming city.

In the decades after Appomattox it was to become a center for rail-roading, trading, and manufacturing. Nearly overnight the complexion of Fremont was to change from a barren, way-side town of 500 to a city of smoke stacks, fine homes, businesses, banks, and ever-passing trains.

The post-war year 1866 burst on Fremont like a loud hurrah to spell out the beginning of the town that was to be. It all started on January 24, 1866, when tracks of the Union Pacific railroad were spiked into town, connecting Fremont with Omaha and the east. This brought a repair shop to Fremont, and the payroll that went with it. And a roundhouse was added in the late 1880's when the railroad appropriated \$95,000 for the construction. A little more than three years after the first rails were laid into Fremont the golden spike ceremony was held at Promontory Point, Utah, joining the railroad lines that had been pushing desperately east and west toward the fateful meeting. This gave the United States a belt of railroad across its middle, and Fremont was one of the most prominent stops on the way.

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# PASSENGER TARIFF

OF THE

## UNION PACIFIC R. R.

July 16th, 1866.

Distance from Omaha, Mo.	Papillion		Elkhorn		Fremont		North Pl'd		Shell Crk		Columbus		Silver Crk		Lone Tree		G'd Island		Wood Riv.		Kearney	
12 1/2	1 25																					
28 1/2	2 85	1 65																				
46 1/2	4 65	3 40	1 75																			
61 1/2	6 15	4 90	3 25	1 50																		
75 1/2	7 55	6 35	4 65	2 90	1 45																	
91 1/2	9 15	7 90	6 25	4 50	3 00	1 35																
109 1/2	10 90	9 70	8 00	6 25	4 80	3 35	1 80															
131 1/2	13 10	11 35	10 25	8 50	7 00	5 00	4 00	2 25														
153 1/2	15 85	14 15	12 40	11 70	9 20	7 80	6 30	4 45														
171 1/2																						
190																						

**Sam'l B. Reed,**

General Superintendent.

OMAHA, JULY 16th, 1866.

### Passenger train schedule, 1866

After the railroad came the banks. The first was started in 1866 by E. H. and L. H. Rogers as a private banking business. The new bank was opened in a back room of a hardware store run by George F. Blanchard, and it was described as a "long, low dingy building" that stood on the corner of Fifth and Broad Streets and for many years it was the only bank in the area. In 1872 it was re-organized as the First National Bank with a capital of \$50,000. The partnership bank of Wilson and Hopkins was started in November 1871 by W. R. Wilson, a grocer and A. P. Hopkins. This private bank was incorporated as The Fremont National Bank in 1882. Following this the Farmers and Merchants National Bank of Fremont was organized in 1876 by George E. Dorsey. Other banks soon to be organized were the Fremont National Bank in 1883 and the Security Savings Bank in 1890.

With banks in town, and one railroad that already spanned the continent from east to west, the town was hungry for more contact routes. There were the farming regions away to the northeast and the ranches to the northwest with potential business for Fremont.

Meanwhile another stabilizing financial institution had made its appearance—the building and loan company. The first in Fremont was the Equitable Building and Loan Association which was organized in 1886. The Nebraska State Building and Loan Association was established in 1892.

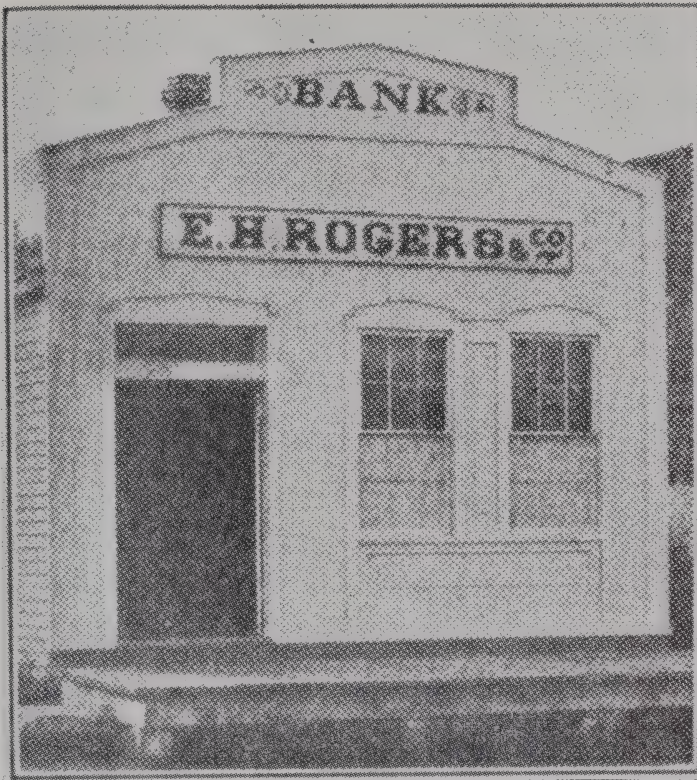
The fever for railroads ran high in 1869. Local business men wanted a railroad that would connect Sioux City with the main line of the Union Pacific at Fremont. Dodge County issued 20-year bonds totaling \$50,000 to finance the building of the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad into Fremont. Financier John I. Blair was the guiding star in the construction of the

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First bank building

line. Later it was bought by the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Robert Kittle and others saw the value in a railroad line up the Elkhorn River Valley, too. So in 1869 they piloted a bond issue of \$120,000 which was voted by Dodge County residents to finance this line. The county also donated land and secured the help of Mr. Blair again. This time the new town got its name included as the new railroad was called the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad Company. It was incorporated January 20, 1869, and before 1870 was gone ten miles of track was laid toward West Point, and in 1871 the line was completed to West Point.

In 1887 a line was built from Fremont to Lincoln. All of these lines eventually became part of the Chicago, Northwestern System.

Fremont became the supply center for branch railroad lines built in all directions from the city. In 1887 three train loads of supplies were coming in daily and at one time there were 25,000 ties stacked near the tracks. Freight and passenger business increased, too, and in June, 1870,

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the cash receipts of the Union Pacific were over \$13,000, and receipts of the other two lines were over \$2,500 in the same period.

In 1877 the Union Pacific shipped more than 2,000 cars of grain, livestock, lumber and other goods from Fremont to eastern and western markets. In the same year 16 passenger trains daily served the city and the next year it went up to 20. By 1888 Fremont had developed into the largest railroad transfer station in Nebraska.

The natural result of the coming of the railroads was a boom in all areas of business and big population groups. Lot values went up as much as 100 per cent from 1864 to 1869. In 1868, 200 homes were built in the city. By 1870 there were 1,199 people in the city. In 1880 there were 3,013 and 1890 there were 6,747. Everywhere in this period people were busy building. The city built the first bridge over the Platte River in the Fremont area in 1871-72. It was washed out in the flood of 1872 not long after it had been completed, but Dodge County erected another one.

Other disasters overtook the lively progress of the community. On August 9, 1869, a \$12,000 fire burned out a furniture store and in 1871 a \$26,000 fire destroyed the Fremont Hotel, and about a week later the passenger depot of the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad was destroyed.

A wind storm in 1884 and a fire in 1887 destroyed portions of the first Dodge County courthouse, which had been built in 1867-68 at a cost of \$4,950.

The city's first jail was built in 1874 at a cost of \$9,832. Before that prisons were kept in a section of the courthouse.

The Fremont Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad was the darling of the city because the idea for it had originated in Fremont and a group of businessmen had selected Mr. Kittle to present a package deal to Mr. Blair. The deal included the \$120,000 bond issue to finance the line. Mr. Blair accepted the offer to cooperate and the ground was broken for the railroad line on November 5, 1869, at the corner of Second and Main Streets. With flags waving and a huge crowd on hand to cheer the first spadeful of earth was turned. E. H. Rogers and L. J. Abbot made speeches. Fremonters gathered at the side saw visions of their railroad begin the connecting link in a network that would reach from the north country to the Gulf of Mexico. This would have made Fremont the hub of a railroad that would have reached across the country from east to west and north to south.

The Elkhorn Valley route did not bring the dreams of all Fremonters true. Many had said it would be the beginning of a chain reaction of events that would eventually make Fremont larger than Omaha. Imaginations took flight and speculation about how large the city would become was a favorite topic of conversation in the stores and at the "Valley House" hotel, which was then owned by W. W. Megrew. The Young Men's Christian Association, then beginning a more active program for formation of Y's in the nation's cities, caught the spirit of the Fremonters for their city. It had appointed an official to organize Y's and sent him first to Fremont.

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The Fremont Y.M.C.A. was organized on October 19, 1868. A report from the local organization said the organization of the Y here was "in connection with a great boom the town experienced for a brief period at that time in consequence of the building into Fremont of the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad. It was thought Fremont would be bigger than Omaha. The excitement subsided as quickly as it had risen and was followed by a long period of state-wide depression, one of the most intense and long continued the state ever experienced. The depression included years of drouth, grasshoppers and financial panic, and Fremont suffered a long stand-still in common with the rest of the state. The organization of 1868 was dropped in consequence." In 1881 the Y was organized again and has continued serving the community since that time.



First court house

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The hard times spoken of in the Y.M.C.A. report came for some on the heels of the predictions of boom. Hardest hit were the farmers. In the four year period beginning in 1873 grasshoppers in great whirling hordes swarmed down on fields and in hours destroyed crops. They came for four successive years and farmers who had shared the hopes for good times were in desperate straits. One farmer, writing in the summer of 1874, told a friend: "This summer is the hottest I have ever experienced. For three weeks the thermometer registered from 90 to 106 degrees. A strong south wind has been constantly blowing. It has hurt our wheat badly—part of my own is burned up—Saturday, August 11, grasshoppers began to drop down. They are now in seven counties and more to hear from. The air was filled with them and it gave the appearance of a great snow storm with a heavy wind. They covered everything on the ground, buildings, fences, and all. Such a sight I never wish to behold again. Turkeys and chickens had no use for them and retired in seeming disgust. Think of them commencing at ten in the morning and constantly coming until night-fall. Just above me is a side track on the railway line and this afternoon they wanted to switch some cars but were foiled in the attempt as the grasshoppers covered the ties and rails in such masses that they caused the wheels to slip instead of roll on the rails."

In 1875 the farmers had been so badly beaten out that they were penniless and could not buy grain for the planting season. George W. E. Dorsey, who was later connected with Farmers and Merchants National Bank, felt the need of the farmers and offered to loan them money at 10 per cent interest, which at the time was half the going rate.

But the expected business upsurge did come to Fremont though not in a sudden flood of dollars. Rather the increase was characteristic of the way the town itself had grown—comparatively slow, but firm and sound. The unreasoned optimism of some became their greatest disappointment. But for those who were willing to work and plan with and for the community, there was advance. The sound investments made in the post-war period were soon to be asked to stand the test of the great depression of the 1890's. How well Fremonters had built their financial, business and commercial foundations was to be shown in that time.

The hard times of the 1870's on the farms did not have a serious effect on the growing town of Fremont. The city occupied such a favorable position as a trading center that it paid farmers to come in from miles around to sell and buy at Fremont markets. The freight rates in Fremont were lower and grain prices were higher. A farmer could sell his wheat for more and buy his implement, food, and other goods for less in Fremont than in any other town for miles around. The trade extended out 50 to 100 miles from the city. So, in spite of grasshoppers Fremont's trade increased as more and more settlers poured into the surrounding areas and made the city their chief base for supplies. And factories that had sprung up to answer the needs of the area were increasing the flow of money into the town.

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The new business was typical of a growing city. In 1870 there were factories in Fremont making brooms, pottery, baskets, and soda pop. The Excelsior Roller Mills were erected in 1882. This business had developed from the grist mill that Thomas Gibson and Arthur Gibson had built in the city in 1867. The roller mills had a 126 horse-power steam engine and a capacity of 150 barrels of flour a day. In 1880 the Nebraska Creamery Association built a brick building at the corner of D and Washington Streets that was one of the largest buildings in the area. It measured 150 by 100 feet and was three stories high. Butter-making was the chief work of the creamery and in 1887 it produced a half million pounds of butter, buying cream from nine surrounding counties. A canning factory had been started in 1881; fence factory in 1886; a clothing manufacturer in the middle "eighties;" a foundry and machine company in 1883; a carriage works in 1889; and a hemp and twine factory in 1888.

A factory making headers for harvesting machines was established in 1875 but eventually sold out to a firm in Hastings, Nebraska. Other manufacturers had been established for making iron materials, beer, cigars, woodwork, and medicines.

In 1886 the city showed the following volumes for its manufacturing:

Flour and Feed .....	\$175,000.00
Butter .....	88,000.00
Iron Works .....	50,000.00
Clothing .....	41,000.00
Beer .....	100,000.00
Wood Works .....	15,000.00
Cigars .....	10,000.00
Cornice .....	15,000.00
Medicines .....	10,000.00
Gloves and Mittens .....	5,000.00
Brooms .....	4,000.00
Blank Books .....	3,500.00
Total .....	\$556,000.00

While manufacturing gave stability to the town's economy, it was the businesses associated with farming and livestock feeding that brought big money into the town. Fremont became a center for sheep feeding, horse breeding and selling, a large marketing center for area farm products, and cattle feeding center.

In the early 1879's Fremonters would herd sheep from western and southwestern states and feed them out in lots near the town, then ship them to slaughtering centers. Men who were prominent in the business were H. E. Griswold, the Reynolds and Lees and Turners. Flocks as large as 23,000 were trailed to Fremont feed lots in drives that covered only six to eight miles a day. In 1887 there were about 30,000 sheep on feed in the Fremont area. By 1889 this had increased to 100,000 and by 1890 to about 200,000. One company handled 115,000 sheep one year. They sold most of the sheep at Chicago markets, but the firm of Balding, Blewett, Morris

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and Lane sold 17,000 to a Boston firm in 1883 for an estimated \$100,000. The shipment required 250 railroad cars.

Almost all of the feed for the huge flocks was bought from farmers in the Fremont area. And thus the region prospered as an agricultural region because of the constant demand for hay, corn and oats. It was estimated that sheep feeding in the Fremont area in the winter of 1890-91 used \$471,800 worth of feed. The Nye and Schneider Company, successor to a company organized in 1866, helped to make Fremont a grain center. They had offices in 31 Nebraska towns with elevators for grain and lumber and coal yards in most of them. In one year the company shipped 5,000 cars of grain, 1,000 cars of hogs, and brought in 1,000 cars of lumber and 1,000 cars of grain. Offices of the company were set up as far away as Minneapolis.

Need of good horses for farm work and the business and industry of the area prompted the founding of the Oregon Horse and Land Company in Fremont in 1884. Interest had started in horse dealing in 1868 when a large herd of wild horses were driven in from California and sold in Fremont. In 1869, 30 fancy horses from Illinois were shipped to Fremont and sold. Gradually the town became the horse market for Nebraska, and large barns and yards were built to accommodate sales and care of the horses. It is estimated the city had seen the sales of over 15,000 head of horses up to 1882. This amounted to a two million dollar horse business up until that time.

When the offices of the Oregon Horse and Land company were brought to the city it spurred the business even more and in 1886 over 1,400 head of horses were sold in the city. Edward Blewett, who had bought into the company with James Balding when the offices were in Oregon and had brought his two offices to Fremont, was the subject of nation-wide newspaper stories when he went to France and bought 113 head of Percherons for the company. The Percheron and Arabian Horse Importing Company moved to Fremont from Custer County, South Dakota and in 1886 Mayor Stouffer started the first Shetland pony breeding in Nebraska.

A Fremont-sold horse was used as a model for the memorial statue to General Grant in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1893. The Oregon Horse and Land Company alone had yards that could accommodate a thousand head of horses.

Benjamin Willis Reynolds was one of the men who herded sheep on the long trails from the west and southwest back to Fremont. Once in New Mexico waiting to begin a drive back, he was riding across the prairie and a fancy-dressed dude cowboy caught up with him and they rode along together. Mr. Reynolds struck up a conversation with the stranger, but soon discovered that he was answering all the questions. The man quickly found out his name, his business, and where he was going. When he asked questions in return the stranger changed the subject. At a fork in the road the stranger on horseback turned off onto another trail and Reynolds

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went on into town and told a merchant about his meeting with the man. He described him and the merchant told Reynolds he had just been riding alongside Billy the Kid. On another herding trip, Mr. Reynolds told friends later, an army officer rode 50 miles to warn his party that Geronimo, the Indian chief, was on the warpath. A detachment of soldiers later arrived to escort the herders and their herd to safety from the Apaches.

