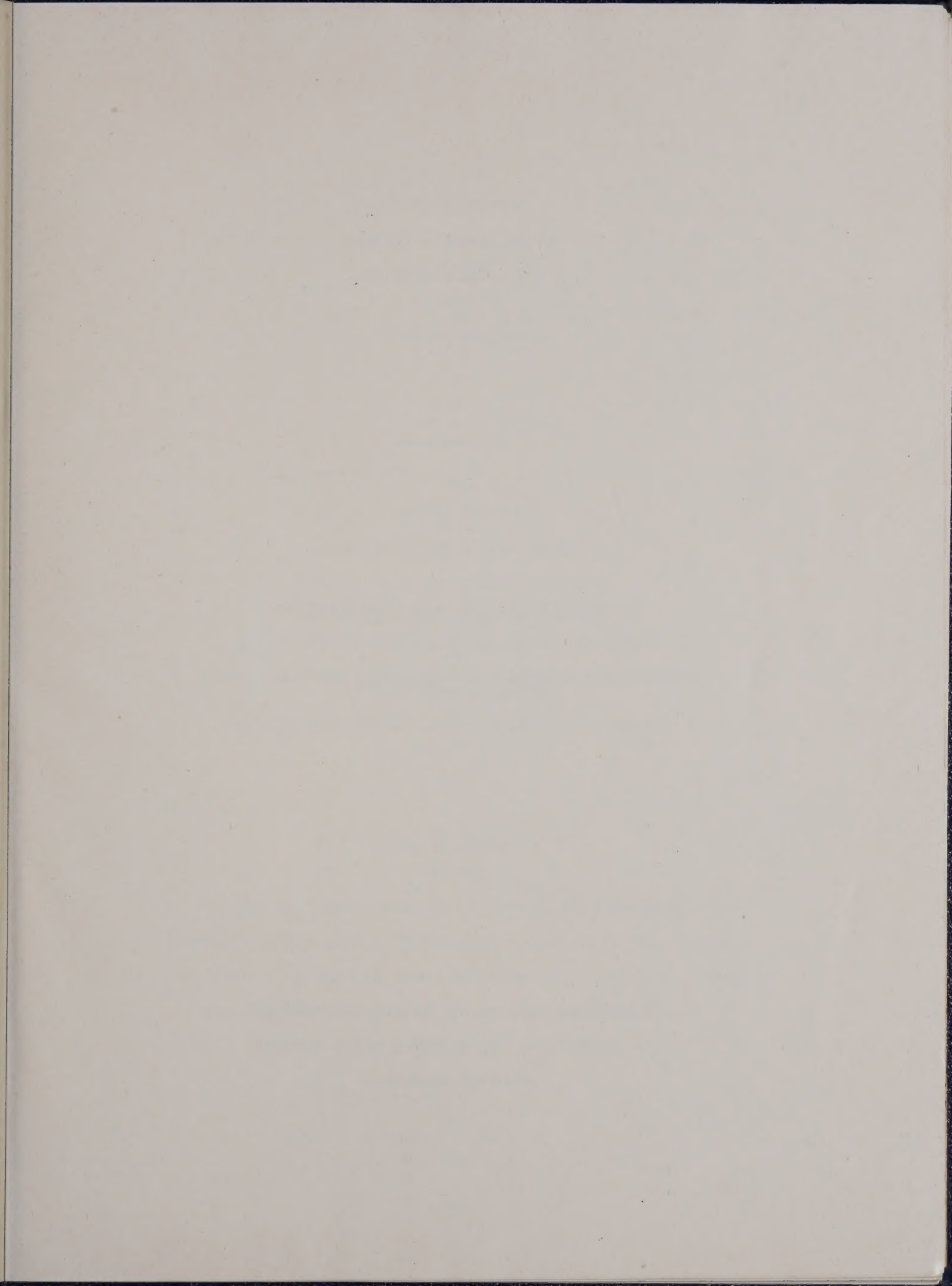


80 Years
in
Webster County



TO MY READERS:

It was here, under the shadow of the Geographical Center of U. S. A., that I was born, grew to manhood and got the equivalent of a common school education. It was here I learned to farm, farmed, taught a country school, and secured from the Nebraska professional schools a "Doctor of Dental Surgery" degree. It is here, in the counties of Webster and Adams, I have practiced my profession and have lived to ripe old age. Webster county is only three years older and Nebraska seven years my senior.

When a community is born, and a child is born in that community the progenitors are interested in recording these births. Thus a measurement of progress is established. From this we reckon the outstanding milestones of life. And so it is, the real things that make life amusing, interesting, worth living are not lost to our memories. Much of our history is lost, buried with the departed, because no thought was given to its recording while alive in the minds of men and women. History, past events, becomes more and more conjectural, remote and doubtful with each passing year. Such was the history writing of the past. Not so in this mechanical age of the microfilm, X-ray, voice recording, and systematic photographing of unfolding life and its activities at certain levels and times.

The deteriorative trend of modern writing, the mixing of history and fiction, is doing much in devaluating interest in true history. Glamourizing to increase sales; imitating the actual; distortion instead of factuality in our literature as written today is, in our opinion, contributing to much of the delinquency of the age.

The articles contained herein were written for and published in the Red Cloud Commercial Advertiser and the Blue Hill Leader the county's two efficient, outstanding country newspapers. In writing these we were more or less original and authentic, with a desire to personal reflection. There was little or no thought of chronological order, each article complete and each depicting some phase of living during the county's 80 years of life. They were not submitted to a literary or book critic and are in their original form as they came from the heart and mind of a Webster County boy who has spent his entire life under the shadow of the geographical center of U. S. A.

We are deeply indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Walter B. Smith of the Commercial Advertiser who have contributed most to our project. They have made us feel so at home in their institution, we feel we are a part of it, and proud. Next in line is the Vaughan family of the Blue Hill Leader. For more than fifty years we have known the Vaughan family of Guide Rock, more particularly the brother and uncle Harry Vaughan. Here too we have been made to feel at home.

From all over Webster County and from old residents living elsewhere we have had splendid co-operation in securing old-time history. The county, as well as I, is indebted to Mrs. Lela Thomas Grimes of California, the daughter of an old-time editor of the Red Cloud Chief, M. L. Thomas for the original picture of the birth place of Webster County. The dug-out of Ex-Governor Silas Garber reproduced in this volume.

DR. ELMER A. THOMAS



In one bold step, for just \$15,000,000, we bought greatness; thousands of square miles of sweeping prairie, rich farmland, underground wealth, invaluable waterways—and the path to world leadership. No other single event in American history was more important.

1386731

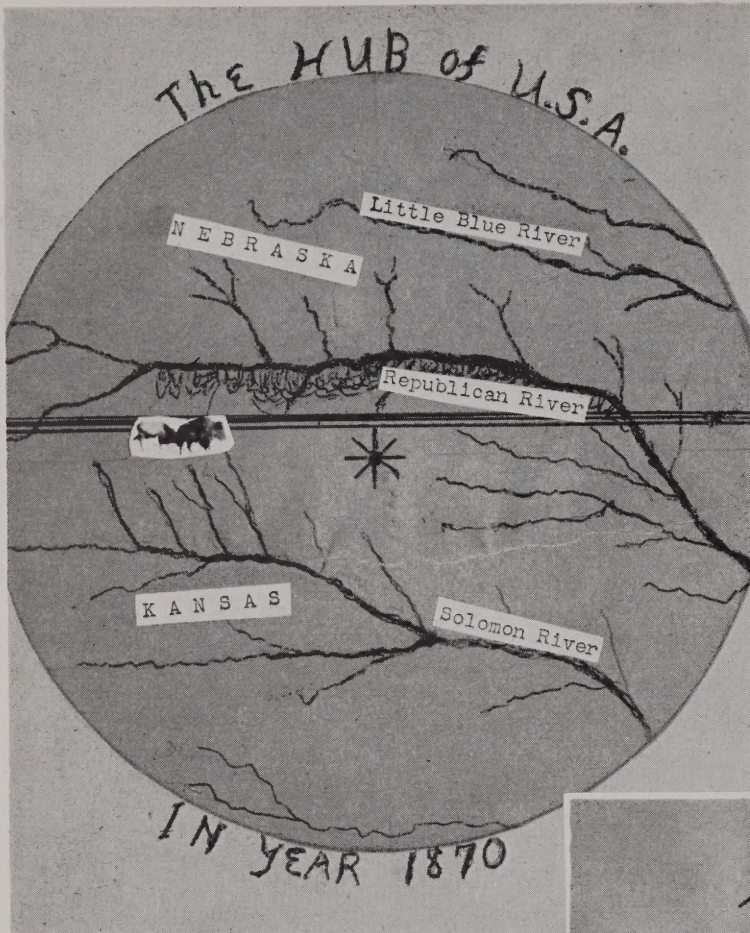


Geographic Center of United States of America
East part of Smith County, Kansas

Latitude 39 degrees 50 minutes Longitude 98 degrees 35 minutes

But little more than a dozen miles south of
south central boundary of Webster County, Nebraska