The coming of the railroads had brought an end to this herding and to another romantic business of the old days on the frontier—wagon freighting. The freighting had been one of the first means by which Fremonters had looked outside town and their area to get extra income. Among the earlier freighters were the Turners, the Lees, the Brughs, J. C. Flor and E. C. Usher. Some of the freighting was done for the Army. Among those who did this was William E. (Commish) Lee. One trip from Omaha to Denver they hauled clothing, grain, and other supplies, and drove a herd of cattle along with their oxen-pulled wagon train. On the trip they went for three days without seeing a tree and the men contracted dysentery from the river water. Twice they camped without water and one evening they were thankful for a meal of clabbered milk and black bread given them by a rancher's wife. The trip began in April in Omaha and they were back in Fremont by August. Henry J. Lee, a brother to William E. (Commish) Lee, wrote that on the trip he once became homesick and lonely on the empty prairie that "I put prairie flowers in my yokes to remind me of friends and roses at home."

It was not by accident that Fremont's business and industry spiraled to make it one of the top three towns commercially in Nebraska in the 1870-1890 era. Business and industry for Fremont has been a vision of the founders of Fremont. And they worked hard to forge their visions into a reality. By the late 1870's it was evident that if the town was to attract more business and industry it needed a bootstrap promotion operation. The city council took one of the first steps in 1878 when it voted to run a \$25 advertisement in the **Chicago Commercial Advertiser** pointing out the resources of the county and the reasons the town was a good location for new business. Then in 1880 Fremonters organized a Board of Trade to promote commercial and manufacturing enterprises of the town. By 1885 it was on sound footing as an organization and was reorganized so that all business men could join by paying \$2.50 fee. By this time the Board of Trade had 120 members. Later it was to develop into the Chamber of Commerce, which was to be the group responsible for manufacturing growth following the depression which began in 1929.

By 1886 Fremont got its first system of arc electric lamps and a scattering of street lights were erected. Street car transportation became a part of the city facilities in 1887 when the Fremont Street Railway Company began operation, using horses to pull the cars. By 1892 the line owned more than 11 miles of street car tracks in the city. In 1892 the city water works, which had been established in 1886, had more than nine miles of pipes in the city pumping water from 50 wells.

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## *Civic Growth and Pride*

In the East Republican politicians were betting that a bearded and contrary war hero named Ulysses S. Grant would be elected president in a sweep. Fremonters were speculating about the election of 1868, too, and they laughed when they heard, around the stove at Smith's Drug Store, the story of what the taciturn Grant had said when they nominated him for the presidency. Pulling at his beard, he had protested that he wasn't too taken up with all this talk about the White House. He only wanted, he said, to be elected mayor of his home town of Galena, Illinois, so he could build a side walk down Main Street.

Sidewalks and General Grant were in the minds of Fremonters much of the time in 1868. It was a year of civic accomplishment in an era when the city was making many gains as a civic center. While the men and women had been working hard to put bread on their table and clothes on their backs for the first few years, they had not forgotten that there is much more to life than the necessities. There were churches, schools and civic halls to be built; clubs to be founded for entertainment and relief work. These were the things that would make Fremont a better place to live and Fremonters were busy with the work of making them possible. America's vast, elastic frontier was bulging and stretching and Fremont was building with it.

News was an important element in the frontier city in 1868. But the only way the citizens got it was through letters, gossip, rousing arguments, and loafing sessions at Smith's Drug Store. Fremont men gathered there to discuss the views of the bristling New York editor, Horace Greeley, as he spoke through the columns of the New York Tribune. His views on reconstruction, the Green Backs and General Grant were news. Fremonters who read his paper wanted a paper in the city to do what they felt the Tribune was doing for New York.

On July 24, 1868, their dreams came true. That was the day the first issue of Fremont's first newspaper, the Tribune, was peeled from the type forms and a small group of pioneer men and boys gathered around to examine the black print.

A printing office had been set up on the second floor of the E. C. Usher Furniture Company store on the north side of Sixth Street between Park and Broad. The editor of the newspaper, first in the Platte River valley, was J. N. Hayes, who had come up from Plattsmouth, bringing several years of newspaper experience and presses and type with him. Theron Nye, E. C. Colson and Wilson Reynolds were there, along with Mr. Hayes and a printer, Ambrose Parcil. They saw a seven-column paper that in its first issue pledged allegiance to the Republican Party and vowed to "supply a want existing in this place, for some means of making known the advantages of this section of the country and offering a convenient organ for the discussion of matters of local interest."

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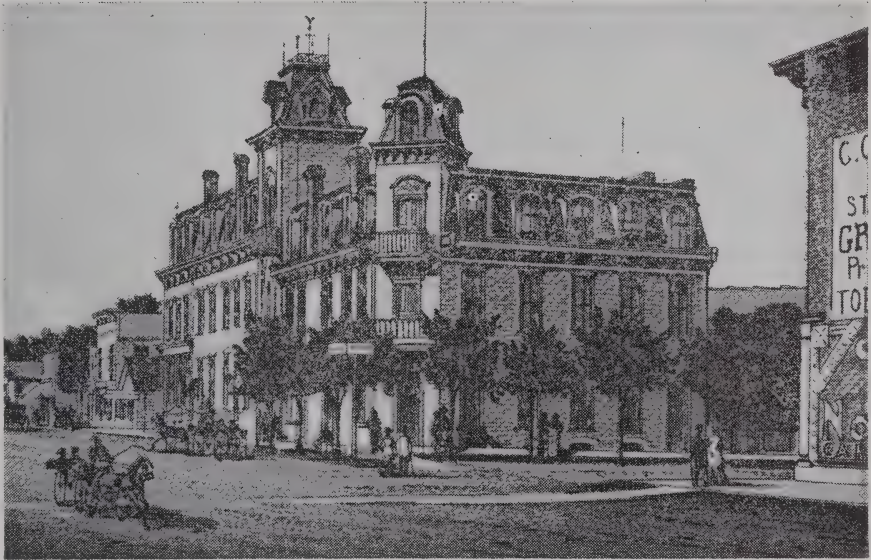
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Main Street, from corner of Sixth, 1886



New York Hotel, Main and Eighth, 1886

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The Tribune was to become the most important paper in Fremont and a guiding light to the growing city. National news in the paper came on a wire of the Overland Telegraph to the offices of Serino B. Colson, who had a cobbler's shop in Sixth Street. Frank and Ross Hammond took over ownership of the paper in 1879 with Frank as business manager and Ross as editor. Ross Hammond thus began his career as editor that was to last 42 years, the longest point of service for any editor in the area until 1956. The Tribune expanded with the rest of the city and in 1887 became a daily evening publication. It did much to add tone to the life of the community and to help Fremont's business grow. It was circulated by star route deliveries to towns in the area and thus gave Fremont merchants their first chance to get printed advertisements into the hands of potential customers in the area regularly. The founding of the daily in Fremont also brought a new phenomena to the town scene—the newspaper delivery boy. In those days the boys went their rounds on horses or walked, although the popularity of the bicycle was looming just over the horizon.

There were other newspapers in the era of the 1870's and 1880's, too, but none were to last as was the Tribune. In 1870 the **Fremont Weekly Herald** was started, and in 1873 it was made a daily. Others which were originated were the **Platte River Zeitung** in 1883; the **Dodge County Leader** in 1891; the **Flail** in 1882; the **Nebraska Democrat** in 1892; and the **Eye** in 1892.

The second step leading to the founding of what was to be Fremont's exclusive daily newspaper was taken in 1938 when the **The Morning Guide** was established, the second daily newspaper then operating in the city. Three years later, on July 26, 1941, it was merged with the Tribune and the two papers were printed as a combined evening paper for the first time on July 27, 1942. The Guide and Tribune had boosted its circulation to 11,500 by 1956.

Church events were among the top news in the newspaper, and the Tribune could report that church growth in Fremont was following the traditional pattern of the western areas. From the first worship service held in the Seth Marvin sod house to the modern city of 32 churches in 1956, the story portrays increasing interest in church life and continual efforts to put the message of the church to practical application in Fremont. Pattern for most churches began with the arrival of missionary or founding ministers and establishment of a mission in the community; then calling a regular pastor and construction of church building for worship; improvement of church property and facilities and increasing membership and influence for the church in the community.

After the formation of the Congregational Church under the Rev. Isaac Heaton in August of 1857, Fremont's church life expanded rapidly. The Rogers family made up most of the membership of the First Methodist Episcopal Church when it was started in the winter of that same year. E. H. Rogers, Lucy J. Rogers, L. H. Rogers and Mary Flor were among the

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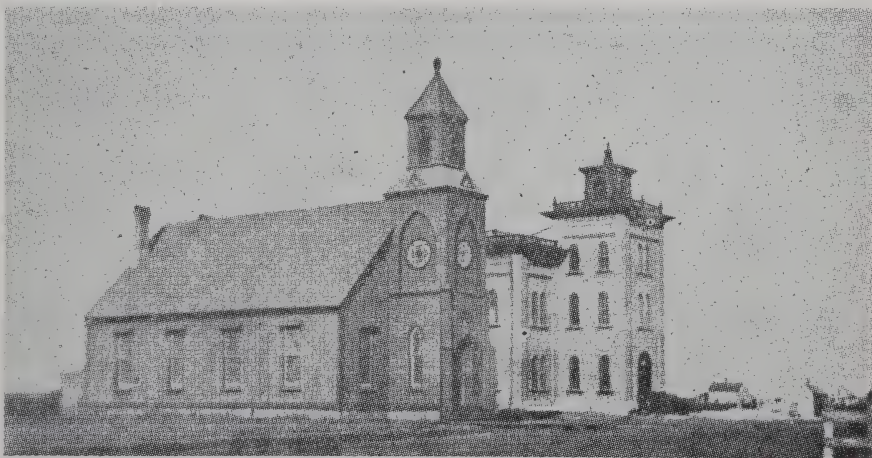
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original members of the church. The group met in the home of E. H. Rogers for Sunday services. In 1865 St. James' Episcopal Church was founded and worshippers held services for two years in the home of Robert Kittle at the corner of Broad and Military. The Rev. O. C. Dake, founding rector of the church, became one of the first Fremonters to author a book. In 1870 he published a volume containing two long epic poems on the Rawhide Creek incident and on Weeping Water, Nebraska.

Growth of the Methodist Church exemplifies the building of the numerous congregations in Fremont and points to the reason it is today known as a city of churches. The founding of the Methodist congregation in Fremont had its beginning on June 22, 1857, when an Omaha elder of the Methodist Church sent a letter to E. H. Rogers at Fremont, introducing a young minister, The Rev. Jerome Spillman. He was to have missions at North Bend, Fontanelle and Fremont. "He is a young man, as you will see, still he is on fire and will do you good service," the elder wrote Mr. Rogers. The Methodists built a church in 1866 and in 1870 hosted the meeting of the Nebraska Conference for Methodists. At that time the congregation had 46 names on the church roll. By 1874 it had grown to 115. In 1875 the church built its first parsonage near the church at Eighth and Broad Streets. Records of the church show that the parsonage, a two-story structure, cost \$1,000 and included three bedrooms, front and back parlor, dining room and kitchen, a bay window and front window and a front porch.

By 1888 the church felt the need to provide a permanent meeting ground for the North Nebraska Conference. The Church sold \$16,000 in



Methodist Church, 1899, and Central High School, 1870.

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stocks to cover cost of developing a Chautauqua Assembly ground north of 23rd Street. The grounds proved to be something less than a financial success, but added much to the life of Fremont. On its 67 acres it featured boat rides in the creek, a plunge bath bigger than a basketball court, an ice cream parlor, an art studio, a large auditorium seating 3000, and a hotel. Horse drawn street cars carried people to and from the grounds site.

In 1907 the church had a membership of 582 with an average Sunday School attendance of 250, and a group of lively societies for young people and men and women who were alive to the wider needs of the church. World War I interrupted plans for construction of a new church, but by 1922 the new structure on Broad and Eighth Streets was built at a cost of \$108,000, including a pipe organ.

An active member of the Methodist church in Fremont for many years, Miss Belle Rogers, has exemplified the service to church and community that has made for growth. Her mother, the former Lottie Heaton, was a daughter of Isaac Heaton, founder of the first Fremont church. Lottie Heaton often gathered girls from the community together for Bible study groups and helped those whose could not read English to translate their German bible so they all could understand.

In 1956 Fremont had 32 churches with at least 10,000 members. In the 1950's many of the city's congregations built beautiful new churches as they followed the expanding line of the town outward. Others have enlarged their facilities and made improvements to care for rapidly expanding rolls. See appendix for 1956 church list.

But influence of the Christian gospel was not limited to the churches in the community. Development of a program of education against the use of alcohol was centered in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, formed in 1874 with Mrs. Lucy Rogers as president. The group met at the homes of members until 1888 when they had erected a W.C.T.U. temple on the corner of Broad and Military. In 1912 the group sold the temple, but continued an effective program of education, working with the schools and churches in sponsoring lecture series and distributing temperance literature. By 1929 they had a membership of 331, largest ever.

Ladies of Fremont who had shared the hardship of pioneer life were especially conscious of the sufferings of others in the city. As early as 1887 they had organized the Fremont Ladies Charity Club and began by meeting regularly to sew for the poor. The club, first in Fremont, was formed at the request of Mayor Sherman. Growth and development of the club typifies the generosity of Fremonters and their interest in the welfare of others. The club had been called the German Coffee Club, since the ladies always concluded their sewing sessions with coffee. In 1887 they formed a new organization with 25 members and with a division of the club for each of the four wards in the town. They raised funds by sponsoring an annual charity ball and distributed clothing and other gifts to

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the needy of the city. For many years they did the only organized charity work in the city, and worked in conjunction with the county commissioners. They packed Christmas baskets for the poor and often paid for furniture, eye glasses, medical and hospital care for the needy. See appendix for 1956 club list.

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After Miss Charity Colson started Fremont's first school in the summer of 1858 Fremonters began to see the need for public instruction. The school where Miss Colson taught was private. The first public school opened in the summer of 1859 in the same building where Miss Colson taught, on Eighth Street near D. The first city school was erected on Fifth Street and was the only school in town until 1870 when Central School was built beside the Methodist church. Central was a two-story brick building with six rooms and it was told among the students that teachers looking for truants could climb to the bell tower of the school and see a boy anywhere in the town. The story may not be too far from the truth, as pictures of Fremont at the time show. Low-built structures were scattered along the unpaved streets, and there were few large trees to obstruct a panoramic view. Back porch pumps, barns and sheds were a part of almost every home-site. Board walks were the order of the day for the downtown area and the conditions of the streets between depended on the weather.

After long rainy spells, Fremont had its share of "hog wallows" on main streets and it sometimes became so muddy that carriages could hardly pass. In 1891 a group of citizens were so enraged at the "ponds" in the streets, and the deep mud, that they demonstrated with a show that must have made even the victim of their humor, the mayor, laugh. They launched a row boat, tabbed "the mayor's yacht" in one of the larger and deeper holes on Park Avenue between Fifth and Sixth, and set a fisherman with a pole in the boat. While he fished a dummy representing the mayor out of a nearby hole that was even deeper, Fremonters gathered around to hold their sides in laughter at the fishing expedition. Then they waded home through the mud to tell their wives how badly paving was needed.

Like better and larger schools, the paved streets were soon to come, and Fremont became more and more modern and tacked the description, "best in the state," to many civic improvements. Leadership in Nebraska in building better schools has been one of the boasts of Fremont since those early days. In 1877, when more room was needed for Fremont's growing school population, a two-story frame school house was erected south of the railroad tracks at a cost of \$1,500. Then in 1879 a four-room, two-story brick building was constructed on Clarkson Street between Third and Fourth. This building cost \$7,000. Again in 1882 the city built a new school, this one a four-room brick structure on K between Fifth and Sixth. North School was built in 1883 and in 1888 a one-story frame school was built for \$900. This building was north of the railroad tracks. And in 1892 the city capped its concentrated school building effort by erecting a

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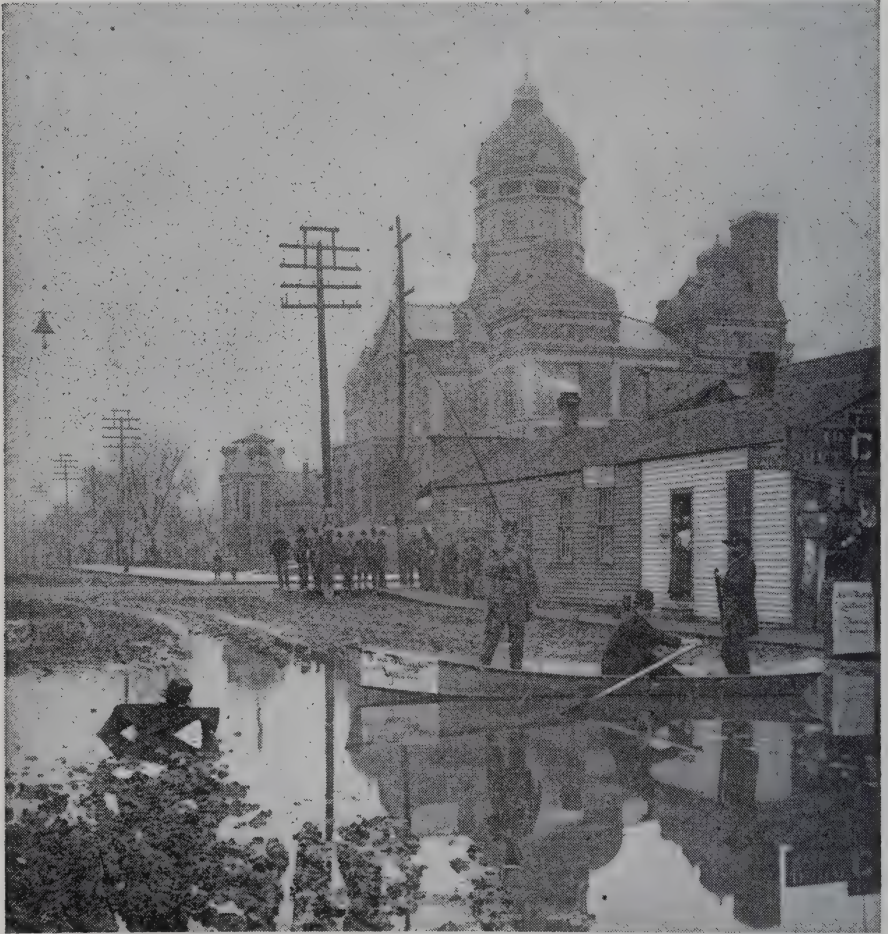
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\$23,000 high school building that was the "pride of the city and the finest in the entire state." It was located between Main and D on Eighth. It had nine rooms and furnace heat. By 1892, after putting up two more schools costing \$9,000 each, the city was known as one that took "great interest in educational matters. No better schools can be found in the West." And the women were commended for their help in the advances.

"Much credit is due to the fact that the ladies have been allowed to hold office as members of the school board," a report said. "The present



Fishing for better roads . . . Enraged by the mud holes on Fremont's streets after big rains, citizens staged a campaign in 1891 to point up the need for paving. They launched a row boat "The Mayor's Yacht," in one of the biggest mudholes. A "fisherman" in the boat fished a dummy representing the mayor out of a nearby hole. The fishing expedition took place on Park Avenue south of Sixth. The picture shows the old Tribune building, and the second court house.



efficient secretary, Mrs. Mary E. Reynolds, aided by other women of intelligence, has been an untiring, persistent worker. The city is indebted to them for its school library, for the slate black boards, as well as the general neat and clean appearance of the various school rooms."

That was in 1892 when the city of Fremont boasted six brick and two frame schools valued at \$88,000 with enrollment of 1,700. There were 32 on the faculty and the total salary for all was \$14,080, exclusive of the superintendent, who received \$1,500 annually. Women teachers were paid \$49 a month. In 1891 Fremont had introduced the free text book system that gave it new prominence in Nebraska educational circles.

Fremonters had been intense about developing good schools as the recognition of Mrs. Reynolds in 1892 showed. At an annual meeting in April, 1874, the voters had given the trustees of the school system a slap on the wrist when they resolved that the officials should be asked to devote more time to the interests of the schools, especially in visiting the different departments. They requested that the board members visit each department not less than an hour each term. There were three terms—fall, winter and spring. At the same meeting the voters requested the



Nye Avenue, 1886

school to start a course in electricity. In 1871 the school officials decided that dancing and education wouldn't mix, so they resolved that "it is inexpedient to let the school house hall for dancing," but decided to rent it to religious societies for "festivals" at \$10 a night. A building constructed in 1878 was inspected by two school officials who reported "the building (just constructed) is a substantial, well-erected structure calculated to do service for a century with proper care." That particular school was used until 1953.





Military Avenue, 1886

School board members got their hand in on the disciplinary problems of the day, too. In 1873 records show they decided to fully sustain the principal and assistant in maintaining order and obedience and that "any scholar having received 10 checks shall be liable to suspension from the school and any scholar having received 15 checks shall be liable to expulsion from the school." School health problems were a matter of concern for Fremonters even earlier than that. In 1872 the board for one school district in the city ordered free vaccination for all pupils in January.

Construction costs for schools in the 1870's and 1880's were much less than those of the 1950's and the bonded indebtedness of the city was not necessarily as great. And it was a good thing for the tax payers that the smaller debts sufficed, because interest rates at the time were much higher than in the mid-twentieth century. In 1869 the taxpayers paid 12 per cent interest on the school debt. Interest charges for other types of borrowing were comparably as large. One farmer in the area at the time paid 60 per cent interest on a loan before he finally got it paid.

But the interest rates lowered steadily as the area developed so that the city was able to keep its school building pace up with the need. During the time the public schools were being built the Lutherans and Catholics were constructing their own parochial schools and in 1956 Catholic and Lutheran elementary schools were serving those denominations in the city. St. Patrick's High School served Catholic youngsters. In 1956 Fremont voters defeated a bond issue for a new high school and followed the election with a thorough study of the educational needs of the city. The high school serving the city in 1956 was erected in 1915.

Those who showed an unusual interest in the schools in early-day Fremont were the forerunners of Fremonters today who make up the Parent-Teachers Association. Although that group was not founded until 1930,

its spirit of helpfulness was apparent even in the earliest days of public school history in Fremont. By 1956 the local P-TA had a membership of 1,513 with six units and a council. It has continued to stress health, education and legislation for Fremont children and schools.

Along with the needs in elementary and secondary education, Fremonters were conscious of the call for an institution of higher learning. In 1884 Fremont was a thriving trading center; a swashbuckling railroad town. As the third largest town in the new state of Nebraska it was developing a civic pride that called for better things. Normal schools and business institutes had been cropping up across the country to answer the two most pressing higher educational needs of the times—persons trained in business and teaching. In 1884 W. P. Jones founded the Fremont Normal School and Business Institute on what later was to be the Midland College campus site, and an institution that was to spread the city's name throughout Nebraska and neighboring states had its start.

Probably nothing did more to bring esteem to the city of Fremont than the work of the normal school and its business department, along with the inspired leadership and teaching of William H. Clemmons. Mr. Clemmons came to Fremont in 1888 after graduation from Valparaiso University. He succeeded to the management of the normal school after Professor Jones had died two years before. Thus Mr. Clemmons began a career that was to make possible advanced education for thousands of Nebraskans and was to continue touching and inspiring lives for decades. More than 30,000 students attended the Fremont school and the enrollment was to grow at times to more than 1,200. Thus Fremont profited from the dollars the students brought into the city, and Fremont could send business and educational leaders out by the hundreds.

The achievements of Fremont College (the official name later) are tied to the career of Professor Clemmons, for it was he who guided the school until it merged with Midland College in 1919. But Fremont business and civic leaders were responsible for the founding of the school. In 1883 Professor Jones had broached the idea for the school to Fremonters and they held a mass meeting to discuss the idea with him. At the meeting they subscribed money enough to start the school and set aside land on Irving Street for its campus and building. On July 4, 1884 the Independent Order of Odd Fellows presided at the corner-stone laying and the normal school and business institute was on its way. Classes started on October 21, 1884 with 36 students. By December there were 150 students taking classes in four recitation rooms. When Professor Clemmons came to Fremont in 1888 he purchased the school and obligated himself to pay for the property and also for some debts that had accumulated. Frank Hammond, writing later about Mr. Clemmons, said "he built it up unaided and alone, except for help given him by his able and efficient wife. His school was a rarity among schools because of its conspicuous success without aid or endowment."

Clemmons believed that a little education was better than none at all, and he worked unselfishly to make an education possible for any student who wanted to study. He kept the fees low. Board, room and tuition were \$2.50 a week in 1889. Even in the 1890's they had mounted to only \$4.00. He taught classes, spoke at convocations, and traveled up and down





**Fremont Driving Park**

Nebraska advising young people to study and prepare themselves. A large, high-browed man, he apparently inspired confidence in all who worked with him. His class in "mental arithmetic" inspired students to become better teachers and business men, and also to write poetry praising his work.

"His voice was heard in almost every school house in the state. His enthusiasm was contagious, his energy unexcelled. Into this work he put his life. He was a trail blazer in the method of reaching and educating the masses," Seymour Sidner wrote later. Mr. Clemmons was called the "father of summer school in the Midwest."

Among those who came from farm homes and communities to study at the school was a tall, gangling lad named Grover Cleveland Alexander. Later he was to burn up the major league as one of the greatest pitchers of all time. The Fremont school, which was the second of its kind in the state, ran 50 weeks a year. Classes were held from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Faculty members were paid an annual salary of \$1,200 and along with students were "perpetual publicity agents for the school."

By 1900 the course offerings and buildings at the college had been enlarged and the school changed its name to Fremont College and Business Institute. It was then known throughout Nebraska and surrounding states. Wherever Fremonters went they found graduates and former students of their college. Student and teacher morale was always high. In 1907 when a fire left the main building in charred ruins, Mr. Clemmons set up a tent and class sessions were never interrupted. Some classes were held in the ceilingless basement of the burned building. But soon reconstruction was started and a few months later the students moved back into their class rooms.



In 1916 Mr. Clemmons was elected superintendent of public instruction and he moved to Lincoln, leaving the school in the hands of his wife. Soon afterwards the health of Mr. Clemmons began to fail and he died in 1920 while visiting in Fremont.

The year before his death Mr. and Mrs. Clemmons had sold the school to the board of trustees of Midland College, then located at Atchison, Kansas. A sister institution of Midland, Western Theological Seminary, also was to be moved to Fremont with the college. The move came after careful study and appraisal by both Fremont and Midland. Fremont was a town of about 12,000 that ranked high as a cultural center. The moral standards of the town were good, and there was no slum section to hold back possible college development. Sunday movies were prohibited and churches were an important part of the community life. Fremont offered Midland a good campus with nine and one-half acres. There were four buildings and Fremont College's high reputation to increase the likelihood of success. The town of Fremont also offered \$25,000 to help the college pay for the \$85,000 campus and building site. In 1919 the move was made from Atchison and Midland College and Western Seminary became a part of Fremont. In 1921 the seminary took possession of the Nye residence and it served as the administration, classroom and dormitory building for that institution.

Midland has continued since that time to serve as the official college of the synods of the United Lutheran Church in America west of the Missouri River. Enrollment of the school has grown slowly from about 200 to 400, and advances in service and accreditation have been marked. By 1956 Midland was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and other regular accreditation groups. Through the years it has become dependent upon two sources for its students—the church and the city of Fremont. About one quarter of the enrollment annually comes from Fremont. In 1956 there were 159 of Midland's 1,200 alumni living in Fremont. The college has continued to serve many hundreds of students who receive one-year and two-year course certificates in education and business. Traditionally Midland graduates about one-third of its alumni as teachers and another one-third in business. More than 10 per cent of its students normally go into full-time church work.

The Seminary became a separate institution and changed its name to Central Lutheran Theological Seminary. In recent years it has built a new class-room administration building and continues to educate ministers for the Lutheran churches of the area and the nation. The college, after moving to Fremont, erected a gymnasium, a library, a new dormitory for women, a new dormitory for men.

An outgrowth of the work of the church in Fremont was the founding in Fremont of the Lutheran Children's Home. In 1956 it was one of two homes in the city serving children. The other was the Masonic Home.

The Lutheran home was founded in 1892 as the Orphans' Home by a Fremont, the Rev. Mr. Graef, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church. He started the home in response to several urgent requests to care for orphans and to provide a home for them. The first location for the home was the Graef parsonage, which was located on the second floor of the Trinity parochial school. That same year the Trinity congregation purchased a



Scott Wall Livery Stable

site on East Military and started construction of a three and one-half story brick building. It was dedicated in 1893. The building had cost \$13,000.

In 1895 five congregations of the Fremont area formed the Orphans' Home Society and began operating the home, hiring a full-time superintendent. In 1907 the adoptive placement program of the home was originated and in 1940 the home began casework services. In 1944 part of the offices of the Lutheran Childrens' Home Society were moved to Omaha and the children's home kept in Fremont. The home erected two modern children's cottages in 1952 at a cost of \$130,000. During its years of service until 1956 the home has served more than 2,500 children.

From the first days of Fremont, entertainment has been important to the city. The first diversity came to the hum and whine of singing fiddles while pioneers danced on the rough-hewn board floor at bachelor's hall. Later dances became more formal and were held in homes or in public dance halls. Then card playing, theatre-going, reading, lectures, and sports of all kinds were to become a part of the Fremont scene. Huge parties, where 80 or more guests were received, were not unusual in the 1890's. Then, by the turn of the century, Fremont claimed several lodges and benevolent orders. These groups sponsored civic projects and entertainment. As groups became interested in a specific type of entertainment or sport, they formed an organization to promote it. A City Library was formed; an opera house was built; a baseball league was organized; a cycling club was originated; and a driving park laid out.

One center for entertainment for the community was the Love Opera House, built in 1888 between Fifth and Sixth on Broad. It cost \$40,000 and had a seating capacity of 1,100, and a stage that was 30 by 40 feet. In 1902 a booklet on Fremont boasted that "for a city of its size, Fremont may well be envied for the possession of the new Larson Opera House (the name had been changed). The building itself is imposing, centrally located and considered one of the finest in the state. It has grown with the city . . . the





Fremont Bicycle Club

stage has been enlarged to 54 by 36 feet and . . . is a splendid example of the flourishing conditions and increasing good taste of the city." Performances at the opera house included plays, operetta, comic opera, and recitals by guest artists. But even the best in Fremont entertainment recognized the drawing power of a bargain. That was the reason for the origination of the "Ten-twen-thirt" shows. They held week-long runs at the opera house and sold tickets for ten, twenty, and thirty cents. Road shows performed one-night stands. Nearing the turn of the century Fremonters were more taken up with the entertainment offered in the Chautauqua summer tent shows and eventually these replaced many functions of the opera house. Soon the silent movies came along to catch the public eyes and they were gradually replaced by the "talkies" and then the color, wide-screened Hollywood movies that were flourishing in 1956.

The huge house parties that were a part of Fremont's social side in the 1880's and 1890's challenged the newspaper reporter's vocabulary. Finally the newspapers began to describe dinners as "coalitions" and run lists of couples who were guests at many of the dinners. The large dining rooms and spaciousness of homes built in those days were necessary to the social life. People saved up their social obligations and eventually took care of them all in one huge party. The *Fremont Daily Tribune* on October 9, 1891, reported one such party included tables for 80 guests, the article said "and Ira Wood—well Ira was a whole couple by himself. Everybody had a splendid time."

Picnics were popular, C. B. Nicodemus, an early-day Fremonter, said. In carriages and on the ever-present bicycles, parties of couples went out to the hills and parks around the city. At night they would return to town for dances at Turner Hall where Tony Planbake had an orchestra.

The Fremont Country Club was formed in 1909 and since that time has formed a center for entertainment. It was reorganized later to form the Fremont Golf Club. By 1956 the club had approximately 500 members.



Baseball has been a part of the Fremont recreation scene since the early 1880's.

But in the early 1890's occurred the first successful attempt to organize the sport here. The first team of any real importance locally was the Fremont Grays. It was composed first of local talent, and later became professional, with some of the best players in the state among its ranks. The next big season for baseball in Fremont was 1906 when an independent team played 54 games throughout the state, winning all but six. In 1910 Fremont took what was up to that time its biggest plunge into baseball when a town team entered professional ball in the Nebraska State League. This was the first and last time seven-day baseball was tried in Fremont. The league was never a financial success, and was supported mostly by local contributions. Fremont won the pennant the first year of pro ball, under the management of Leonard Bennett, and took second the following year when Fred Wheeler was president of the club. In 1914 the franchise was sold to Norfolk since the team was badly in debt due to the declining interest of the fans. During the period of from 1914-21, most of the baseball played in Fremont was the sand-lot variety. John Sonin, Fred Wheeler, Fred Pierce, John Martin, Lloyd Haven and others later succeeded in raising



Scott Wall



C. B. Nicodemus

the level of baseball here through the Elkhorn Valley League, a Sunday baseball organization composed of teams in the area. The Elkhorn Valley League flourished several years. Later in the 1930's, the town switched to a single team which included My Draemel and Irv Peterson. In 1937 Fremont was league champion, with Glismann as centerfielder, Draemel, left field, Howdy Hook at first, Smagaza as catcher and Frank Chambers as pitcher. In 1939 Fremont won the state title and went to Battle Creek,

Michigan to compete in the amateur baseball World Series. They reached the semi-finals before being eliminated. Ed Stanek hurled 34 wins and two losses that season.