Caption 7.50 2-6-67 ± m.v. 77-894 A.O. 3302



The Hub of the Nation As It Presents Itself Today--1953

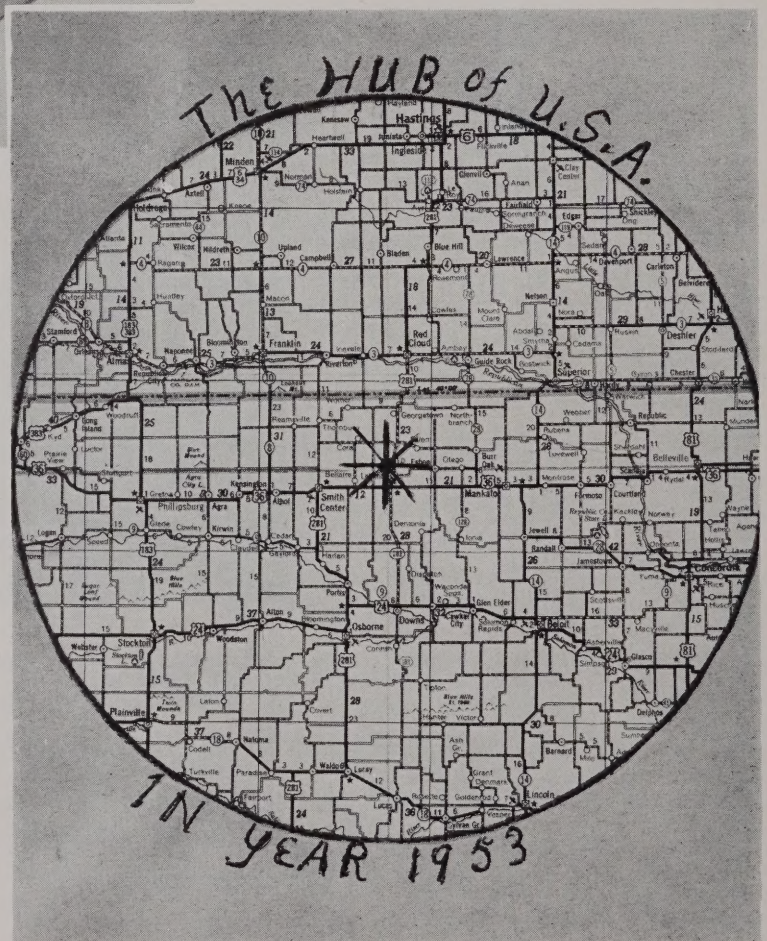
It is the early spring of 1952 and I am standing beside a little monument marking the geographical center of the Nation. It is in the evening and the sun has traversed the clear cloudless sky and is casting long shadows of the little monument across the roadside to the east. During the day it had passed from east to west, just so the shadow cast about the little monument. I look diagonally across the sections to the southeast a mile or so and see there, glistening in the sunlight, a beautiful little village busy with its evening tasks. I have just come from the east over the beautiful highway across Kansas from east to west, number 36, less than a half dozen miles to the south, and turned north on highway number 281 and again west just a mile and here I am standing in the center of the

greatest Nation on the globe. Just to the south is the river Solomon and the little village across the way is Lebanon.

Major Long who visited this territory during the years of 1819 and '20, according to reports, expressed the idea that this territory was unfit for cultivation and went so far as to state that the country bore a "resemblance to the desert of Siberia."

Washington Irving, a great writer of his time, said of this region: "it could be well named the Great American Desert." The first maps of this great domain so designated it.

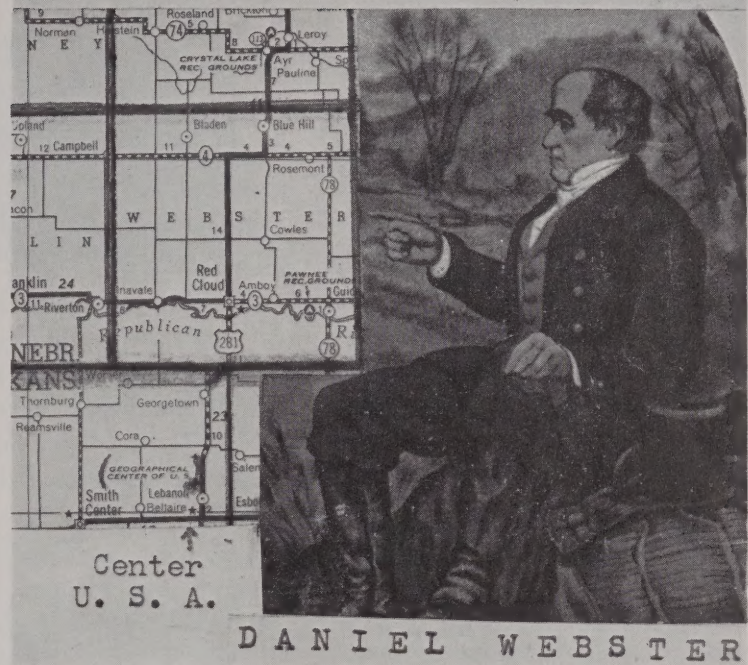
The Spanish people from the earliest onset were nervous, restless, adventurous searchers for easy wealth. Cortez is said to have made this remark to the Indians: "We Spaniards are troubled with a disease of the heart for which we find gold, and gold only, a specific remedy."



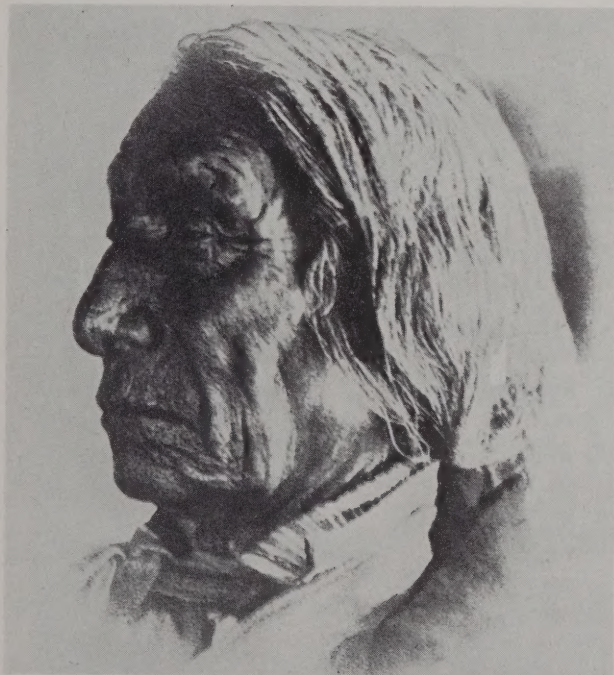
Webster County Namesake

The American Statesman Daniel Webster an orator, born at Salisbury, N. H., U. S. A., January 18, 1782; died at Marshfield, Mass., October 24, 1852. He was graduated at Dartmouth in 1801; commenced the study of law, was admitted to the bar in 1805, and the next year entered upon practice at Portsmouth, N. H. In 1812 he was elected to Congress from New Hampshire, and was reelected in 1814. In 1816 he removed to Boston, and soon acquired an extensive legal practice. In 1822 he was elected to Congress from Boston, and in 1827 was chosen to the United States Senate, holding that position until 1841, when he became Secretary of State in the administration of Mr. W. H. Harrison, retaining that place during a portion of the administration of Mr. Taylor, who became President upon the death of Mr. Harrison. In 1850 he again became Secretary of State in the administration of Mr. Fillmore. His health beginning visibly to decline, he tendered his resignation of the secretaryship, which was declined by the President. The closing months of his

WEBSTER COUNTY NEBR.



life were passed at his residence at Marshfield a few miles from Boston.