In 1940 the Pioneer night league was formed, but Fremont didn't become a power until 1948 when it was the league champion.



**Fremont Nationals baseball team, 1902**

## *Stability and Security*

Stability has been the operative word for describing Fremont's economy since the founding of the city. It's business and industries, almost without exception, have been founded to answer a real and continuing need in the economy of the city, the area, or the nation. There have been no boom or bust periods in the 100 years of Fremont. This stability of the local economy naturally has added to the attractiveness of the city as a home for families, as a community where parents are happy to raise their children. This stability has mellowed life in Fremont; has given it a depth that stems only from security.

In a period of little more than 30 years the Fremont economy twice faced the stern challenge of a national depression, and each time came through sound and soluable. The first time was in the panic of 1893. The other was in 1929. The panic of 1893 came on the heels of hard times in 1892 and ushered in a half-decade of labor violence and city soup lines that were to be dissipated only in the outbreak, on May 1, 1898, of the Spanish-American War. The panic of 1893 came as the result of over-extension of business in the hey-day of the 1880's. Across the nation, six hundred banks and fifteen hundred commercial houses failed. In Nebraska there was widespread bank and business failures. Money became scarce and supplies everywhere exceeded demands. In 1894, the year Coxey's Army of the unemployed marched on Washington, there were only 354 firms in Fremont. The year before, preceding the panic, there were 375. In 1894 farm prices buckled at the knees and so did many hungry unemployed workmen in American cities. It was the year of the great Pullman Strike, and the year President Cleveland barred the way to any inflationary measures by the government. In the cotton, the corn, and the wheat belts there was a revolt against starvation prices for crops, and Fremont shared the gloom of the agricultural areas.

But once again the stability of the town's economy was the over-riding factor that kept Fremont serene amidst the storm. However, several Fremont businesses could not meet their obligations and closed their doors. Others saw the hand writing on the wall, and sold out. Factories felt the pinch, too, and closed. Among the Fremont firms that closed were the canning factory, dye works, two carriage firms, and a construction firm that went bankrupt. In 1893 Fremont factories employed 300 with weekly payrolls of \$3,400. In 1894 comparable figures were 124 and \$1,480. But while this was happening, the town was yet growing. In 1893 Fremont annexed four additions and in 1894 Fremont bank deposits were at a normal level of just below one million dollars. In 1892 the Fremont Saddlery Company was organized with a capital of \$100,000. John Thielen was president and E. H. Barnard was vice president. By 1899 it was to grow to a firm employing 40 men with markets for its products in seven states. In 1894 the brewery had gross profits of over \$21,000. In 1893 a furniture and mattress company located in Fremont. In 1895 a butter tub factory moved to town and by 1897 had grown to where it employed 40 men. Sheep feeding continued to be a big business in the Fremont area and in 1897 an estimated 100,000 were fed in the vicinity. The Fremont feed yards, which were strategically located for shippers going to either Omaha or



Chicago, also kept up a big business. In 1898 the yards serviced seven hundred cars of stock. Feed consumed in these yards, in the sheep feeding, and in the large yards of the Standard Cattle Company at Ames, Nebraska, kept agricultural prices in the area above normal. In 1898 farmers of the Fremont area sold 110,000 bushels of corn to the company. Fremont was also the headquarters for a creamery operating 20 stations in all parts of Nebraska.



Fremont's brewery

By 1899 Fremont was over the hump of the depression caused by the panic of 1893. The few new industries in the city and the upsurge of business nationally caused by the Spanish-American War had given new impetus to economic life. The *Tribune*, in an issue hailing the start of a short-lived sugar beet business west of Fremont, proudly reported in 1899 that the city had four banks, a brewery, a broom factory, a butter tub factory, a cigar box factory, seven cigar factories, three hack lines, a harness factory, nine livery stables, 13 physicians, eight saloons, one theatre. In the same edition the *Tribune* said: "Fremont is one of the few small towns of the West that has risen to the dignity of paving: This metropolitan feature was added more than 10 years ago and the cost of it has now been liquidated."



Employees of the Fremont Saddlery Works



Fremont Stock Yards and Land Co. . . . The yards had facilities for 18,000 head of livestock in open pens, plus covered sheep barns. The company owned 1,600 acres of tame grass pasture on the Platte River.



The 1890-1900 period had shown the way for Fremont's future . It was to be, as later Chamber of Commerce promotion was to say, the "City where agriculture and industry meet." By 1900 approximately one person out of six in Fremont was supported by manufacturing or industry. The majority of the others were to a large extent dependent on agriculture or business related to it.

Serenity in economy in Fremont has been reflected in most of the remainder of the life in the city since it began in 1856. However, Fremont has had its small share of crime. The 1870's brought two murder cases that were to go down in Fremont history. The first was in 1870 when a Mr. Smith, proprietor of the St. Charles Hotel, was involved in an argument with a Mr. Gallon of West Point over a ten-cent feed bill. They fought for a few minutes before Smith clubbed Gallon over the head with a neck yoke and the victim died almost instantly. Smith was tried and convicted of second degree murder and sentenced to ten years in the penitentiary.

In 1877 the Dr. George St. Louis murder case was top news in the area. The man was tried in Dodge County but a hung jury let him go free. He was then tried in Saunders County and convicted of poisoning his wife. The judge sentenced him to hang. He committed suicide when he heard the sheriff coming to take him to the gallows.

The Pulsifer murder took place in 1891 and attracted wide attention. In the case, Charles Shepard and Chris Furst were found guilty of murdering Carl C. Pulsifer, a Crowell, Nebraska grain buyer. The case went to the state supreme court, and the defense made a special appeal to the governor. But he refused, and the men were hanged at 10 in the morning on June 9, 1891, in the Fremont jail.

Death came to Fremonters in more honorable ways as the city shared in wars of the United States. Twenty-two men from Fremont served in the Spanish-American War and two died in service.

In 1912 Fremont was a bountiful city. High trucks, with wheels of wooden spokes that ran on hard rubber tires, ground over the down-town streets and cars mingled with buggies along the edges of the streets. Five-bulbed street lights on the curbing gave the city an air of prosperity. Irving Park was a well-shaded, calm, peaceful place to take the children for an afternoon stroll. Tall trees, lots of shade, and beautiful homes were taken almost for granted. Out on the campus of Fremont College tall maple and ash trees gave the school the advantage of calm surroundings. There were more than 30 organizations in the city and golf was a popular recreation for the young Fremont business man. The Frank Fowler home was Fremont's showplace, and Nye Avenue was the street to drive your friends along when they came to visit. Proud Fremonters told their friends that there were more than 5,000 blossoms on the flowery acreage home of Mr. Fowler. Already the Fremont Hospital on Broad Street was recognizing the danger of speed. The staff had posted a sign in the lawn, facing the south, to warn incoming motorists to "remember the sick—drive slowly."

There were three orchestras and seven bands in the town and Fremont was being hailed as the "fourth city" in Nebraska. A state gazeteer published at the time said Fremont "has two fine, centrally located parks and a modern sewer system, municipal water and electric light systems." The





Ice in the pasture . . . A spring ice jam in the Platte River in 1904 dumped huge pieces of ice on the pasture of the Ernest Schmidt farm 3 miles southeast of Fremont. The camera was facing southeast, and the Union Pacific railroad line is in the background to the left of the picture. Standing amidst the ice is Ernest Schmidt.



Fremont Commercial Club trade excursion, 1911



Horse-drawn street car

town had seven banks, four newspapers, and its brewery advertised "the famous Fremont Pilsiner" beer. The Fremont Beverage Company was advertising the "celebrated Fremo," the drink that is "sold everywhere." But in 1920 a state gazeteer advertised only soft drinks for the beverage firm. Prohibition had taken the alcohol out of drinks and the Pilsiner out of Fremont.

In 1904 a Fremonter who was to be one of the town's most successful businessmen and politicians was getting his start in political circles. He was Dan V. Stephens, who had taught school in Fremont for two years and had served as county superintendent of schools for four years. Mr. Stephens was born in Indiana in 1868 and educated at Valparaiso University. After his service as superintendent he organized the Hammond & Stephens Company in 1894 and soon had it turning out printed supplies for county and city school superintendents. He was to go on to become a leading banker, dairy man, and Democrat. In 1904 he was elected a delegate to the Democratic national convention and in 1908 took part in the Democratic nomination of William Jennings Bryan in Denver. In 1911 he was elected to Congress and re-elected in 1912, 1914 and 1916. Mr. Stephens continued as a leading Democrat until his death in 1939. On the day of his death, January 13, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sent a message of condolence and regrets and the city knew it had lost one of its first citizens.

With increasing respect for the leading men they produced, Fremont and Dodge County had already recognized the need for finer public buildings. In 1890 they had dedicated a new \$50,000 county court house that was the pride of the town. Its high dome and big, stone doorways appeared to represent the very justice of a beneficent government. But in 1915 the structure was demolished by a fire that destroyed the building and left gaping holes in the official records of the county. A replacement was built on the same spot on Park Avenue for \$117,000.





Second court house, 1890-1915.



## *Where Industry and Agriculture Meet*

As Fremont was proud of her leading citizens such as Mr. Stephens, she was soon to be as proud of the hundreds of young men from the city who went off to battle in the World War I. And the city was to do more than its share in helping Dodge County to over-subscribe each of five loan drives made in connection with the conflict. Fremont contributed generously, too, to help the county nearly double a Red Cross drive with a goal of \$125,000.

While Fremonters watched and waited for word of the outcome of battles, American forces under General Pershing were helping the allies drive to victory over the Central Powers in the bloodiest war to that time. On Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, Fremont celebrated with the usual clamor of bands and parades. Had the citizens been able to foresee the hard times of the depression that were coming, the vision might have put a damper on the celebration.

In the 1918 period Fremont was in the middle of a transition that was to leave many of her industries victims of progress. The results of this transition were to stun the city and hold her nearly motionless, economically, until "bootstrap" operations by the city's businessmen began to take effect in 1937. From the beginning Fremont industries had been founded to answer real needs. But in the period from 1900 through the depression year of the early 1930's those needs changed. And with the changes Fremont was hurt. For a while it must have seemed to some Fremonters that a ghost was following the industrial enterprises of the city. Many of them would be started and be profitable for a while. Then the demand for their product would die because of a new invention. It was like that with the Fremont Saddlery Company. Horses were a main means for transportation in its hey-day. The automobile replaced the horse and the saddlery business faded from the picture. The cigarette gradually took the place of the cigar and the seven Fremont cigar factories dwindled. The automobile replaced the horse and buggy and the carriage works was not needed. The ice box factory closed when refrigerators began to become popular. The brewery was a victim of Prohibition. Changes in methods of butter manufacturing lessened the need for the output of the butter tub factory. Fremont was a horse-buying center and the decline in the use of horses put another crimp in the economy. Trucking and decentralization of stock buying caused a slump in the booming feed yard business.

The stock market crash in 1929 did not come as a thunderous clap of doom to Fremont. Instead the city took it quite lightly for a while. Many said it would have no effect in Fremont. Those who admitted it would make changes thought that the worst it might do would be to cut down on the sale of luxury items. But by 1931, when the county saw the need to establish a public woodpile where Fremonters could chop wood and take what they needed without cost, it was apparent that Fremont, as well as the nation, was in the midst of a depression. At that time employment was down to an estimated 2,100 with a payroll of two million dollars. The year before the Fremont 4-H Fair was started in an effort to bring dollars into the city. And in 1923 the paving to Omaha had been completed, adding the business that would come into the city via an all-weather road.



Sixth Street, looking east from across Broad, early 1930's

In 1938 the paved roads to Uehling and Mead were completed and Fremont became more and more a shopping center for the rich agricultural areas around it. An indication of the popularity of the city were the 36 conventions held in Fremont in 1938. In November of 1938 Highway 30, the Lincoln Highway, had just become an all-weather, transcontinental road and Fremonters began to see the commercial value in property on that route.

In the meantime government aid, and planning on the part of visionary Fremont business men, had given a rosier hue to the Fremont economic horizon. In February, 1937, 45 mayors and the governor had been present at the dedication ceremonies for the new city auditorium on Broad Street. It was built with W.P.A. aid at a cost of \$130,000. At the same time \$300,000 was to be spent in Fremont to build two concrete viaducts over the railroad tracks on highway 77 and 275. In 1937 the city had 77 manufacturers and wholesalers employing 738 persons. This was a far cry from what was needed and the newspaper reported that the Chamber of Commerce was searching for an industry to employ 100 people.

In 1938 DeKalb Hybrid Seed Corn Company decided to locate in Fremont and the Chamber of Commerce contributed \$500 toward the price of a lot for its location. In the same year a \$167,000 bond was voted to put up a Dodge County hospital. Still the labor situation was critical and the newspaper reported that unless "suitable winter projects develop" a large number of W.P.A. workers were to be unemployed. So all Fremont was happy when, on December 31, construction began on the hospital. Relief for the empty-pocket economy came in November, too, when \$236,000 in W.P.A. funds were set aside for city projects.





Chamber of Commerce car, 1930's

Characteristically, Fremonters were at this time seeing what could be done to pull the city's economy up by its own bootstraps. The industrial division of the Chamber of Commerce made contacts with prospective industry, summarizing the favorable facilities that existed in Fremont—low electric rates, good transportation facilities, good water supply, and a high class of labor. The "selling" of Fremont began to pay off. Industries came to town and other cities looked to Fremont as a leader in the method for acquiring industry.

In 1949 the *Guide and Tribune* reported that Fremont had the "know-how in attracting new industry." C. W. "Red" Motter, then Chamber of Commerce secretary, told visitors that "Fremont awoke a decade ago to the fact that its payroll income had slipped, a substantial part of the loss due to a curtailment of the activities of the Northwestern Railroad. We saw the need for an industrial payroll which would fit into our economy—which was agricultural. The answer, we saw, was industry to provide cash market for our farm products and processing income for our business community."

Credit for Fremont's industrial development also went to the municipal power plant, which at that time represented a five million dollar investment, with rates that were among the lowest in the Midwest.

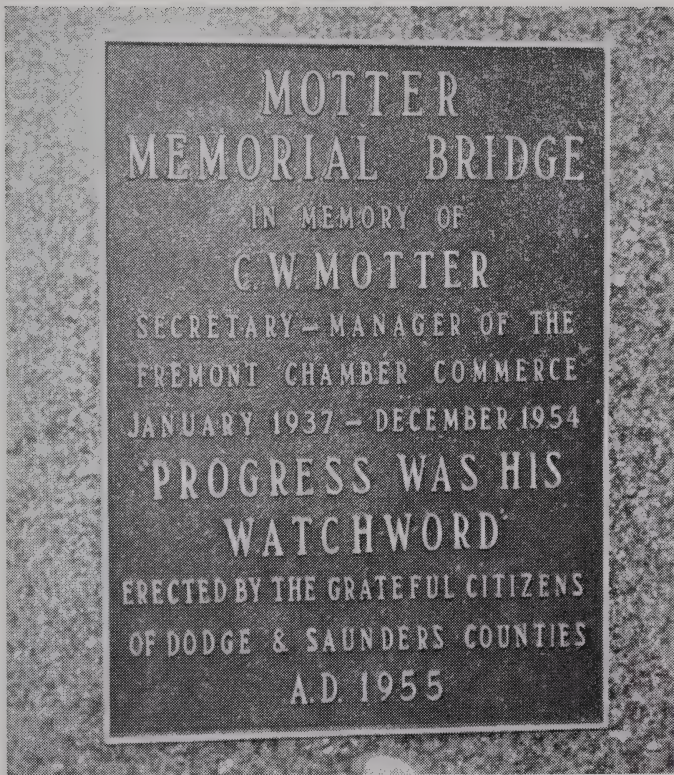
In 1939 Gamble-Skogmo rented the warehouse of the former Crystal Refrigerator Company and more jobs were made available for Fremonters.



It was in January of 1939, too, that the first unemployment checks were mailed in the city. With such growth as the corn company and the Gamble-Skogmo plant, Fremont began to get on a more solid footing financially. The business index of the city bulged. In 1933 the total bank deposits had been \$2,864,000. By 1943 they were \$10,318,596. Bank clearings in the same period jumped from three to eleven million dollars. The number of telephones had gone from 2,140 to 3,526 and the total payroll for the



Ex-slave unveils statue of Lincoln . . . Tom Watts, a former slave, unveiled a statue of Lincoln presented to the city of Fremont by L. D. Richards on May 30, 1921. The statue stands in the city park.



Marker at Platte River Bridge constructed in 1955.

city had jumped from two million to more than four million dollars. Though the population had remained about the same, around 11,000, Fremont had more money in 1943 and prospects for growth were good. World War II brought a gradual increase in business until the installation of an ordnance plant at Mead, Nebraska, gave a big lift to the Fremont economy. But it was in 1947 that Fremont was to get its biggest financial boost.

The greatest single economic factor in the first hundred years of Fremont's existence, with the exception of the railroads, was the founding of a packing plant by the Geo. A. Hormel & Co. here in 1947. The Hormel plant was the successor to the Fremont Packing Company, which had been started by Fremonters in the late years of the depression in an effort to boost the sagging income of the town. When Hormel took the plant over in 1947 it had 52 employees and had been reasonably successful as a "bootstrap" operation.

A new phase in Fremont's economy was started when Hormel purchased the Fremont plant on June 23, 1947. Soon Hormel had a new plant under construction. And just as the plant itself expanded so did the economy of the city and the area. In less than a decade the double economic effect of the Hormel plant was apparent.



First, Hormel has provided a market for more than a half-million head of hogs and approximately 100,000 cattle annually. The annual hog production alone represented the use of about six million bushels of corn, or the product of nearly 80,000 acres of farmland. Thus, because of the Hormel plant, the products of farms were assured of a local outlet. Secondly, by 1956 Hormel was employing 850 workers at the Fremont plant and virtually all of them came from Fremont or the area. The Hormel annual payroll was approximately one-half of the ten-million dollar industrial payroll of Fremont. Such an over-whelming addition to the city's income in less than a decade made for a healthy growth and stabilization in all areas of business.

Stability and security had been the key to Fremont business and industrial development before Hormel, and the new packing plant was to demonstrate the importance of them even more than preceding establishments. The Hormel company was founded in Austin, Minnesota in 1891. Its founder, George A. Hormel, believed in the dignity of the individual employee; in the employee right to security. In 1931 the company head, Jay C. Hormel, pioneered a version of the guaranteed annual wage. It had also introduced incentive pay, joint earning and profit sharing plans designed to fit the employee into the Hormel picture. Turn-over in the company has traditionally been low; employee morale high. Perhaps the annual wage assurance practice by Hormel was the greatest stabilizer for the Fremont economy. It meant that each time a Hormel employee received a check he was assured of a job for another year at pay rate up to at least the level in practice when he got the check. For Hormel employees this job insurance meant they could buy homes and plan their lives with a greater degree of permanency than many previous Fremont industrial workers. It meant business men in the city could plan on a continuing flow of money from Hormel employees. The end effect was a stabilization and security for Fremont economy such as it had not experienced before.



**Hormel plant in 1956**



The Hormel plant was a pioneer in more than wage practices. The plant in 1956 included approximately 340,000 square feet of floor space and was one of five branch plants operated out of the main Hormel office at Austin, Minnesota. Later the Fremont plant pioneered a new "immobilizer" method for hog killing that improved meat quality. The plan was copied by other packers. Hormel also was among the first few to begin buying hogs and cattle on the "grade and yield" system. The system makes it possible for the buyer to pay higher prices for higher quality stock. It recognizes differences in quality and grade of stock and imposes discounts on animals lacking in quality.

In 1956 the Hormel plant at Fremont was a part of the national Hormel system that was rated among the five largest packers in the country. Its principle products included beef, pork, veal, lamb, Spam, hams, bacon, sausage and cold meats, chili con carne, skinless franks, and pure pork sausage.

In 1955 Fremont business and industry included: Geo. A. Hormel & Company; Mode O'Day Corporation, Incorporated; Pathfinder Corn Products Company; Platte Valley Cement Tile Manufacturing Company; DeKalb Agricultural Association, Incorporated; Conrad's Seed Company; Farmers Union Cooperative Creamery; Fremont Foundry and Machine Company; Sargent and Company; Pfister Hybrid Company; Herzig Manufacturing Company; Consolidated Blenders, Incorporated.

In 1956 Fremont can look back on its first 100 years with pride. Over the years it has been alternately known as "the convention city," "the city of churches," "the seed corn center of Nebraska," "a poultry and processing center," "a large chicken hatchery center," and a "railroad hub." Employment in the city went from 4,314 in 1946 to over 7,000 in 1956. In 1955 building permits were over three million dollars. Bank clearings were nearly 50 million; postal receipts were over a quarter of a million dollars; livestock receipts were nearly a million and one-half dollars and the city was pumping approximately a billion gallons of water a year. Construction of new homes was continuing at a rapid pace. Many schools, public utilities and stores were building or planning to build new structures. Midland College was in the midst of an expansion campaign. Fremont churches were at a peak in membership and in quality of structures. Fremont's economic, educational and cultural growth and its high plane of spiritual development, marked by the influence of its churches, made the city a desirable place to live.

Since that time on August 23, 1856, when the first claim stakes were driven, Fremont has remained in character. She has been a city of homes and of substantial citizens working to improve substantial business and industry in the city. A poet might write that the citizens of Fremont have assumed some of the dignity of the soil which they have built their city to serve. They have remained close to God through their churches. They have demonstrated a continuing concern for their fellow men through their many service clubs and agencies of mercy. They have been quick to assure continuing prosperity for their sons and daughters by furnishing adequate schools and thriving businesses. They have kept a keen pride in their city. Thus Fremont, after 100 years, stands as a symbol of what man will create to better himself. And in 1956 it was a noble symbol.



View of Fremont, looking southeast, 1956.



West Central Co-Op Elevator, 1956



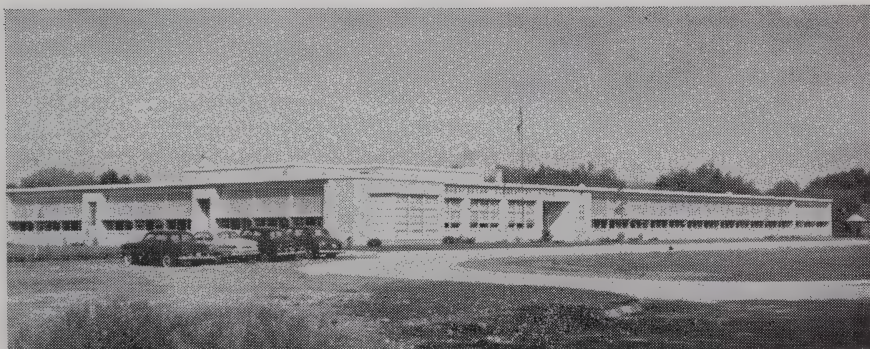


Belle Rogers



Mrs. Ross Hammond

Two ladies who have been among pioneer families of Fremont.



Washington Elementary School, 1956



## Appendix--Churches

First Baptist, 505 North C Street—Organized July 15, 1869.

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic, 402 East Fourth Street—Organized January 1. Membership in 1956, 750 families. The parish constructed a grade school in 1914 and a high school in 1948.

First Christian, Eleventh Street and Nye Avenue—Organized April 2, 1891. Membership in 1956, 621.

First Church of Christ Scientist, 605 North H Street.

St. James' Episcopal, 301 East Fifth—Organized July 14, 1865. Membership in 1956, 400.

Beth Israel Synagogue, 331 West Third Street—Fremont Hebrew Society organized in 1888. In 1954, name of the Synagogue was changed from Fremont Hebrew Society Synagogue to Beth Israel Synagogue. At time of founding, approximately 40 Jewish families lived in Fremont. Membership in 1956 was 23.

First Lutheran, 515 East Fourth—Organized January 15, 1885. First Church, 1885-1907; second church, 515 East Fourth Street. Membership in 1956, 650.

Good Shepherd Lutheran, Missouri Synod, 1544 East Military—Organized July, 1954. Church membership in 1956, 92.

Salem Lutheran, 401 East Military Avenue—Organized June 2, 1902. Membership in 1956 was 1600.

Sinai Evangelical Lutheran, Eighth and Pebble Streets—Organized December 21, 1891. Membership in 1956, 320 adults and 135 children.

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran, 406 East Third Street—Organized in May, 1884. First place of worship was Dodge County Court house. Lutheran Children's Home constructed, 1893. Trinity became a member of the Mis-



E. H. Rogers log house, built in 1857.

souri Synod in 1889. Membership in 1956, approximately 1,630.

First Methodist, 815 North Broad—Organized June 22, 1857.

Free Methodist, 530 West Jensen.

First Presbyterian, 520 West Linden Avenue—Organized November 23, 1873. First church, 1874; second church, East Fifth and Union Streets, 1910; third church, 520 West Linden Avenue. Membership in 1948, 864.

Bethel Assembly of God, 1205 North Hancock Street.

Calvary Evangelical United Brethren. Eleventh and Main Streets—Organized April, 873. First Church, Fourth and I Streets, 1873-1930; second church, Eleventh and Main Streets. Membership at time of founding, nine. Membership in 1956, 138.

Church of Christ, 1146 East Ninth Street.

Church of Christ, 134 North Clarkson Street.

Church of the Nazarene, 1401 North Irving Avenue.

First Congregational, 100 West Military Avenue—Organized in August 1857.

Foursquare Gospel, 434 East Fifth Street.

Jehovah's Witnesses, 537½ and 539½ North Broad Street.

National Conference of Christians and Jews—Organized in 1955 with 40 members.

Revival Center, 350 North Main Street.

St. James African Methodist, 1701 North Platte Avenue.

Salvation Army, 401 North I Street—Organized 1896. Officers duties then were largely the conducting of meetings, street services and visitation.

Seventh Day Adventist, 449 North I Street.

Seventh Day Adventist, 906 East First Street.

Christian and Missionary Alliance, Eighth and C Streets.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, War Dads' Hall.

Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Fifth and I Streets—Organized June 19, 1881. Membership in 1956 was 85 with 60 in Sunday School.

Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith, 403 W. Third.

## *Clubs*

Altrusa Club—Organized September, 1924, with nine charter members, for community service.

Anglers Club—Organized 1952, with 100 members. Incorporated. Leases private area for fishing and picnic.

American Association of University Women—Organized March, 1939. 1956 membership, 125.

American Legion

American Legion Auxiliary—Organized 1920 with 47 charter members. Project is child welfare with special attention given to children of servicemen.

American War Mothers—Organized July 13, 1929, with 60 charter members, to aid service men, veterans and their families, and for community service.

American War Dads—Organized 1944, with 64 members, to provide aid to service men.

American War Dads Auxiliary—Organized April 27, 1948 with 37 members, to provide aid for service men, Gold Star children and veterans.

**Ancient, Free and Accepted Masonry**—Fremont Lodge 15 instituted in June 1867, with nine members. Signet Chapter, No. 8, organized in August 1871, with 17 members.

**Beta Sigma Phi**—Organized in April, 1935, with seven members. Five chapters in Fremont include: Nu Phi My, Pledge of Beta Sigma Phi, Ritual of Jewels, Exempar, and Order of the Rose. The organization provides social and cultural activity for young women, and engages in community service.

**B'nai B'rith**—Organized 1946 with 30 charter members for community service. The group is composed of Jewish men.

**Charm String Button Club**—Organized December, 1950, with five members.

**Chatauqua Assembly of Fremont**—Organized in February 1889, to administer the Chatauqua grounds. This group existed about 10 years.

**Credit Women's Breakfast Club**—Organized March 28, 1938 with 13 charter members to promote a better understanding by the members of their work.

**Daughters of the American Revolution**—Organized January 17, 1903 with 19 members, for historical, patriotic and educational work and community service.

**Degree of Honor**—Organized 1894 with 10 charter members, to aid veterans, the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. At one time the group was an auxiliary to the Ancient Order of United Workmen.

**Dodge County Extension Service**—Organized March 1, 1918. This is a government service which sponsors 4-H clubs and Extension clubs. Fremont is the home of the largest 4-H Fair in the state, except for the State Fair.

**Dodge County Historical Society**—Organized 1955, with 1956 membership approximately 465. The group was organized to make plans for a permanent depository for all available historical items concerning Dodge County.

**First Garden Club**—Organized March 21, 1930, with 10 members, for the development of the home grounds, civic beautification, the advancement of gardening and to aid in the protection of forests, wild flowers and birds.

**Floral Study Club**—Organized March 11, 1932, with 14 members, to sponsor the annual flower show, to strive for civic and roadside beautification, to study garden theory and to plant trees as memorials in parks.

**Flower Mission**—Organized 1901 with 10 members, to take flowers to all patients at the hospital each Saturday, and during the summer months to take fresh fruit to old people. The projects are financed thru the annual Flower Mission Dance. The group also sponsors a memorial fund.

**Fraternal Order of Eagles**—Organized February 8, 1902 with 66 members. The group holds a Damon Runyon dance annually, the proceeds of which go to the cancer fund. The organization also provided a place for teenagers to learn to square dance. The FOE moved to a new building in 1950.

**Fremont Club**—Organized 1887 with approximately 70 members to provide for the social welfare of business men of the city.

**Fremont Community Players**—Organized September 1949, with 20 members to produce plays.

**Fremont Junior Woman's Club**—Organized February 15, 1932, with 11 charter members, for community service and leadership training.



**Fremont Lodge of Elks**—Organized December 16, 1902, with 88 members for patriotic and charitable work, community service, and to provide aid for crippled children. A Drove of Does, auxiliary to the Elks Club, was organized on April 8, 1956, with 125 charter members.

**Fremont Saddle and Bridle Club**—Organized as the Fremont Riding Club in 1943 with eight members. Incorporated as the Fremont Saddle and Bridle Club, Inc., in 1948, with 10 members. Membership varies from 50 to 125. The purpose of the organization is to promote the breeding of fine saddle stock, to create interest in riding and to conduct horse shows.

**Fremont Senior Woman's Club**—Organized December, 1893, for community service.

**Fremont Women's Bowling Association**—Membership, approximately 270, from Fremont and surrounding towns.

**Girl Scouts**—Organized January, 1921. In 1956 the group included 34 Girl Scout and Brownie troops, with a combined membership of 521, with 150 adult leaders, co-leaders, troop committee members and board members.

**McPherson Post No. 4, Grand Army of the Republic**—Organized March 2, 1876, the fourth GAR post in the state, eleven charter members.

**Hadassah**—Organized 1936 with 30 charter members. The group is an organization of Jewish women who aid in bringing health facilities to Israel, and who promote community service.

**Izaak Walton League**—Jessie Benton Chapter organized October 12, 1953 with 59 members to promote park beautification, bird feeding, bird houses and tree planting, and to aid in Girl Scout work.

**Independent Order of Odd Fellows**—Centennial Lodge No. 59 organized April 19, 1876 with 11 members. Apollo Encampment, No. 22, established March 16, 1885 with 40 charter members. Canton Fremont, No. 4, formed April 7, 1888 with 52 charter members. Golden Rule Lodge No. 59, Rebekah Degree, organized on March 29, 1891 with 65 charter members.

**IV Garden Club**—Organized November, 1948 with 19 members to study floral arrangements, the growing and caring for plants, indoor and outdoor gardening and birds and wild flowers.

**Job's Daughters**—Bethel No. 15, International Order of Job's Daughters, organized June, 1930, with 23 members. The order, open to girls between the ages of 12-20 years who are related to members of the Masonic Lodge, was organized to "band together girls for spiritual and moral uplifting."

**Junior Garden Club**—Organized April 25, 1940.

**Kiwanis Club**

**Knights Templar**—Mt. Tabor Commandery was instituted October 29, 1879, with 15 charter members.

**Knights of Labor Assembly No. 4387**—Organized 1884.

**Ladies Charity Club**—Organized 1887 with about 25 members, at the request of the Mayor of Fremont. This club had met informally previous to this date, and is considered the oldest active club in Fremont. The purpose of the organization from its beginning has been to perform works of charity.

**Ladies of the Grand Army of Republic**—John C. Fremont Circle No. 56 organized May 7, 1924 with 28 charter members to give aid to veterans.