Red Cloud Namesake

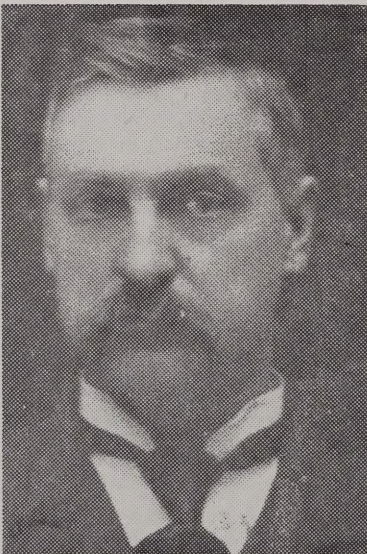
Red Cloud was named after Chief Red Cloud the last warrior chief of the Teton-Sioux Indians. He was born in Nebraska near the forks of the Platte River in the year 1821 and died in 1909. At the time Red Cloud city was named, Red Cloud Chief was at the height of notoriety. It has often been said that a daughter of his was buried on a high cliff across the Republican, opposite Red Cloud city. History does not support this contention. His reign was north of the Platte River and nowhere can we find evidence of his ever being in the vicinity of Webster county.



The pioneer, Capt. Silas Garber, county's first Probate Judge, twice Governor State of Nebraska, 1875-1879.



In this dug-out a petition was drawn and signed asking the Governor to order an election preliminary to county organizations. Therefore, Acting Governor W. A. James ordered an election to be held at the dwelling house of Silas Garber in Red Cloud, Nebraska, April 19, 1871. According to the below, the Governor's order was complied with.



One of the two election clerks, Pioneer Homesteader, M. L. Thomas, early owner and editor of the first newspaper, Red Cloud Chief.

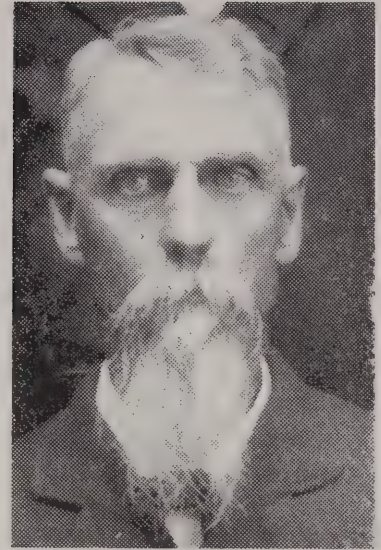
This is a picture of Silas Garber's dug out at Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska.

In this dug out we held the election organizing Webster County and making Red Cloud the County seat. Forty votes were cast. I was one of the clerks of election

M. L. Thomas
Election was held in April,
1871

Webster County

It lies in the southern tier of counties 150 miles west of the Missouri River. It is twenty-four miles square and comprises 368,640 acres, all of which was prairie except along the streams. On April 19, Donald McCallum and Emanuel Peters settled under the shadow of a large rocky bluff called Guide Rock, 1870, the first in the territory of Webster county. The U. S. Census for 1870 showed but sixteen in the territory. However, by April 19, 1871, there were enough to organize the county, the first to so organize in the Republican Valley and southwest Nebraska. There were many first things in this first year. After the stockade the first building was by Silas Garber and constructed by digging a hole in the ground, and laying a few logs around the banks and putting on a dirt roof. This dug-out became of historic importance. Mr. Garber was a widower, and lived there alone, doing his own cooking. Whenever public meetings were to be held, that was the place selected.



A voter in first election, L. D. Thomas, Township Assessor, school officer and county supervisor, 1888 to 1892, inclusive. Brother and father.

Land Office at Beatrice Neb.
 April 11 1871.

I, Mr. L. D. Thomas has this day paid
 to the Register and Receiver for
 to file a Declaratory Statement, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged.

Matthew C. Parker
 Register

No. 2498

Mr. L. D. Thomas having paid the fees
 has this day filed in this Office his Declaratory Statement, No. 2498.

South West 1/4 Section 10
 Township 2 N. of Range 10 West, containing
160 Acres, settled upon under Act of Feb. 20, 1871, being
Wm. offered.

Henry W. Atkinson
 Register



Dr. E. A. Thomas, collector of Webster county history and Author of 80 Years in Webster County.

L. D. (Ren) and M. L. Thomas reached Red Cloud the early part of February, 1871. Both homesteaded according to receipt and filing papers with date according to one duplicated above.

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ARTICLE 1

Where, How and When the Land

If there were no curiosity, there would never be an eager attempt to explore the field of knowledge. In the center of this great nation, which occupies nearly half of the continent, is where we live. One hundred and fifty years ago this nation doubled its size at a single bold stroke. It was the greatest territorial advance ever made by any nation. Spain discovered it, France explored and settled it, and then traded it back to Spain, and then at the turn into the 19th century Napoleon was scheming and plotting to claim it as his.

There was no enemy to freedom like the strutting conqueror Bonapart; and Jefferson knew, through British spies who had informed our ambassador in London, that the great western wilderness called Louisiana had passed in secret trade, from Spain to Napoleon. This cocky little general was expecting war with England and needed credits and President Jefferson knowing this, and that Napoleon was day dreaming of becoming ruler of Europe seized on the psychological moment to put over one of the largest real estate deals, and dispatched James Monroe, minister extraordinary to France to assist the regular minister, Livingston. After some dickering a bottom price of 15,000,000 dollars was agreed upon and on the second day of May, 1803 they signed a bargain for U. S. A. On May the 22nd, war between England and France broke out and the gold received soon went up in gunpowder. He who fancied himself as a founder of empire, sold off the land that could, within 50 years, have fed all the armies of Europe. And for what? To prosecute a war born only of his insane ambition to rule.

Spain had explored in the south in search of gold. France in the north to trade in furs with the Indians, England along the coast between these two to establish homes. Spain claimed the territory because of exploration by Coronado, France through claims of Marquette and La Salle, and England through the ocean-to-ocean claim. So it was this vast expanse of rich land was purchased for less than four cents an acre.

President Jefferson wishing to learn something of the real estate deal he had made in the unknown western country, sent out two exploring expeditions. The first in 1804, was in charge of Lewis and Clark who after two years returned to St. Louis, their starting place, and made a good account, of much value. The next exploring party was in command of Lieut. Zebulon M. Pike. His route was somewhat in the form of a circle. Beginning at St. Louis it was to pass through Kansas, then south, then east, and up the Mississippi to St. Louis. His mission was not only to explore but to make peace and apprise the different Indian Tribes of the new owner of the land.

There were four tribes of Indians in Kansas at that time, the Osages, Kansas, Pawnees and the Comanches. The Pawnees were located with happy hunting grounds in and around the geographical center, "to be", of the U. S. A. In 1880 and thereabout they were the most numerous and most powerful nation of the plains. They were decimated largely because of their peace loving ways. In 1880 they numbered in the neighborhood of 10,000 peo-

ple and their villages were located along the Republican river in and about the Kansas and Nebraska line. Here the high rugged bluffs along the southern banks of the river furnished them protection and a hiding place for their stores of food and splendid natural fortification; the river and its quicksands on the north and a visibility to the northwest and northeast of many miles. About six miles southwest of Guide Rock, was found the burial grounds of many Indian remains and here was found the unmistakable remains of tepees, ashes, seeds, metal pieces of saddles and bridles, and other trinkets of the nature of those presented to them by the Spanish previous to Pike's visit. One has only to visit these bluffs and canyons to visualize the wisdom of these Indians in selecting this place for their village.

From southeast and west to the river were almost impassable steep hills, deep gullies, and natural hazards defying the best fleetfooted ponys of their worst enemies the Sioux and Cheyennes, to the north. Lieutenant Pike writes in his memoirs that there were around 2,000 Pawnee in the head village when he visited Chief Characterish in September, 1806. From this date on to the time of the passing of the homestead law this territory remained undisturbed. Almost entirely the happy hunting ground of the Indian, the retreat of the buffalo and the antelope.

One of the grand old poets of this age, "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow" beautifully describes "Where the Land", in a tale of Arcadia, from *Evangeline*.

"Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Mountains,
Through the sweet-water valley precipitate leaps the Nebraska;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish Sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, decant to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and so solemn vibrations,
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies;
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,
Bright luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and roebuck;

Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-trails
Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,

By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
Here and there rise smoke from camps of the savage marauders;
Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift running rivers;
And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side,
And over all the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them."

ARTICLE 2

The Lure of the Land

The rapid homesteading and settlement of the virgin land up the Republican Valley is a testimonial of its lure for the white man. It was one of the Indian happy hunting grounds which he gave up with no little regret.

It was well known to the hunter and trapper, men who were little known as they slipped in and out with their furry animal pelts, avoiding contact with the Indians. At times they had to fight their way out, having failed to by-pass the cunning red men.

The Homestead law was passed in 1862 at a time when through great civil strife and readjustment, little attention was given to it. This law provided that any person who was the head of the family, or who was twenty-one years of age, and who was a citizen of the United States could acquire a tract of 160 acres of public land on condition of settlement, cultivation, and occupancy as a home for a period of five years, on payment of certain moderate fees.

After statehood had been accomplished this vast section of territory was thrown open to homesteading west of Nuckolls county. In the year 1870 the birth of new counties took place as settlement warranted. However this year was spent in colonizing, and organizing took place in the years following. In the spring of this year two members of the Rankin Colony, who visited this territory south of the high rock promontory on the south bank of the Republican river, remained while the others returned. Two hardy, energetic members, Donald McCallum and Emanuel Peters, crossed the river where they found a little valley. Here they dug in by making a dug-out home and formed a settlement known as Guide Rock, named for the rocky cliff across the river. About the same time Silas, Joseph and Abram Garber made an extended trip up the valley on horseback, carefully examined the country as they went along. They were well pleased, concluded to locate somewhere in what later became the Red Cloud Valley and Red Cloud.

Webster county at this time was a part of Jefferson county.

After a long trip, we find the Garber brothers back at the Beatrice Land Office. Here they found several men desirous of locating on some of the river land of the frontier. By the middle of May, the Garbers with William McBride, Albert Lathrop, Thomas Comstock, and A. M. Talbot were on their way to the Republican valley. On arriving at Guide Rock they found McCallum and Peters had made and were living there in a dug-out, the only members of the Rankin Colony, who had selected large tracts of land but had never settled on them.

This party built a stockade for protection. It consisted of one room forty feet square. The first women to come to the county were Mrs. Thomas Comstock and Mrs. Joseph Garber. They joined their husbands at the stockade. With the first settlers, Mrs. Sarah Rich, a widow, came and took a homestead nearby.

On the 17th day of July the first entries were made at Red Cloud by Silas Garber, Dr. Peter Head, Witt Brice, August Roats and David Heffelbower and on August 9, W. E. Jackson and James Calvert arrived with their families.

In August of 1870, these settlers built a stockade on the land of Silas Garber. During the year a few more settlers established homes near these two stockades. It is interesting to note that their nearest neighbor was a Mr. F. J. Hendershot, near the present town of Hebron.

During the fall, A. M. Talbott was made postmaster at Guide Rock. He also put in a small stock of goods and kept a store. Other news by the end of the year was that A. J. Rennecker had established the first ranch and with Silas Garber holding the plow and William McBride driving the oxen, the first land was broken.

The following winter was a lonely one. The weather was cold and soon provisions became scarce. Everything had to be hauled from Beatrice. Game, however, was plentiful, and although the settlers suffered privations, there was no danger of starvation.

ARTICLE 3

State Government 1860-1878

The history of Webster county, Nebraska would not be complete without a review of state history during its conception, birth and infant development.

First, the state had just passed through its most disgraceful and shameful history during its first years of statehood.

Second, the creation of a new state, constitution and function of officers under same.

Third, Webster County's part in a substantial basic and endowed political foundation thru its esteemed and foremost citizen, Governor Silas Garber.

The first session of the State legislators to meet in the new capitol convened on January 7, 1869. The session was uneventful. The most notable event of the year 1869 was the completion of the Union Pacific railroad through the state. The sixth session of the legislature, which assembled on February 17, 1870, ratified the fifteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States and provided for the erection of a penitentiary. The sixth session adjourned on March 4, but Governor Butler reassembled the members in extra session, and called attention to the necessity of passing a herd law and the ratification of a certain contract made by him for conveyance of certain lands.

In the fall of 1870 occurred the Republican victory in the election; they elected Governor David Butler to a third term. His secretary of state was W. H. James. The years of Governor Butler's administration were not prolific of great events. The population of the state grew rapidly and in 1870 had reached over 120,000. The Union Pacific had been built through the state and several other railway enterprises had been inaugurated. New sections of the state, Webster county among them, opened for settlement. New towns sprang into existence and the state grew in wealth and political power.

In spite of the strides being taken by the State of Nebraska, everything pertaining to her state government was not as serene as a summer day. Although honored with re-election to the highest post in the state, Governor Butler did not entirely escape criticism for some of his official acts. The charge that he had appropriated state funds for his personal use and benefit was frequently made, and the charge became so emphatic that the legislators were finally compelled to take official cognizance of it. On March 1, 1871, the eighth session of the legislature being then in session, a committee from the House of Representatives appeared before the Senate and announced that articles had been prepared impeaching David Butler, governor of Nebraska, of misdemeanor in office. Secretary of State James was immediately notified to assume the executive functions, and preparations for impeachment trial made. The Senate convened at a High Court of Impeachment on March 6, and upon the following day, Governor Butler appeared with counsel and managers of impeachment.

There were eleven articles of impeachment. To these Governor Butler made an elaborate answer. He denied all with the exception of the first. The governor was acquitted of every charge except the first, upon which he was found guilty. He was removed from office, the duties of the executive falling upon William H. James, Secretary of State. The legislators of 1876-77 expunged from the records the famous impeachment trial.

The elevation of Secretary of State James to the executive chair was followed by stirring events. On September 19, 1871, a new constitution was rejected by a vote of 8,627 to 7,986. The necessity for the adoption of a new and revised constitution was generally admitted, but a number of distasteful amendments brought the instrument in disfavor.

The leading issues of the eighth session of the legislature, which convened on January 9, 1872, were the reconsideration and the adoption of a measure looking to the development of the native resources of the state. The relations between the members of this body and Acting Governor James on February 17, were not the most cordial. A joint resolution providing for the submission of the constitution, stripped of its objectionable features, was defeated in the House on January 19. A deadlock ensued, whereupon the House adopted a resolution to adjourn as of January 24. In the meantime the Senate had adopted a resolution to adjourn until December 31. Acting Governor James then assumed a questionable prerogative of issuing a proclamation, declaring that in-as-much as "no reasonable hope is entertained that the longer continuance in session of the legislature will result in the adoption of any measures which have as their object the public good." But the legislature refused to recognize the right of the acting governor to regulate its movements. The senate assembled on the 21st, took up the concurrent resolution of the House to adjourn on the 24th, and agreed to it. An unsuccessful attempt was made to have the office of governor declared vacant, and the legislature adjourned on the 24th day.

But the end was not yet. Acting Governor James was called to Washington, D. C., on business. His enemies seized the opportunity to make trouble for him. I. S. Hascall, president of the Senate, issued a proclamation that the absence of the acting governor from the state created a vacancy in the office, and calling the legislature to convene in a special session on February 15, for the purpose of enacting laws, as he alleged, for the promotion of the state. A friend immediately telegraphed the news to Acting Governor James who returned to the state at once. He issued a counter proclamation annulling the call for a special session of the legislature. A few of the members came together and attempted to organize, but the test case was decided against them by the Supreme Court and the matter passed into history.

At the general election in the fall of 1872, Robert W. Furnas, who had been prominently identified with the State of Nebraska, coming from Ohio in 1856, and locating at Brownsville. He commenced the publication

of the Nebraska Advertiser, one of the oldest newspapers in the state.

The ninth session of the legislature convened on January 9, 1873. This session was made memorable by the first contest over the submission of a prohibitory amendment to the constitution. The friends of prohibition endorsed a measure to regulate the sale of intoxicating liquors, but after some consideration it was indefinitely postponed.