**Legion of Honor**—Fremont Council No. 28, Organized July 2, 1886 with 21 charter members.

**League of Women Voters**—Organized 1952 with 43 members to stimulate interest in voting and election issues.

**Marasing Club**—Organized 1920 with 13 charter members to do charity work for children. The work of the club is financed through an annual Marasing Dance.

**McPherson Women's Relief Corps No. 123**—Organized February 14, 1891 with 85 charter members.

**Modern Woodmen of America-Normal Camp No. 225**—Organized October 2, 1886 with 12 charter members.

**National Secretaries Association**—Pioneer Chapter organized August, 1948, with 20 charter members, to elevate the standing of the secretarial profession.

**National Union-Harmony Council**—Organized April, 1881, with a membership of about 30.

**Optimist Club**—Organized March 10, 1948 with 75 members to help serve boys of the community. Started National Bicycle Safety Week in 1948. In 1956 began construction of a club house for use by boys of Fremont and by Optimist Club members.

**Opti-Mrs. Club**—Organized October, 1948, with 28 charter members, for community service and to help girls in the community.

**Parent-Teacher Association**—Organized 1928, and in 1930 the PTA units in Fremont reorganized under a governing council. Membership in 1930 was approximately 225. P-TA Mothersingers organized in 1934 with 36 members. P-TA units are active in the grade and junior high schools. The P-TA gives aid to schools and children, and campaigns for certain school legislation. It also participates in community service work.

**Red Men of America**—Organized March 16, 1892 with 60 members. Nationally this group dates back to the Revolutionary War. The Fremont group was fourth to form in Nebraska. Its object was friendship and benevolence.

**Rifle Club**—Organized 1945 with 15 charter members to promote rifle shooting with safety. The group maintains an outdoor range at Nickerson, and an indoor range in Fremont.

**Rod and Gun Club**—Organized 1941 with 38 members. The group owns 400 acres with hunting, fishing and picnicing facilities for members. Soil conservation is practiced on the 400-acre tract.

**Rotary Club**—Organized May 22, 1919 with 15 charter members to aid the Boy Scouts in tree planting projects at Camp Cedars, to sponsor a junior baseball team, to aid in 4-H Club work and in other community service and educational projects.

**Royal Arcanum**—Organized July 15, 1879, with 22 charter members.

**Scottish Rites**—Emeth Lodge of Perfection No. 5 was organized March 24, 1888, with 16 members.

**Second Garden Club**—Organized March 16, 1936 with 14 charter members, to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to aid in the protection of native trees, plants and birds, and to encourage civic planting. This group has planted trees in various parks in Fremont and has helped with the rose garden at the City Library.

**Stars and Stripes Navy Mothers Club**—No. 815 organized November 6, 1954, with 32 charter members, to do welfare work for veterans and their families, and to do community service work.

**Women's Christian Temperance Union**—Organized 1874 with six members. In 1888 constructed the WCTU temple at Military and Park. The temple, center of many cultural, social, temperance and religious activities for many years, was sold in 1912. In 1929, membership in the WCTU reached 331.

**Veterans of Foreign Wars**—Organized in Fremont 1922 with 40 members. In 1956 membership reached 608.

**YMCA**—Organized 1868, but disbanded after a year. Reorganized May, 1881 with 15 charter members, and again disbanded in 1884. Reorganized November 23, 1888 with 53 members. Building at Fifth and Park was constructed in 1907. In 1956 the YMCA served 1000 regular members and members of allied groups, and makes club rooms available to Fremont organizations.

Errors of omission, typographical errors, misspellings and oversights will be rectified and acknowledged in the next centennial booklet to be published in the year 2056. Please contact the committee at that time.

The Athenas



## PROGRAM OF DAILY EVENTS

### SUNDAY, JULY 22—RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE DAY

Morning—Special Centennial Services in Churches of all Faiths  
Evening—8:00 P.M.—Community Religious Observance, Hymn singing—  
Massed Choirs  
Walter R. Olsen, Centennial Band—**Memorial Park Stadium**

### MONDAY, JULY 23—GOVERNOR'S DAY

Morning—Registration of Guests. Review of Historical Windows.  
12:00 Noon—Joint Service Club's Noonday Luncheon, sponsored by the Optimist Club. U. S. President's Awards to employers of physically handicapped, selected by the Mayor's Committee of Fremont. Address and Awards by the Honorable Governor Victor E. Anderson.  
**Pathfinder Hotel.**  
2:00 P.M.—Grand Official Opening Fremont Centennial. Guest of Honor—Hon. Victor E. Anderson, Governor of the State of Nebraska. Air Salute—Nebraska Air National Guard, **Reviewing Stand, 5th and Main.**  
3:00 P.M.—Thrilling demonstration by Fremont Fire Department—Reviewing stand 5th and Main—Followed by Water Fights between Fire Departments from neighboring towns and between the Fremont Fire Department and the winner—**City Park Area.**  
Kangaroo Court and Fun with the Keysytone Kops.  
Thrills on the Midway.  
8:00 P.M.—Address by The Honorable Governor E. Anderson—**Memorial Park Stadium.**  
8:30 P.M.—Coronation of the Centennial Queen. First showing of the Spectacle "PRAIRIE VENTURE". **Fireworks—Memorial Park Stadium.**  
10:00 P.M.—Centennial Queen's Ball, **City Auditorium.**  
11:00 P.M. Arrival of the Queen, Princess Royal and Court of Honor Grand March—led by "Miss Centennial of 1956", escorted by The Honorable Victor E. Anderson.

### TUESDAY, JULY 24—NEIGHBOR'S DAY

9:00 A.M. and All Day—Registration of Guests, Hospitality Headquarters. Review of Historical Windows. Old-fashioned Sidewalk Bazaar, sponsored by Fremont Merchants. Free ice cold lemonade on the streets all day. Recognition of Honorary Princesses from Neighboring towns.  
12:00 Noon—Town and Country Old-Fashioned Basket Picnic, **City Park.**  
2:30 P.M.—Assembly of Sisters of the Swish, **Hotel Pathfinder.**  
3:30 P.M.—Preliminary judging Sisters of the Swish, **Reviewing Stand, 5th and Main.**  
5:30 P.M.—Assembly of Brothers of the Brush, **Hotel Pathfinder.**  
6:15 P.M.—Preliminary judging Brothers of the Brush, **Reviewing Stand, 5th and Main.**  
8:00 P.M. Presentation of Honorary Princesses from Neighboring towns, **Memorial Park Stadium.**

8:30 P.M.—Second Showing of Spectacle "PRAIRIE VENTURE". Fireworks—Memorial Park Stadium.  
After the Pageant—Old-Fashioned Square Dance and Kangaroo Court, City Park.

#### WEDNESDAY, JULY 25—AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY DAY

9:30 A.M. and All Day—Exhibits by Agricultural and Industrial Firms, City Park Area and City Auditorium.  
9:30 A.M. Until Noon—Open House at Agricultural and Industrial Firms, as advertised.  
12:00 Noon—Bargain Luncheon at City Auditorium (Ticket sales limited in number)—Industrial and Agricultural Address, City Auditorium.  
3:00 P.M.—Free Ice Cold Watermelon Feed and Watermelon Eating Contest, City Park. All you can eat while they last—Bring on the champions! Thrills on the Midway..  
4:00 P.M. Horse Shoe Contest, City Park—Bring on the Champions!! Fun with the Keystone Kops.  
6:00 P.M. Twilight Soft Ball Game, Memorial Park Baseball Field.  
8:30 P.M. Third Showing of Spectacle "PRAIRIE VENTURE". Fireworks—Memorial Park Stadium.  
After the Pageant—Old-Fashioned Square Dancing at the City Park. Thrills on the Midway. Keystone Kops Kapers.

#### THURSDAY, JULY 26—MILITARY AND VETERANS DAY

9:30 A.M. and All Day—Open House at all Service Organizations: V.F.W., American Legion, National Guard, etc. Display of Military Weapons and Equipment of all Services, National Guard Armory.  
11:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Centennial Dollar Dinner, National Guard Armory, served by Gus Knowles, (Ticket sales limited in number.)  
1:25 P.M.—Presentation of Dignitaries, Military Personnel and Honored Guests at the Reviewing Stand, 5th and Main.  
1:30 P.M.—Grand Historical Military and Veterans Centennial Parade. Air Display.  
6:30 P.M.—Forty-third Army Band Concert at the National Guard Armory.  
7:30 P.M.—Pre-Pageant Concert by the Naval Training Center Band and Offutt Air Force Band, Memorial Park Stadium.  
8:30 P.M.—Fourth Showing of Spectacle "PRAIRIE VENTURE". Fireworks—Memorial Park Stadium.  
10:00 P.M.—Military Ball, National Guard Armory.  
11:00 P.M.—Military Ball Grand March.

#### FRIDAY, JULY 27—YOUNG AMERICAN'S DAY

10:00 A.M.—Youth City Government, Fremont City Offices.  
1:30 P.M.—Presentation of Members of City Youth Government by City Officials, Reviewing Stand, 5th and Main.  
2:00 P.M.—Kiddies', Float, Pet, Pony and Bicycle Parade.  
3:30 P.M.—Boy and Girl Scout Demonstration, City Park. Fun on the Midway.  
4:30 P.M.—Swimming Events, Municipal Swimming Pool, Memorial Park.

- 6:00 P.M.—Ball Games between Cookie and Pee Wee Leagues, **Memorial Park Ball Fields.**
- 8:00 P.M.—Presentation of Youth Government Members, **Pageant Stage.**
- 8:30 P.M.—Fifth Showing of the Spectacle "PRAIRIE VENTURE". **Fireworks—Memorial Park Stadium.**

**SATURDAY, JULY 28—Pioneer and Homecoming Day**

- 9:00 A.M. and All Day—Registration of Pioneers, Former Residents and Honored Guests, **Lobby Hotel Pathfinder.**
- 11:30 A.M.—Welcome Address by Miss Belle Rogers, **Pioneer Room, Hotel Pathfinder.**
- 12:30 P.M.—Dutch Luncheon, **Pioneer Room, Hotel Pathfinder.**
- 2:00 P.M.—Selection of Pioneer King and Queen. Recognition of oldest man, oldest lady and oldest couple in attendance. Recognition of descendents of pioneers. **Pioneer Room, Hotel Pathfinder.**
- 4:30 P.M.—Police Escorted Tour of The Fremont of 1956, starting from and returning to the **Pathfinder Hotel.**
- 7:30 P.M.—Final judging of Sisters of the Swish, Brothers of the Brush and Whisker Shaving Contest. **Memorial Park Stadium.**
- 8:30 P.M.—Last showing of the Spectacle "PRAIRIE VENTURE". **Fireworks—Memorial Park Stadium.**
- After the Pageant—Old-Fashioned Street Square Dancing—**City Park.**



## COMMITTEES

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Co-Chairmen—Jas. D. Milliken, C. J. Reynolds  
H. W. Shinrock, Robert L. Voss, H. N. Koyen.

### REVENUE DIVISION

Chairman—David Kavich

#### Historical Program Committee

Co-Chairmen—Carrol Thompson, Arnold Lahrs  
Dave Weirich, Mrs. Charles Dunn, Mrs. Malcolm Torgerson, Mr. Orville Zabel

#### Concessions Committee

Chairman—Gerald W. Myers

#### Novelties Committee

Chairman—M. W. Iseman  
O. H. Nichols, Boyce Owens

#### Celebration Ball Committee

Chairman—Floyd Paul  
Don Beach, Gene Keating, Clarence Jurging

#### Wooden Nickel Committee

Chairman—Floyd Sager  
Richard Mitten, Harvey Jensen, William Welstead, Hi Hawley, Roy Wilcox, Del Johnson, John Howery, Walter Kallenbach, Dick Whitefoot, Gordon Ludlow

#### Square Dance Committee

Chairman—Sam Smith  
Virgil Gana

### PROMOTIONAL DIVISION

Chairmen:

Ladies Chairwoman—Mrs. Milo Johnson  
Mens Chairman—Mort Cooper

#### Brothers of the Brush Committee

Chairman—Eugene Haisch

#### Mens' Hats Committee

Chairman—Dave Kavich

#### Promenade & Caravan Committee

Chairman—Stan Rodenburg

#### Sisters of the Swish Committee

Chairman—Mrs. Milo Johnson  
Mrs. Janey Watkins

### **Kangaroo Court Committee**

Chairman—Dwight Hollins

Harold Zimmerman, Sam Forney, Robert Buresh, Henry  
Essign, Sr., William Rhodes

### **SPECTACLE TICKET DIVISION**

Chairman—G. E. (Jerry) Bentz

#### **Ticket Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Dave Mitten, Jim Lindberg

#### **Queen Contest Committee**

Chairman—Mrs. Roy D. C. Farris

Roy Farris, Kenneth Lahrs, Mrs. Bernard Schafersman,  
Mrs. John F. Kerrigan, Mrs. Robert Weinberg, Mrs. How-  
ard Williams, Mrs. Martin Jetter, Fredrick Werner, Stew-  
art Daniels, Mrs. Gerald Meyers, Mrs. Stephen Spangler

#### **Cashiers and Gates Committee**

Chairman—Tom Milliken

### **SPECTACLE DIVISION**

Chairman—Samuel I. Berek

#### **Scenairo and Title Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Mrs. F. P. Bowersox, Mrs. Chas. Dunn

Mrs. Russell Anderson, Mrs. Jack Davis, Mrs. Wm. T.  
Dunn, James Fowler, Al. Gericke, Earl Lee, Luther Larson,  
Nina McKennan, Chas. Marshall, Helen Marr, Ed. Nagle-  
stock, Paul Pascoe, Frank Perkins, Belle Rogers, John  
Sonin, Ada Williams

Consultants—Chas. Nicodemus, Paul Colson

#### **Properties Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Mrs. Dale Milliken, Byron Peters

Mrs. Robert Brown, Mrs. Frank Croghan, Mrs. Hjalmar  
Anderson, Mrs. Stella Burhop, Mrs. C. A. Keene, Mrs.  
Grace Smith, Mrs. C. W. Motter, James Cusick, Richard  
Kuhlman, Mrs. Frank Eagle, H. W. Hendriksen, Robert  
Brown, Norman Karlin, Arnold Wittmann

#### **Spectacle Music Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Mrs. Vern Johnson, Mrs. John Coffey

John Parde, Marvin Schou, Oscar Lyders, Fritz Poppe,  
Walter R. Olsen, Mrs. Herb Koyen, Mrs. Hakon Sorensen

#### **Cast Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Mrs. R. J. Noerrlinger, Mrs. Clarence Oeltjen,  
Mrs. Merle Hall

Mrs. Henry Christensen, Mrs. Elizabeth Grant, Mrs. Ted  
Vrana, Mrs. Al Follen, Mrs. Samuel I. Berek, Mrs. Wm.

Zimmerman, Mrs. Clarence Wittmann, Mrs. James Cusick, Mrs. Ernestine Smizer, Mrs. James Watkins, Mrs. Ewald Weiche, Mrs. Robert Launer, Mrs. Wm. Dugan, Mrs. Roy Honey, Mrs. Carl Buck, Miss Ruth Fredericksen, Father B. J. Leahy, Martin Senske, Norman Swails, Richard Kuhlman, Albert Gay, Larry Kibbee, Floyd Sager, Leander Murphy, B. J. Howe, Fred Schneider, Richard Weichman, Gerald Oosterling, George Mangold, Mrs. E. L. Keim, Mrs. Stanley Steen, Mrs. H. W. (Bud) Hendriksen, Miss Jean Jurgins

#### **Construction Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Bruce Peters, Marvin Theel, Joe Jonas

Don Beach, Carl Johnson, Hugh Seagle, Wm. Somers, Wallace Lillie, Jess Hansen, Wm. Wright, Stanley Nielsen, J. C. Kerrigan, Earl Korshoj, Vernon Bishop

#### **Horse-Hitch Committee**

Chairman—Leander Murphy

#### **Makeup Committee**

Chairman—Miss Marilyn Legge

Mrs. Joe Morehouse, Mrs. Homer Turner, Mrs. Fred Schroeder, Mrs. A. O. Fasser, Miss Geraldine Fredericksen

#### **Costume Committee**

Co-Chairmen—Mrs. Fred Richards, Jr., Mrs. A. J. Hanson

Mrs. T. H. Beeson, Mrs. A. E. Anderson, Mrs. R. E. Dooley, Mrs. Fred Teigeler, Mrs. Gerald W. Howard, Mrs. Henrietta Williams, Mrs. Fred Spear, Mrs. Earl Conrad, Mrs. A. L. Rousey, Mrs. Bob Moller, Mrs. Wm. Mitten, Mrs. Gordon Pelley

#### **Underwriting Committee**

Chairman—Harold Wohlner

### **PUBLICITY DIVISION**

Chairman—O. H. Nichols

#### **Distributive Committee**

Chairman—Floyd Sager

#### **Speakers Committee**

Chairman—Thomas J. Milliken

Gordon Ludlow, Robert S. Rutledge, R. V. Graff, Eugene W. Buch, Mary E. Kissell, Mrs. Clara M. Muir, Raymond C. Simmons, Winston K. Rashleigh, T. W. Vrana

#### **Decorations Committee**

Chairman—H. N. Koyen



## HOSPITALITY DIVISION

Chairman—Glen Ilgenfritz

Co-Chairman—Mrs. Clara Muir

### Pioneer Recognition Committee

Mrs. Gertrude Hammond, Mrs. Joe Green, Leonard L. Larsen

### Industrial and Commercial Pioneer Committee

Emil Shaaf, Al Gericke

### Hospitality Center Committee

Mrs. Wilson Reynolds, Mrs. Max Brand

### Traffic and Safety Committee

Chairman—Tony Belardinelli  
Tracy Diers

### Transportation Committee

Chairman—Tony Belardinelli  
Tracy Diers

### Housing Committee

Ed Weber, Clyde Curry

## SPECIAL EVENTS DIVISION

Chairman—Milton C. Ebers

### Merchants Promotion Committee

Chairman—Gordon Pelley

L. N. Peach, Boyce Owens, Bob Whitmer, Harold Wohlner,  
O. N. Nichols, Louis Petersen

### Parades Committee

Chairman—Gerald D. Myer

Dick Harrison, Don Ronish, Art Chambers, Glen Wells,  
Don Beach, Harold Wohlner, Albert Carlberg

### Historical Windows Committee

Co-Chairmen—Roy D. C. Farris, Nina McKennan

Paul Chisholm, Stewart Daniels, Verne Daniel

### Music Committee

Chairman—Walter R. Olsen

Mrs. Hakon Sorensen, Mrs. Herbert Koyen, Marvin Schou,  
John Parde, Oscar Lyders

### Special Days Committee

Chairman—Don Beach

### All Faiths Day Committee

Chairman—Leonard L. Larsen

Rev. Albert C. Becker, Rev. Richard Urback, Rev. Fredrick D. Boldt, David Kavich

### Governors' Day Committee

Chairman—William Spear

Marvin Welstead, Vance Sibert, George Svoboda, Forrest Johnson, Bruce Peters, Gerald Bentz

### Neighbors' Day Committee

Chairman—R. C. Harriss

Co-Chairman—Paul Bundy

Asst. Chairman—J. M. Sorensen

Stanley L. Steen, John L. Nickel, Lowell Loeffler

### Agriculture and Industry Day Committee

Chairman—Bill Buch

Roy Bowers, Chas. West, Dave Bute, Art Lovald, James Paulin, Stewart Daniels, Robert Scott, Robert Perry, Vaughn Hazen, Don Beach

### Military and Veteran's Day Committee

Chairman—Don Beach

Harold Wohlner, Chris Lyster, Jno. Anderson, Louis Petersen, Lyle Gill, Eugene Haisch, Dick Hanson, Capt. Rhoades, E. H. Mares, Myron Bodell,<sup>e</sup> Albert Carlberg, Marion Fasser, Gus Knowles, Thomas K. Eason, Joe Jonas

### Young America Day Committee

Chairman—Robert Lattin

Charles Groves, Art Ronhovde, Myron Draemel, Norman Swails, Mrs. Robert Berg, Mrs. Clarence Larsen, Lloyd TeSelle, Gerald D. Myer, Richard Kuhlman, Mrs. Melvin Bohocek, Mrs. Dale Christensen

### Pioneer and Homecoming Day Committee

Chairman—R. V. Graff

Harvey Von Seggern, George Gage, George Mangold, Art Baldwin, A. F. Gericke, Thome Johnson, Forrest Johnson

# The Fremont Centennial, Incorporated

— Presents —

## “PRAIRIE VENTURE”

A John B. Rogers Production

Football Stadium — Memorial Park

Fremont, Nebraska

JULY 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 1956—8:30 p.m.

LEHR KNOWLES

Managing Director

WALT WILLIAMS

Producing Director

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Synopsis of Episodes and Scenes

### “PRAIRIE VENTURE”

— BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION —

We acquaint you with a mythical and wholly fanciful Character, who, nevertheless, is very much alive in the respect that he is most probably a sort of universal and composite picture of a homey and down-to-earth individual as everyone might visualize him at one time or another—A Pioneer Personage whose voice is heard at the beginning of our Story, to “kinda explain an’ mebbe emphasize a point or two that you folks would’ve otherwise overlooked”—An ancient fellow we shall affectionately call “The Old Timer”—

## PROLOGUE

A fanfare of trumpets heralds the arrival of our Celebration Queen, “Miss Fremont of 1956” preceded by her royal companion, the “Princess Royal” and the “Centennial Princesses” with the Ladies-in-Waiting, Pages and Court Attendants of the Regal Entourage—Down through the Avenue of Flags comes Her Majesty, as the personified “Forty--Eight States” and “The UN Princesses” along with the “Military Cadets” and the “Sailorettes”, plus the boy and girl scouts, Brownies and Cub Scouts pay homage to their Sovereign—

Episode Two

### “IN THE BEGINNING”

Scene One—“The Fremont Story”

This is the Fremont Story: an epic of a tidal wave of freedom-loving men and women sweeping on to a new world rich with natural resources beyond the dreams of the ages; rolling back the great unknown of darkness and wilderness they came, across the trackless plains seeking the right to worship according to their light, to win sustenance and fortune, to live their lives untouched by tyrants’ rule.



## Scene Two—"The Mound Builders"

Once an ancient people inhabited this land, known as the "Great Earth-work Builders". Being pagan, they worshipped many gods, offering sacrifices and building funeral pyres. Then, they vanished as mysteriously as they came.

### Episode Three

## "RED MEN IN THE LAND UNKNOWN"

### Scene One—"Life Among the Pawnees"

Where today a community stretches its streets, homes, civic buildings, industries, farms, busy offices and stores and weaves its daily life into the fabric of an energized nation, there once stood a virgin wilderness peopled by the Pawnees.

### Scene Two—"The Rawhide Creek Incident"

In 1850 a party of men started from Kenosha, Wisconsin for California in search of gold. One man of their party had taken an oath that he would kill the first Indian he saw. Happening upon a Squaw fishing, he made good his threat. The Pawnees, in retaliation, seized the man, and after torturing him, skinned him alive, throwing his skin into a creek, from whence it received the name "Rawhide Creek".

### Scene Three—"Robert Kittle and the Indians"

This incident set off a series of attacks by the Indians. One Pawnee chief, named "How-E-Tat" visited Robert Kittle and gave the white men four days to leave the country.

### Scene Four—"The Fortress at the Old College"

The white men resisted the attacks of the Indians and refused to give in to their demands, successfully defending their property.

### Scene Five—"The Peace Treaty"

General Thayer and a troop of soldiers after much bloodshed, defeated the Indians, and a peace pipe ritual was observed, after which the Indians and whites lived in amity.

### Episode Four

## "A NEW PEOPLE TO A NEW LAND"

### Scene One—"Wagons Westward"

The village now begins to thrive and along a military road recently located from Omaha to Fort Kearney there now moved groups of industrious and courageous settlers to build the City of Fremont. Military Avenue of today marks the exact line of that road through our city. We see a typical covered wagon train enter on the scene, welcomed by Isaac Heaton, the first man to set up housekeeping in Fremont—In the excitement of the occasion, the women rush to a covered wagon as a child is unexpectedly born — Later, a fiddler tunes up and all sundry engage in a lively square dance—Then, as the shadows fall and the camp-fires glow, an older spirit passes into the Hands of her Maker—

## Scene Two—"Bachelor's Hall"

On a lot directly east of the Congregational Church, and where now stands the residence of Mr. Brunner, stood a log cabin built by the Bowman brothers, and which for many years was occupied by a "Bachelors Hall" to accommodate the many young men who were here and who could not find homes in our small log cabins. So they clubbed together and kept house for themselves. Many were the pranks they played on the surrounding neighbors, but it was all in good fun. And they could always be counted upon to attend a wedding!

## Episode Five

### "FREMONT BEGINS TO GROW"

#### Scene One—"Remember the Sabbath"

The early settlers believed that every individual was able to enjoy unparalleled opportunity for the betterment of mankind—to seek his own salvation in his own way and live as a free man, so our hard-working and courageous forebearers worshipped each according to his own light.

#### Scene Two—"Readin', 'Ritin' 'n' 'Rithmatic"

Our early settlers realized that in order to build a foundation for a new life for the future generations to come, their children must learn to read and write. To fully appreciate the great strides education has made we have only to look in on this first school. It seems, however, that teacher had some of the same troubles then as now—

#### Scene Three—"Abraham Lincoln"

The cataclysm of Civil War descends upon the nation over the question of States' Rights. Out of this terrible conflict came one of the greatest figures in our history.

#### Scene Four—"The Iron Horse"

In July, 1866, the Union Pacific line reached Fremont—and immediately the town began to grow. Stores began to open up—a paper was started and the town barber did a rushing business. The whole town came out to greet General Grant when he arrived at Fremont and stopped for lunch—and ONE lady almost missed the train!

#### Scene Five—"City Government"

March 24, 1871, Fremont became a city, and an election was immediately held. Mr. Theron Nye became the first Mayor of Fremont, and the populace loudly acclaimed he and his constituents.

## Episode Six

### "BUSTLES, BIKES AND MOUSTACHES"

#### Scene One—"The County Fair"

In the 1890's, Fremont boasted a county fairgrounds, and right popular it was, too! This was the period of the telephone, the bicycle built for two, and the "horseless carriage". Women adopted gay and fantastic fashions; it was the day of the hour-glass figure and the Merry Widow hat. It was

the period of the bustle and "every girl was a Gibson girl". It was the day of the tintype, the handlebar moustache, the bathing beauties, the band concert, the picnics, the games, the baseball team, the medicine show and the very naughty "Can-Can". We see them all, but wait—there's a fight developing! Those Were The Days!

#### Scene Two—"A Song For Fremont"

Mayor George Wolz decided that Fremont should have its own song, and offered a prize of \$25.00 for the lucky composer! So—Fremont got its song! What if it did sound like "America"?

#### Scene Three—"The Tractor Girl"

It was in 1913 or 14 that the Ford Tractor Company held a big show on the Eddy Farm just north of our present airport. Thousands of visitors attended the show, to learn of the latest developments in agriculture, to boost their city of Fremont, and to see the beautiful "Tractor Girl" come riding down the Lincoln Highway on a Cub Tractor. And the great man himself—Henry Ford—was there, too!

### Episode Seven

## "FREMONT GROWS UP"

#### Scene One—"The Flickers"

People said they wouldn't last—and that they were a fad but soon nickelodeons were springing up all over. And now? Cinerama, Cinemascope, Stereophonic Sound—what next?

#### Scene Two—"World War I"

The year was 1914 and again the people of Fremont heard the troubling sounds of war in the making. President Wilson protested "Unrestricted Submarine Warfare." The climax came in 1917 when the Lusitania was sunk and the United States entered the war. Fremont men marched to Armageddon.

#### Scene Three—"Midland College"

The time is September, 1919. Midland College was established in Fremont by the Lutheran Church and offered courses in Commerce, Music, Education, Domestic Science, and College Preparatory.

#### Scene Four—"The Roaring 20's"

It was the golden age of "Yes, We Have No Bananas", plus-fours and the Flappers. A dance sensation hit the nation and soon everyone was doing the Charleston.

### Episode Eight

## "LEST WE FORGET"

#### Scene One—"The Day of Infamy"

With startling suddenness on the quiet afternoon of December 7, 1941, war came to the United States for the second time in a generation. The Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor!



**Scene Two—"The Suitcase Brigade"**

Fremont, like the rest of the nation, found its boys were being drafted and joining the "suitcase brigade".

**Scene Three—"Iwo Jima"**

From Guadalcanal to Omaha Beach the men and women of the nation help to fight the battle against "outrageous tyranny".

**Episode Nine**

**"SALUTE TO OUR HERITAGE"**

**Scene One—"The Hall of Fame"**

A brief salute to some of Fremont's great citizens.

**Scene Two—"Citizens of Tomorrow"**

A salute to our youth—the citizens of tomorrow!

**Scene Three—"Education on Parade"**

Without our fine schools and wonderful teachers, our youth would not be properly equipped to carry on America's tradition. Now, a salute to our fine school system and the fine, upstanding young men and women they are turning out every year!

**Episode Ten**

**GRAND FINALE**

There are no bounds or limits to the frontiers of our freedom. We have built our schools, hospitals, libraries, laboratories—we have brought forth symphonies and written great literature. Now the darkness and the wilderness are far behind. Ahead lie new boundaries, widening, expanding—certain to roll back before the same unquenchable spirit of which we are the heirs. As descendants and progeny of a pioneer people, it is ours to go forward—to surmount obstacles—to keep the faith. So proudly we hail—Fremont's One Hundredth Birthday!

**MASS SINGING OF THE "STAR SPANGLED BANNER"**

**FIREWORKS DISPLAY**

# The Fremont Centennial, Inc.

presents

## “PRAIRIE VENTURE”

A John B. Rogers Production

Staged Under the Direction of  
**WALTER WILLIAMS**

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### Cast of Characters

#### NARRATORS

Joan Holmes, Mrs. David McGath, Ione Fulton Hall  
Clancy Croft, Ted Vrana, Jean McCartney

#### EPISODE ONE—PROLOGUE

MISS COLUMBIA — LINDA LAUNER

TRUMPETERS: Larry Shaw, Fred Lamb, Ed Haney, Clifford Cushman,  
Harold Babendure, Al Allen

MOUNTED GUARD OF HONOR: Not Cast at press time

NATION QUEENS: Raegene Scheinost, Sally Hancock, Joan Dvorak, Sarah  
Moenter, Sally Wimmer, Ila Fritz, Kathy Keimers, Joyce Bartling,  
Leila Masters, Pauline Mathemeier

CADETS: Lois Gertsch, Carol Livingston, Linda Orr, Dorinda Tillman, Susan  
McCartney, Fay Wisner, Judy Glover, Shirley Kosta, Jo Ann  
Andrews

SAILORETTES: Sheila Otto, Sandra Lyster, Judy Pannier, Kay Sedlacek,  
Sharon Mack, Katherine Peterson, George-anne Nagel, Nora Sin-  
nett, Rochelle Christensen, Janice Foster, Karen Myers, Donna K.  
Van Riper, Linda Parker, Jan Jurgens, Judy Ibsen, Sandra Niehus,  
Sandy Hoffman, Carol Harms, Mary Everly, Alice Ilgenfritz,  
Marge Johnson, Julie Hyllested, Karen Dunker, Jo Ann Dvorak

STATES: Gloria Dickmeyer, Kathy Jennings, Judy Hearn, Mary Bucher,  
Linda Wagner, Marsha Hansen, Jean Hellings, Diana Dickmeyer,  
Rita Cooney, Lorna Leuthaeuser, Silvia Leidig, Kathleen Popken,  
Karen Sondergard, Linda Blanchette, Marian Morrison, Patsy Riley,  
Linda Reimers, Carol Vance

BOY SCOUTS: Roger Hansen, Philip Wenstrand, Dick Mendenhall, Steve  
Freeman, Steve Cunningham, Larry Kruger, Delbert Kleveman,  
Jim Sazama, Bob Kruger, Jim Young, Jim Klein, Bobby Tabor, Lee  
Vanderschaaf

**CUB SCOUTS:** Charlie Lyster, Jon Osborn, Jerry Perkins, Mike Steen, Jeff Klintberg, Mike Sehestedt, Eddie Nelson, Clair Losee, Steven Benke, Allan Vanderschaaf, Bob Nelson, Tom Klein, Douglas Denison, Curtis Launer, Jimmy Eastberg, Larry Urban, Jeff Taylor, Ogden Martin, Roger Hass, Robert Scott, Jonathan Deily, Kurt Weiche, Keith Bartling, Jimmy Ladd, Dennis Yanone