The tenth session of the legislature was a special one, convening on March 27, 1873, and remained in session only two days. It was called for the purpose of taking

needed action on matters relating to the boundaries of certain counties.

At the general election in 1874, our Webster county pioneer, Silas Garber, was elected governor by a large majority.

The eleventh session of the legislature, which convened in January of 1875 performed a notable service for the state by providing a new constitution better suited for the needs of the rapidly growing young commonwealth. A constitutional convention was held in Lincoln in June of 1875 at which time a new constitution was devised. It was submitted to a popular vote on October 10, and was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

ARTICLE 4

Many Firsts -- 1871

This was a year noted for many first things. Among them, the first marriage. On July 14, William Norris was united with Hulda J. Rennecker and the knot was tied by our first judge, Silas Garber. However, a Rev. Mr. Penny got here in time to preach the first sermon. A son of William Pennemore, while hunting on Spring Creek, was accidentally shot, the first death and the first funeral. The first birth, a son, to Mr. and Mrs. W. D. McKinney.

In May, in a little log schoolhouse at the Guide Rock stockade, the first term of school was taught by Miss Mary Kingsley, who got a salary of twelve dollars per month. During this year, a quarrel took place and a man named Hicks was shot by J. R. Bowbier, who claimed self defense, there was no trial.

This territory, still a part of Jefferson county, now was ripe for a county organization, so in the early spring, a meeting was held in the dugout of Silas Garber and a petition was drawn up, and sent to Acting Governor W. H. James, who issued a proclamation on April 10, calling an election at the residence of Silas Garber to elect county officers and to locate the county seat; this election to take place April 19, 1871. By this proclamation, James Calvert, Peter Head and William McBride were appointed as judges of the election and Wm. H. Brice and M. L. Thomas as clerks.

On the appointed date the election was held, and resulted in electing Silas Garber, judge; W. H. Brice, treasurer; Thomas W. Williams, clerk; Donald McCallum, surveyor; W. E. Jackson, superintendent of schools; Emanuel Peters, sheriff; Peter Head, coroner; Joseph Garber, William Fimmimore, and Peter Head, commissioners. The county seat was elected to be located on the claim of Silas Garber on the east half of the northwest quarter of section 2, township 1, range 11.

On the evening of the day of election, the votes were canvassed by the election board. This being an interesting affair, there was a good turnout and the dugout only had one chair, that was given to Mr. W. H. Brice, who was over eighty years old. The others provided themselves with seats by setting sticks of firewood up endwise. The returns were made out and Dr. Thomas B. Williams and

E. Edson were appointed to take them to Lincoln. There were 45 votes cast.

On May 5th, the county commissioners met for the first time. They were all qualified for office except W. E. Jackson and Edward Kellogg was appointed to fill his place. The county remained as one precinct until June 15th, when it was divided into three, Guide Rock, Red Cloud and Walnut. Walnut Creek on the upper Republican had by this time a substantial settlement.

The first regular election after organization of the county was held on October 10 and resulted in the election of Peter Head, Joseph Garber and Allen T. Ayer, commissioners; W. E. Jackson, treasurer; Silas Garber, judge; James Calvert, sheriff; D. McCallum, surveyor; T. B. Williams, clerk; Edward Kellogg, superintendent of schools; and Dr. Peter Head, coroner. On the same day, bonds of \$2,000 were voted for the erection of county buildings. The dugout of Silas Garber was used for court house and county offices for some months. This residence of Silas Garber was built by digging a hole in the bank and laying logs around three or four feet above and putting on a dirt roof. This was the home of the man, who less than four years later, became governor of Nebraska.

The offices were later, during this year, moved to a small log building.

During this year, there was still great fear on the part of some of these people, concerning Indian attacks, and there were many serious scares and frights. At one time the Indian chief, Red Cloud, was said to be camped about eight miles above Red Cloud stockade, accompanied by a band numbering from many hundred to many thousand, and all were bent on driving the white people out of the country. This story created great confusion among the settlers, but proved to be erroneous. Indians rarely appeared and when they did, proved to be very friendly.

During the spring, Ed Keeney, E. Edson, John Waller and L. D. and M. L. Thomas settled on upper Elm Creek, between Guide Rock and Red Cloud. They built a stockade there. This stockade was known at Elm Creek and Guide Rock as the lower, Red Cloud as the upper stockades.

Both the winters of '70 and '71, '71 and '72 were lonely ones for most of the settlers, yet among themselves, they managed to enjoy some very good times. Game was plentiful and little parties were held and at the Red Cloud stockade, a literary society of considerable merit was conducted. There was a fair crop of corn and small grain and some fine gardens were raised.

In Red Cloud the first store was opened by Smith Brothers and in a short time sold to Fennemore and Penny who sold to Silas Garber in November. C. M. Taylor built a log house in the rear of R. R. Sherer's store and occupied it as a hotel. The first physicians were Drs. Williams and Peter Head. The first school in Red Cloud was taught by Miss Fannie Barber, later Mrs. Edwin McCune—salary \$12 per month. The first child born was Frances, daughter of G. M. and Carrie Taylor; the first attorney was J. R. Willcox and second, soon after, was H. S. Kaley. David Lutz opened the first drug store.

In the early days of this year, two young men in a prairie schooner drove into Red Cloud. It was snowing, sleeting and thawing. One of these young men was sick and their first thought was getting a doctor.

Finally a Dr. Williams came to the wagon and after making an examination said nothing while thinking; finally he said, "Young man, I do not know what to do

with you. You are very sick and must not stay in this cold, wet wagon. You must get in where it is dry. You have the mumps."

Finally he said, "We have an old bachelor who has a dugout down here on the creek. He is out hunting buffalo and may not get in until late, so I will take you down and put you to bed and will inform him when he gets in." His name is Jonnie Stocks. Before midnight he came, having missed Dr. Williams. He stomped into his cabin, lit his lantern and turning to the bed, swore. "Who in _____ is in my bed?" Before the young man could answer, in came the doctor who explained, he said, "Jonnie, this man is very sick, and I could not leave him out in the cold. He has the mumps, but you have had them." Flaring up Jonnie exclaimed. "No, I have not." While the two men were arguing, the young man started putting on his clothes, when Jonnie saw him, he whirled on him and ordered him back in bed, took the doctor by the collar and the seat of the pants and tossed him out into the snow. He then rolled up in a buffalo robe and was soon snoring.

After a few days these two young men continued on their way up Elm Creek where they joined three other men in building the stockade there.

This young man with the mumps was L. D. Thomas, who became my father, and the other was M. L. Thomas, his brother, who later published the Red Cloud Chief.

ARTICLE 5

1872 -- 1873

1872

This year was a continuation of the year before, with more active homesteading and improvements. Red Cloud had quite a start as a village and there was a store and post office, as well as a schoolhouse at Guide Rock.

The first attempt at a legal trial was that of a man named King, who was arrested and brought before the county commissioners for trial on the charge of selling liquor without a license. The commissioners found they had no authority. The first liquor license in the county was issued to Silas Garber, March 20, the price being \$25.00 a year.

The first real lawsuit in the county was in the spring and was a suit for debt by Rutherford vs. Fennemore. The trial was held before Justice of the Peace Penny, at his home on the south side of the river. The attorneys were Hon. H. S. Kaley for the plaintiff and J. R. Willcox for the defendant. Willcox's client was beaten, and he, being an energetic young man, started out for Red Cloud at once to appeal the case to the district court. It was cold weather in the early spring, and the river was flooded and he had no way to cross but to swim, and swim he did. Before reaching the other side he became so numb that he despaired of reaching the shore, but finally made it. But, it was a very dark night, stiff and cold he lost his way and came near perishing before he reached the dugout of Silas Garber. Willcox became a leading public man of the county and was county judge some years later. During this year J. O. and J. Potter, from Salina county, located at Red Cloud and put up the first saw mill.

This year was Webster county's first vote for a presidential election. The result was, in the year of 1872, Republican U. S. Grant 170 votes, Democrat Horace Greeley 21 votes. Total vote of 191 votes.

During all the year of 1872, there was a continuous stream of settlers into the county. They came by foot, ox team, mules and horses, single or with families. If one could have flown over the county, most any time this year, the picture he would have seen would no doubt resembled that of many an ant hill in summer season.