**BROWNIES:** Sylvia Ostrand, Danita Eastman, Barbara Janssen, Jackie Bliss, Ellen Hasch, Georgia Lueke, Virginia Timme, Anne Morrison, Leslie Johnson, Mary Fay, Andy Palmentier, Genie Merchsuse, Debby Christensen, Ronnie Rump, Peggy Allen, Nancy Loeffler, Dorothy Nelson, Mary Kay Smith, Sharon Geibler, Kathy Stark, Pamela Harris, Nancy Rist, Nola Chittick, Jackie Orr, Joan Werblow, Connie Clark, Patty Kent, Susan Vonderlage, Morita Sorenson, Jackie Isaacson, Charlotte Betonte, Kathy Hanna, Pamela West, Bonnie Nelson, Judith Todd, Dee Ann Todd, Carol Ann Spurrier, Linda Freeman, Sharon Schneider, Kathy Farrell, Kathleen Bierbohn, Pamela Rice, Brenda Leidic, Linda Williams, Kathy Wyatt, Karen Muller, Linda Kaiser, Valarie Gill, Gene Heimann, Karen Peterson, Judy Wagner, Pamela Clark, Irene Burt, Kathy Girger, Carole Agren, Kathyryne Sanderson, Evelyn Yount, Janet Watson, Anna Westrihill, Gene Lincke, Linda Hemminger, Constance Placzek, Susan Yurk, Kathleen Gray, Barbara Blair, Cheri Bates, Mildred Klickamp, Patty Steiren, Mary Deily

**AND THE PRINCESS ROYAL, MISS FREMONT, AND THEIR COURT**

## **EPISODE TWO—"IN THE BEGINNING"**

**Scene 1—"The Fremont Story"** (Sponsored by VFW and Auxiliary)

**PIONEER FAMILY:** Ronald Rathke, Inez Wyman, Ranene Harsch

**OLD FASHIONED COUPLE:** Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Mets

**GAY 90 COUPLE:** Mr. and Mrs. Elly Klintworth

**Scene 2—"The Mound Builders"**

Jerry Shotbolt, Mark Nelson, Dick Hendriksen, Harold Smith

## **EPISODE THREE—**

### **"RED MAN IN THE LAND UNKNOWN"**

**Scene 1—"Indian Village"** (Sponsored by Beta Sigma Phi)

**PAWNEE CHIEF:** Dudley Syre

**SIOUX CHIEF:** Sandy Donaldson

**BRAVES:** Max Paulson, Robert Moser, Gene Zimmerman, Gene Bay, Darrell Devoe, LeRoy Kramer, Jerome Sokolovsky, Dick Kocour, Don Wallingford, Dr. Frank Williams, Bob Moomey, Frank Brayton, Roland Kull, David Hein, Charles Haller, John Sturgeon, Wayne Peterson, Bill Dugan, David Realph, Don Johnson, Jimmy Gee

**SQUAWS:** Lorene Hendriksen, Lillian Lattin, Darlene Roberts, Eileen Williams, Roberta Cusick, Marie Jaksha, Ione Morgan, Mildred Sic, Delores Cecil, Bottie Huff, Mary Ellen Kissell, Bonnie Keating, Sandra Toft, Beverly Kemmerling, Marilyn Sokolovsky, LaNell Otteman, Connie Young, Francis Albrecht

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** Nick Cusick, Chuck Sic, David Cecil, Bobby Welstead, Jim Jaksha, Jerry Jaksha, Mike Jaksha, Lyle Morgan, Judy Lattin,



Scene 2—"A Song for Fremont" (Sponsored by the "Grey Bonnets" of the Business and Professional Womens Club)

GEORGE WOLZ: Glenn Devasure

QUARTETTE: Darwin Wegner, Chuck McKenzig, Chuck West, Dr. Bill Pugsley

CUSTOMERS: The "Grey Bonnets"

Scene 3—"The Tractor Girl" (Sponsored by Dodge County Extension Office)

THE TRACTOR GIRL: Clarinda Wagner

HENRY FORD: Howard Knoell

## EPISODE SEVEN—"FREMONT GROWS UP"

Scene 1—"The Flickers" (Sponsored by the Community Players)

THEDA BARA: Frances Lovell

RUDOLPH VALENTINO: Clarence Croft

VILLAIN: Dick Rainey

Scene 2—"World War I" (Sponsored by the Mrs. JayCees)

NURSE: Sharon Bartling

GOLD STAR MOTHER: Mrs. Henry Wittmann

DOUGHBOY: Al Allen

TELEGRAPH OPERATOR: Walter Wittgow

Scene 3—"Midland College" (Sponsored by Midland College)

DEAN OF MEN: Don Ciesielski

DEAN OF WOMEN: Iris Ciesielski

STUDENTS: Gene Martin, Norman Jensen, Harold Rhea, John Shriver, LeRoy M. Rasmussen, Ben Bruner, Don Russel, Bob Baird, LaVern Rasmussen, Merwyn Dunker, Carol Rasmussen, Barbajeane Bennett, Marjorie Coffey, Mary Jane Thulin, Phyllis Larson, Carolyn Kriebel, Donna Rasmussen, Karen Mason, Nancy Gassaway, Sandra Johnson, Phyllis Rigicka

Scene 4—"The Roaring 20's" (Sponsored by the Community Players)

GEORGE: Dick Rainey

FRED: Clarence Lovell

FLAPPER: Mary Lynn Moss

BOOTLEGGER: David McGath

DANCERS: Phyllis Ruzicka, Phyllis Larson, Karen Mason, Carolyn Kriebel, Leona Kildee, Norman Jensen, Harold Rhea, Bob Baird, Bob Church, Clancy Croft

## EPISODE EIGHT—"LEST WE FORGET"

Scene 1—"The Day of Infamy" (Sponsored by the Rebeccas)

FATHER: George Porter

MOTHER: Hazel Sullivan

SON: Karl Rasmussen, Jr.

DAUGHTER: Patricia Lyddon

Scene 2—"The Suitcase Brigade" (Sponsored by Jr. and Sr. Women's Clubs)

RECRUITING OFFICER: Ray Delaney

FAMILIES: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sasse, Mr. and Mrs. Drais Hubbard, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Buckner, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Anderson, Earl Hubbard, Larry Anderson, Janet Buckner, Ella Joyce Coffey

THE BOYS: James Kurowski, Art Christensen, James Walling, Don Walling, David Jurging, Jerry Patrick, Ralph Costa, Gene Hubbard,

**WOMEN:** Dorothy Cajka, Bernita Sorensen, Darlene Brandenburg, Roberta Cusick, Sylvia Johnson, Ann Spurrier

**Scene 2—“Readin’, ‘Ritin’ ‘n’ ‘Rithmatic”** (Sponsored by 4-H Clubs Extension

**TEACHER:** Mrs. Charles Gibson

**PUPILS:** Stevie Brand, Dick Wittmann, Roger Wittmann, Robin Lamborne, Duane Westerholt, Carl Soukup, David Christensen, Dudley Smith, Jim Bradrick, Mike Bradrick, Jennie Beebe, Sarah Beebe, Marilow Vanderschaaf, Janet Bucher, Roxie Tallent, Jean Tallent, Kandy Hall, Connie Church, Wilma Kuhlman, Barbara Werblow

**Scene 3—“Abraham Lincoln”** (Sponsored by VFW Auxiliary)

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN:** Leon Eggers

**WIDOW:** Mrsy Harry Swaim

**CARRIAGE DRIVER:** Al Christensen

**Scene 4—“The Iron Horse”** (Sponsored by Knights of Columbus)

**GENERAL GRANT:** Louis Foltz

**BARBER:** Richard Rayman

**STOREKEEPER:** Lester Probst

**PRINTERS:** Joe Mundy, Marvin Karmann

**Scene 5—“City Government”**

Personnel from previous scene

## **EPISODE SIX—“BUSTLES, BIKES AND MOUSTACHES”**

**Scene 1—“County Fair”** (Sponsored by Epsilon Sigma Alpha, Christensen School of Dance)

**COP:** Bob Mallonee

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** George Mangold

**BARKER:** Clarence Wittmann

**SURRY DRIVER:** Del Hartung

**BUGGY DRIVER:** Harold Brand

**OLD TIME CAR DRIVER:** Tracy Diers

**CAN CAN GIRLS:** Cheryl Warden, Jane Reeder, Nancy Voss, Mary Orshek, Donna Rockwell

**BATHING BEAUTIES:** Marilyn Hull, Judi Steen, Elizabeth Hellings, Connie Walker, Kay Thompson, Nelda Frost

**BASEBALL PLAYERS:** John Horsband, David Rise, Bob Realph, David Realph

**BAND:** Ann Von Schritlz, Charlene Babendure, Fred Schneider, Maxine Harris, Ted Higgins, Gary Honey, Harold Babendure, Cliff Cushman, Mary Perrigo, Bob Horacek

**MEN:** Duane Haas, Ken Kehne, Bob Williams, Ewald Weiche, Merrit Weddle, Marvin Leseth, Hugo Haubensak, C. A. Lundstrom, John Coffey, Gerald Klahn, Vernon Resch

**WOMEN:** Mrs. Rodney Ball, Mrs. Carl Rasmussen, Mrs. George Kolb, Mrs. Duane Haash, Donna Cappen, Donna Williams, Bonnie Weiche, Mrs. Merrit Weddle, Barb Leseth, Mrs. Vernon Resch, Mary Cooper, LaVerne Forsberg, Darlene Klahn, Enies Brand

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** Todd Ball, Mike Rasmussen, Jeff Rasmussen, Jim Haas, Robyn Ball, Darcy Ball, Susan Haas, Cazett Weiche, Ella Joyce Coffey

Judy Hendriksen, Linda Williams, Charlene Roberts, Debby Roberts,  
Kathy Kramer

**INDIAN TORCH DANCE:** (Sponsored by Vrana Dance Studio)

**SOLOISTS:** Joan Christensen, Sally Wengert, Judy Johnson, Lucy Madden,  
Diane Rainey

**TORCHBEARERS:** LaRae Richter, Linda Hauser, Sharon Freeman, Sandy  
Meistrell, Linda Lawson, Anne Witte, Judy Enyeart, Pam Draemel,  
Karen Teebken, Linda Larsen, Gale Ann Vrana, Karen Koyen

**Scene 2—“The Rawhide Creek Incident”** (Sponsored by the Lions Club)  
Not cast at press time

**Scene 3—“Robert Kittle and the Indians”** (Sponsored by St. Patrick’s Altar  
Society)

Not cast at press time

**Scene 4—“Fortress at the Old College”**

Personnel from previous scenes

**Scene 5—“The Peace Treaty”** (Sponsored by the American Legion)

**OFFICER:** Frank Perkins

**SOLDIERS:** Lee Linder, Leon Eggers, Gayle Eggers, Ervin Froid, Glenn  
Harris, Gordon Ludlow, Weldon Meyer, Jack Polmantier, John  
Steffes, Dick Wiechman, Al Mandel, Harold Schneider, Clarence  
Johnson, Bob Turner, Henry Schnoor, Ole Kvalnes

## **EPISODE FOUR—“A NEW PEOPLE TO A NEW LAND”**

**Scene 1—“Wagons Westward”** (Sponsored by Square Dance Club)

**THE FATHER:** Sandy Donaldson

**THE SON:** John Sturgeon

**MEN:** Donald Rockwell, Kenneth Updike, Alex Allen, William Kelly, Ray  
Brandt, Sam Smith, W. E. Kallenbach, Dick Hendriksen, Merwyn  
Dunker, Bob Ganley, Clarence H. Dahl, E. A. Luebke, Larry Kibbee

**WOMEN:** Wealthy Rockwell, Betty Updike, Doris Allen, Gladys Kelly,  
Carol Brandt, Wanda Smith, Virginia Kallenbach, Kitty Roush,  
Hannah Lawrence, Frances Anderson, Donna Schnell, Irene Kibbee,  
Norma West, LeAnne Iwan, Susan Wiechman

**BOYS AND GIRLS:** Rodney Rockwell, Duane Dowty, Russell Dowty, Mar-  
lene Rockwell, Connie Allen, Peggy Kelly, Karolyn Kelly

**Scene 2—“Bachelor’s Hall”** (Sponsored by Legion Auxiliary)

**BRIDE:** Norma Long

**GROOM:** Kenny Long

**MINISTER:** Billy G. Gardner

**BUGGY DRIVER:** Thomas M. Shires

**THE BACHELORS:** Del F. Hartung, Jim Schenzel, Duane Sherwin,  
George H. Schmelzer

## **EPISODE FIVE—“FREMONT BEGINS TO GROW”**

**Scene 1—“Remember the Sabbath”** (Sponsored by St. Patrick’s Altar Society)

**MINISTER:** Archie White

**PRIEST:** Allen Bloom

**RABBI:** Mike Iseman

**ALTAR BOYS:** Mike McIntosh, Larry Pfeifer

**MEN:** Joe Cajka, Marvin Sorensen, Clarence Brandenburg, Jim Cusick,  
Frank Spurrier, Harvey Johnson



Jerry Fritz, Keith Charleston, Gary Ackerman, Bruce Cason, Gary Hancock, Bob Mundy, Fred McDonald

Scene 3—"Iwo Jima" (Sponsored by National Guard)

R. A. Tompkins, Billy Gardner, Robert Lindgren, Travis Nelson, Rodney Moeller, Merlin Woerner, Anton Snyder, Lloyd E. Witthuhn, Robert L. Krohn, Dale E. Lahman, Leo Wheelock, Charles Garulich, Richard B. Anderson, George Riley, Lloyd Wilkenson, Arthur Vance, William Mulliken, Bert Carlson, Gary E. Hopper

## **EPISODE NINE—"SALUTE TO OUR HERITAGE"**

Scene 1—"The Hall of Fame"

Not cast at press time

Scene 2—"Citizens of Tomorrow"

The Sailorettes

Scene 3—"Education on Parade"

SPIRIT OF EDUCATION: Sharon Christian

MUSIC: Marlo Milliken, Charles Niles

ART: Duane Johnson

SCIENCE: Keith Ritthaler, Alice Catlett, Janice Stender, Sandy Donaldson

SPORTS: Jan Fowler, Mary Sue Coover, La Rae Richter, Linda Larson

FUTURE HOMEMAKERS OF AMERICA: Carol Chambers, Janalee Knoell, Roberta Rockard, Nancy Bang, Dorothy Hetrick

FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA: Jerry Nielsen, Eugene Larsen, Eldon Nielsen, Duane Bullock—and the Fremont High School Band

## **EPISODE TEN—FINALE**

MISS LIBERTY: Diane Rainey and the entire cast

## **"PRAIRIE VENTURE" CHORUS**

Directed by Vern Rasmussen

Organist—Marvin Schou

MEMBERS: Fay Miller, Mrs. Lowell Loeffler, Mrs. Lambert Burmester, Mrs. Helen Croft, Mrs. LeRoy Watson, Guy Olmsted, Larry Shaw, Ellsworth Shomshor, Bud Hendriksen, Les Rowe, Czerny Rouzee, Bill Wright, Bill Sorensen, John Haslam, Mrs. Gayle Eggers, Ed Jaksha, Mrs. Delbert Gaeth, Derrold S. McCardle, Dale Olson, John Shriver, David R. Miller, Dean Moomey, Vern Welch, Ed Matschulat, Miss Marty Campbell, Boyd Watson, Jean McCartney, Eula Mae Hawkins, Mrs. Eva Lynn, Nola Dickerson, Mrs. Miles Semrad, Mrs. Helen Wallingford, Mrs. C. A. Bone, Mrs. Carol Hosch, Earl Pedersen, Dr. A. L. Rousey, Wenstan Rashleigh, Mrs. Dennis Zakovec, Gloria June Paris, Mr. and Mrs. Phil A. Nelson, Hugo Haubensak, Miss LaVern Forsberg, Mrs. Asa K. Lane, Don Johnson, Mrs. Rupert Dunklau, Mrs. Robert Lambourn, Mrs. Robert Saylor, Marie Nusz, C. A. Lundstrom, Mrs. George Gage, Mrs. Irene Kibbee, Charles West, Barajeane Bennett, Marjorie Coffey

Also taking part are members of the Midland Choir.

The director wishes to thank Mr. Walter Olsen, Mrs. John Coffey, Mrs. Vern Johnson, Mrs. Ernestine Smizer, Mrs. Ted Vrana and all the other wonderful people without whose help this production would have been impossible.

Cast listing not complete at time of going to press. Program subject to change without notice. We regret any inadvertant deletions, omissions or misspellings.



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