As there was no time to think of recording the history, no newspaper until the following year, one can only draw on the imagination of activities in building dugouts, sod and log huts, stock shelters, breaking sod for planting, making fire guards, providing for winter fuel by gathering buffalo chips, brush, sunflowers and wood.

What optimism, what hope, what vision the future had for these toilers of the virgin prairies, it can truthfully be said of those that came, that endured, that conquered, that they were among the cream of mankind.

1873

During the winter no remarkable events took place. The time was passed quite pleasantly by the settlers, who were now sufficiently numerous to give some social advantages.

About the middle of April, there occurred one of the most terrible snow storms ever known in this part of the state. Previous to this time the weather had been

fine, warm and balmy and grass had begun to grow. A great deal of sowing and planting had been done. This storm lasted three days and was so blinding that the settlers could not venture away from their houses to care for their stock and large numbers of cattle perished.

This year was outstanding in immigration to the county, and by this time all the best land for homesteading had been taken up and there was a large acreage under cultivation and the yield of crops had been good.

The Webster County Agricultural Society was organized and the 22nd and 23rd of October was the date of the first county fair. The fair was a success. The first newspaper in the county, the Red Cloud Chief, was established in June by C. L. Mather, and the first term of district court was held in June.

In Vol. 1, September 25, 1873, No. 13 issue of the Red Cloud Chief, the first preserved issue we have been able to review, we find a familiar notice 77 years later, it reads:

Notice to Taxpayers—Notice is hereby given that all the delinquent taxes on personal property must be immediately settled. If not paid on or before October 1st, I shall proceed to collect, by distraint and sale of property according to law.—W. E. Jackson, Treasurer.

Notice to Pensioners—The Biennial examination of pensioners will commence on the fourth day of September, 1873.—Thos B. Williams, Examining Officer of Webster County.

Editorial Comment:

We suggest that there be a meeting of the citizens and property holders of Red Cloud, to make some concerted action for protection against prairie fires. If this is not done, there may be everlasting occasion for regret. Already from other parts of the state come accounts of the burning of hay, grain, stables and house—all from careless neglect; that is almost criminal in not preparing for the advent of burning prairies. It is a fact that our town is now liable from fire any dry or windy day. (The Chief then states before printing, it received a notice calling for a meeting to make plans to protect the city from prairie fires.)

Among news items we note:

Young Hyson and Colony Tea 90 cents per pound—Garber and Co.

Among the general weekly local news is a political advertisement for county judge and an editorial against the one making the announcement.

So we find the Chief starting from scratch, true to form, as a pioneer newspaper. These pioneer newspapers, many times short of news, filled it with editorials and articles lambasting some other paper, politician or citizen not walking the straight and narrow path. After using all the mean, slanderous and ridiculous words, descriptive or otherwise, they coined many of their own. These early editors seemed to have no fear of libel suits, which they seemed ready to invite at every opportunity, and I have known them to carry loaded pistols, just in case.

With no radio, no moving pictures, side shows, prize fights or other exciting entertainment, these word battles between editors helped to pass the time.

From Red Cloud Chief, January 1, 1874:

First report of the financial condition of Webster county, Nebraska, December 5, 1873.

Treasurer's report from organization of county to December 5, 1873.

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| State General Fund: | Debit | \$268.01 |
| | Credit | 268.01 |
| Amount assessed | | 268.01 |
| Balance on hand | | 21.63 |
| Delinquent | | 37.44 |
| State Sinking Fund: | Debit | \$107.38 |
| | Credit | 107.38 |
| Assessed | | 107.38 |
| Cash on hand | | 8.68 |
| Delinquent | | 14.86 |
| State School Fund: | Assessed | \$214.76 |
| | Delinquent | 30.27 |
| | On hand | 17.34 |
| | To schools | 167.15 |
| State Normal Fund: | Assessed | \$27.08 |
| | Delinquent | 4.33 |
| County General: | Assessed | \$536.05 |
| | On hand | 17.61 |
| | Delinquent | 188.09 |
| County Sinking Fund: | Assessed | \$1339.46 |
| | On hand | 164.23 |
| | Delinquent | 188.09 |
| Bond Fund: | Assessed | \$266.67 |
| | On hand | 230.31 |
| | Delinquent | 188.09 |
| Railroad Fund: | Assessed | \$432.00 |
| | On hand | 184.15 |
| District School Fund: | Paid to Districts | \$522.28 |
| | On hand | 184.28 |
| | Balance from state | 707.05 |
| | Recovered from state | 707.05 |
| Dog Tax: | Fines and licenses | \$136.00 |
| | Delinquent | 23.00 |
| | On hand | 54.00 |
| Poll Tax: | Assessed | \$352.00 |
| | On hand | 16.00 |
| | Delinquent | 138.00 |
| Resources | | \$15,532.65 |
| Liabilities | | \$15,632.65 |

Note: We have briefed this report so we could save space, presenting only that portion that can be used for comparison.

ARTICLE 6

First County Road

THE FIRST PETITION AND PROCEDURE FOR A ROAD IN WEBSTER COUNTY, NEBRASKA 1871 - 1872

Taken from the county clerk's records, road section book (A).

To the honorable county commissioners of Webster County, Nebraska.

We, the undersigned citizens of Webster county, Nebraska, would most respectfully ask for the location of a county road as follows: To commence at the section corner of section one and two thirty-five and thirty-six between Town one and two, Range eleven west and run by the most practicable route to the north county line.

We would ask that W. N. Richardson be appointed commissioner to locate and report up said road and your petitioners will so pray this 26th day of December, 1871. James LaDuce, James Calvert, George W. Pfaefer, Jr., Edman Parkes, A. G. Gurney, John C. Gethoefter, Geo. B. Lee, George Honty, J. A. Tomlison, Albert Lathrop, John Tomlinson, D. Lutes, Chas. Gurney, Samuel Parks, J. W. Burtis, Chas. H. Potter, John Feltis, M. C. Judd, Silas Garber, Augustis Roats, Edward Kellogg.

BOND ON ROAD PETITION

Know all men by these presents that we, W. N. Richardson, Silas Garber, Samuel Garber, Thomas B. Williams, J. M. Baldwin, freeholders of Webster county, are held and firmly bound unto the County of Webster, State of Nebraska in the sum of _____ Dollars for the payment of which we bind ourselves, our executors and administrators jointly and severally.

Whereas an application has been made to the County Commissioners of said county for the establishment of a county road as follows: From the town line of one and two at or near Red Cloud to the north line of Webster county.

Now if the said W. N. Richardson, Silas Garber, Samuel Garber and others above named shall pay all expenses of said road providing said road shall be less than five miles in length and if the said W. N. Richardson, Silas Garber and Samuel Garber and others named above, shall pay all expenses which may accrue in the location of said road in case the same shall not be established a public highway then this bond to be void, otherwise to remain in full force and effect.

In witness thereof we have hitherto set our hands this second day of December A.D., 1871. J. M. Baldwin, W. N. Richardson, Silas Garber.

Commission to locate road.

State of Nebraska, Webster County. Before the County Commissioners of said county, January 6th, 1872.

To W. N. Richardson:

You are hereby notified that you have this day been appointed a commissioner to view and if requested to locate a county road petitioned for by W. N. Richardson, Silas Garber and others to be called Red Cloud and Adams Center, and described as follows: commencing at Red Cloud between sections one (1) and two (2) and thirty-five (35) and thirty-six (36) on the north town line of

town number one (1) of Range number eleven (11) west of the sixth Principal Meridian Webster County. Thence north three (3) miles on the section line to Crooked Creek, thence in a northerly direction (to be found in the notes within) following the most practicable divides and crossing the heads of four or five shallow draws to Elm Creek eleven miles and seven chains, then following the best divides on an easterly direction crossing five (5) small draws, intersecting the county line twelve miles 72 chains west of the corner past between sections eighteen (18) miles and 28 chains from the place of starting.

At dry creek three miles from Red Cloud no bridge is necessary but a little grading with one team and three men perhaps one day.

At Elm Creek a bridge requiring one day's work with one team at present to make the road passable. The last half of the road runs a fine nearly level prairie. On Elm Creek there is some timber.

You will therefore appear at the office of some justice of peace, notary public or clerk of the board and qualify according to law and on the tenth day of January, 1872, you will proceed to commence the examination of the route above described and if in your judgment the above road is needed you will call to your assistance the necessary aid, proceed to lay out and mark the same according to law and report to the county clerk within twenty days after the completion of said survey.

Given under my hand and seal this sixth day of January, 1872.
(Seal)

Thomas W. Williams,
Clerk

State of Nebraska, Webster County, ss. I do solemnly swear that I will to the best of my ability, perform the duties of commissioner on the within named road according to law and the foregoing instructions.

W. N. Richardson

Subscribed and sworn to by W. N. Richardson before me on this tenth day of January, 1872.

Thomas B. Williams,
County Clerk

State of Nebraska, Webster County, ss. We, Donal McCallum, H. R. Phelps, John Feltis, J. R. Wilcox, do solemnly swear that we will, to the best of our ability, discharge the duties jointly upon us by law as surveyor, chain man and axman in the location of the road above described.

D. M. McCallum, Surveyor

H. R. Phelps, Chainman

John Feltis, Chainman

J. R. Wilcox, Axman

Subscribed and sworn to by Donal McCallum, John Feltis, H. E. Phelps and John Wilcox before me this 22nd of March, 1872.

Thomas B. Williams,
Clerk

REPORT

State of Nebraska, Webster County, ss. To the honorable Board of County Commissioners of the said county.

The undersigned having been appointed a commissioner to view and if thought necessary to locate a certain road in said county petitioned for by W. N. Richardson, S. Garber and others, and known as the Red Cloud and

Adams Center road, would report as follows: That having been duly sworn he found for the accommodation of the public that the road should be located as petitioned for.

Therefore, with the assistance of D. McCallum, as surveyor, John Feltis and H. R. Phelps, chainmen, and J. R. Wilcox as axman, who were all duly sworn, your commissioner proceeded on the day set therefor to wit, the 18th day of March A.D., 1872, to lay out and locate said road and to distinguish the same by the proper marks,

mounds and stakes in the manner prescribed by law and in accordance of the field notes and plat of surveyor of the road which are hereto annexed and which are made part of this report.

Your commissioner is of the opinion that the road will be of great convenience to the public and would hereby recommend its establishment, all of which I respectfully submit.

W. N. Richardson,
Commissioner

ARTICLE 7

Blue Hill -- Bladen Country

About me round I saw
Hill, dale and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid laps of murm'ring streams.—Milton.

* * *

Milton, the poet, in this little verse, graphically pictures what I have tried to present in my first article about the Blue Hill-Bladen country. However the liquid laps of murmuring streams failed to daunt the oncoming pioneer homesteader, for he had ingenuity and brawny muscle, and proceeded to enter the bowels of the earth and tap the hidden waters, so cool, so pure, and in great abundance. It can here be pointed out then, that broad, shallow, sandy bottomed Platte River to the north is some three hundred and fifty feet above that of the Republican. There is therefore a descent from the Platte to the Republican and along such a formation that there is easy drainage from one into the other. Not far from where the town of Blue Hill stands there was a homesteader who soon became known far and near as the pioneer well digger and very few farms up and down this country that did not have a well that had been made by the ingenious benefactor.

When but a small boy on my father's homestead, Section 20, Elm Creek township, he brought his well rig and bored a 12-inch well for us. I thought it would be fun to turn that auger as one of a two-man team that pushed those two big handles round and round, cutting deeper and deeper until the blades on that big auger were full and ready to bring to the surface. Mr. Wilson was a kindly man and gave me the opportunity I had wanted. It did not take long for me to see that if it turned at all my partner was doing far more than his share. Many years after that auger had reached water and that wood curbing had slid to the bottom, I spent many hours turning a windlass with a half-inch rope attached at one end and to the other a long slim bucket with a wood bottom and a two-inch hole through it to its upper surface a wood block attached by a soft leather hinge. Around the well curbing, that was left protruding some 30 inches above the ground, there was built around it a wood box some 30 inches square. Two upright posts were made fast to the back end of a cross beam across their tops and hanging to this was a six-inch pulley around which the rope passed from well to windlass and all this was made fast to the curbing by the use of tamped dirt. The bucket was started down the well and controlled in speed by a lever. When the bucket struck water the valve was lifted up and the bucket filled. As the journey upward was started the valve closed and remained closed until the surface was reached. To the housing was attached a

wooden spout sloping outward and downward which had in its upper end a small two-inch peg upon which the bucket was lowered, the valve opened and bucket emptied. In this way we obtained water for three or four head of horses, as many or more thirsty cows, a dozen or more hogs, chickens, and for the house use. It was not long, however, until a well pump and windmill was substituted. Most of these wells were from 100 to 200 feet deep.

One gathers from the verbal and written history that the predominate earliest settlement was along the Republican valley in Webster county and the Blue River through Adams county to the north. We find this erroneous as the early settlements were fairly well distributed over the counties and a history of school districts and early U. S. post offices and a biographical survey substantiates our findings. While many of the first things that took place may or may not have been the first in the county, they were the first on record and must be so considered until otherwise proven erroneous.

The U. S. Census for the ten-year period ending 1870 showed but 16 people in the county while the census of 1880 showed 7,107. The minor civil divisions of the county in 1885 showed in the two northern tiers of townships, Oak Creek, 588; Potsdam, 1,133; Glenwood, 511; Harmony, 743; Catherton, 486; Batin, 380; Elm Creek, 407; Stillwater, southern townships, 748; Beaver Creek, 636; Pleasant Hill, 504; Red Cloud, 2,219; Inavale, 559; Walnut Creek, 366; Line, 258; Garfield, 498; Guide Rock, 1,122. Town populations were included in these figures.

Long before the railroads came all homestead land had been taken and school and railroad land occupied.

They came on foot, by ox teams and horse drawn wagons of many descriptions; bachelors, "benedicts", young married couples, old married couples, some without and some with one to a dozen children. Among all, the spirit of adventure prevailed. A chance meeting was an introduction and a glad hand was extended to all alike, and at homes the latch string was always out. There was something in the atmosphere of the wild prairies and its sunshine, and the winds stimulating and invigorating that made mankind glad to be alive. The country was like a new born babe on the first days of recognition when with beaming eyes and first smiles the infant makes one feel and see in the pure and unadulterated soil, a divinity, a hope and faith undaunted by adversities; and hardships. And it was this hope and faith in the new land that resolved the early pioneers to stay and fight and conquer the land you and I enjoy to this day.

ARTICLE 8

Sadie Hummel Holdrege Reminisces

Heaven forming each on other to depend,
Bids each on other for assistance call.—Pope.

* * *

A great lover of pioneer history with an ardent desire to preserve it was the ambition of Mrs. Sadie Holdrege of Inavale, Neb. While still alive on August 27, 1937, she presented to the Old Settlers of Webster County at their annual meeting the following early history she had written. Well do we remember her and the institution of which she writes as it was but a very few miles up the creek from where we were born and raised. One of her fondest wishes, we are sure, would be that we publish it along with our pioneer articles. She entitled it "The old Batin, or Hummel Feeding Station on the Old Freight Trail between Red Cloud, Juniata and Hastings."

My father was Isaac Hummel, a bridge contractor for the Burlington Railroad, Washington, Iowa, in 1869. In 1870 he was seized with the prevalent spirit of wanderlust and after a couple of moves we landed in Lincoln, Neb., in July, 1871, remaining there until August. I was a little girl 9 years old.

Lincoln was a little village located on a sort of knoll on the prairie in the vast wilderness, practically without a tree. We could look down the street from the hotel to the Burlington Depot near Salt Creek in a grassless desert. I have never seen a town that looked as lonesome as did Lincoln during our short sojourn there.

In '71 the Burlington grade was built as far west as Fort Kearny, but the track was laid only as far as Dorchester. In August we left Lincoln for Dorchester on a construction train. We looked like settlers and they were glad to haul us free of charge. We piled all our belongings in a box car, and all climbed in and rode there. There were my father, mother, brother Albert, sister Mary and myself. My brother George was born at the Batin Feeding Station in '75. I remember that in the twilight in the car I found a very comfortable bed in a large box filled within about a foot of the top and covered with canvas. The next morning I awoke hungry and cold and could smell nothing but bread, bread, bread. I found out that I had slept on a box of bread being shipped out to the construction crew.

On our arrival at Dorchester my father bought lumber to build a box house 12x24 and hired two teams to haul it and our household goods to Juniata. There was no sign of a town at Hastings, only a large, well-filled lagoon of clear water on the prairie. We also rode on these wagons or walked along beside them on this long dusty trip.

Juniata was named but there was no town there either. The Burlington Company had built four small frame houses in the corner of the section by the new grade as a nucleus for a town, and had also put down a well. My father built his house at Juniata and we were soon all settled in our new home. Although the other four houses were occupied by most friendly people it was a most lonesome place and my mother sometimes cried by the week. We got all our mail, fuel, groceries and other

supplies from Grand Island, about 30 miles away as the train went. The next year a Post Office and retail stores and a hotel came to Juniata. The early winter of '72 was very disagreeable.

My father became dissatisfied, and in July '73 he landed on a quarter section of land on Elm Creek where the Batin schoolhouse now stands, 11 miles straight north of Red Cloud. My father had already used his homestead right so he preempted this land. He built a two room house with a three room basement, and dug a well with abundance of good water at something more than 100 feet.

The already established freight trail to Juniata cut through the middle of our quarter passing in front of our house, thence almost straight north to the railroad town. This old freight trail was the main artery of travel from the Solomon River in Kansas, about forty miles south of Red Cloud, to the then nearest railroad. Feeder trails covering a territory from Esbon, Old Salem, to Smith Center, converged at Red Cloud forming one great trail to Juniata. Mute evidence of these trails still show in the grass land of a few unbroken pastures.

In the fall of '73 a Post Office was established in our home through the efforts of Doctor T. B. Williams, and it was named Batin in honor of Doctor Williams' mother whose maiden name was Batin. Batin Post Office was the regular route from Red Cloud to Juniata including Cloverton and Little Blue. Little Blue also became a feeding station operated by a man by the name of Dailey.

Our well soon became famous as it was the only one between Red Cloud and Cloverton, possibly to the Little Blue. At first freighters stopped to get a drink and to fill their jugs to water their teams. Our place soon became a regular stop both going and coming. My father fixed up crude accommodations and his business grew by leaps and bounds. Our place soon became the overnight stop. At first my father fixed up a small dugout stable in the bank with a brush, hay and dirt roof for about a dozen teams, and also built a two-roomed sod and dugout waiting room and cook shack. The shack had a small heating stove in one room and a cook stove in the other where the teamsters made their coffee and warmed up their meals from their grub boxes. Beans and pork and bread about covered their menu. Each wagon carried a grub box and bedding, and generally a rifle or other firearms.

By the end of two years, in '75, my father had enlarged his stable until it would shelter around 100 teams, and also added a few outside feed bunks by digging out the bank and fixing a manger with poles. He also built a sheep corral of poles and limbs that were handy along the creek. Sheep, by this time, being herded to market occasionally in small flocks. They brought us our first sand burrs which soon infested our entire farm.

Our first water tank was an old wooden bucket, then the old wooden tub. As business grew, my father built

a plank water trough, one foot wide one foot high and about 8 feet long. On many occasions I have seen as many as 125 teams being cared for over night at our station. The water for all this stock was drawn from our well with a rope and bucket. In our earliest days an ox team occasionally passed on the trail, but these were soon displaced by horses. Four-horse teams were not uncommon. After the railroad reached Juniata, Hastings sprang up like a mushroom. The freight trail continued past our place but went to Hastings instead of Juniata until the railroad came to Red Cloud in 1880.

The freighters were but homesteaders going to the nearest railroad market with wagon loads of grain or hogs, returning with various merchandise for themselves and neighbors, consisting of lumber, machinery, clothing and groceries. Flour mills had already been established to run by water power in many places through the freighter's territory. Sometimes a rugged but happy boy or girl accompanied the father on one of these freight trips. On some occasions the freighter was accompanied by his wife. It was all a grim spectacle of determination.

In 1873 until 1880 the stream of freight wagons was continuous winter and summer. In cold weather the grub boxes would freeze up and I have seen men chip their frozen bread with a hatchet and thaw out their beans and pork over the stove while making their coffee. In warm weather the freighter would take his bed and sleep about his wagon, in or under it. But in the cold weather they would sleep on the floor of the cook shack, and when that filled to overflowing they would sometimes fill both the dining room and kitchen floors of our house. This was also true in case of a rain storm. Sometimes lanterns would be swinging all night long as late arrivals came in.

My father charged 25 cents for a team over night without hay, 35 cents with hay. Nearly all freighters carried their own feed grain with them, or did not feed any. Some carried both their grain and hay. My mother charged 25 cents for meals, and 25 cents for a bed, and it was not uncommon for as many as four persons to occupy one 25 cent bed. Those who slept on the floor in their own bed rolls were free and welcome guests.

Most of the teamsters had covered wagons to protect their freight from rain or snow. Raincoats were almost unknown and it was not uncommon to see rain-soaked drivers, or others wearing buffalo robes for capes to keep off the rain. It was a thrilling sight to see teamsters double up their teams to pull out of a mud hole or over a slippery hill. In the winter time burlap sacks were almost universally wrapped about the feet for overshoes. It was not unusual to see a dozen men wading about in the snow with great cumbersome burlap wrappings about their feet.

The mail was carried on this old trail from Red Cloud to Juniata by a spring wagon, worked over and fixed up for a stage coach. Frequently it would land at our place with as many as four passengers and the driver for dinner,

the four passengers, all dressed up, were a lot of people those days.

In a tornado at Juniata in '72 we lost our clock, and for a time-piece my mother had a surveyor set a brad in the south window sill and mark its shadow for noon. With this brad and the almanac which gave the time of the rising of the sun, we measured our time of day for several years, just how long I cannot recall.

While running our Feeding Station Indians would pass by and trade us buffalo meat and deer and antelope, for hog meat as they called it, or bright pieces of clothing. I well remember that my father would hang whole quarters of buffalo and halves of deer and antelope on the north side of our house at any time of year, and it would never spoil or become infested with insects of any kind, but a shell would dry over it. In fact it would keep until it would all dry up.

With the coming of the railroad to Red Cloud in 1880 the long freight haul ceased, freight stations passed out and the wide, rutty, many tracked trails grew up to grass. Our Batin Station was deserted more suddenly than it started. The stables fell in, the sheep corrals were used for stove wood. Also the Batin Post Office was discontinued with my father having been the only post master.

Among others, Ed McCune drove the stage and carried mail in the early days of our old trail, and he quit his job to marry Fannie Barber, the first school teacher of the Red Cloud district and to settle on his homestead northeast of town.

In 1877, a young man just past 20 years of age, educated, fearless, obliging and nice looking, hired out to drive this stage and carry the mail. The next year, at a little past 16 years of age, I quit as assistant postmistress of Batin and helper at the hotel and feeding station to become Mrs. H. H. Holdrege. I have reared a son and four daughters, and today I am grandmother to nine and great grandmother to nine others. I got enough of moving around when I was a little girl in this new country, and have most interestedly watched the great procession of settlement and development pass by.



Many Built of Native Logs.

ARTICLE 9

Walnut Creek

WHEN THE EARLIEST SETTLERS CAME AND WHO THEY WERE

The first settler of Walnut Creek was Joseph Holcomb, who came to Webster county in the month of September, 1870. Mr. Holcomb was not only the first settler of Walnut Creek, but he was also the first printer who made his home in the county. A printer by the name of Hoffman had arrived at Guide Rock during the summer, but he afterwards removed to Franklin county, where he founded a paper. Mr. Holcomb's only connection with the newspaper business in Nebraska was an occasional compositor for the Chief during its first two or three years. There is an amusing story connected with Mr. Holcomb in early days.

In the Sunday school at Inavale, the teacher—Mrs. Groat, we believe—asked her class of little girls to give the name of the earthly father of the Savior. This seemed to stagger the class, and nobody ventured to answer. The teacher undertook to help their memory by suggestion. She first pronounced the letter "J", but the children stared blankly at her. After waiting a little while, the teacher went a little farther and pronounced the syllable "Joe." A bright smile glowed on one little cheek, and a little hand was uplifted. "Who was it?" eagerly inquired Mrs. Groat. The answer came with a brisk explosiveness which startled the poor teacher as if a bunch of firecrackers had been lit off, "Joe Holcomb."

Mr. Holcomb was not the first to take a homestead in Walnut Creek.

As Charley Gurney was coming out with "Father" Brice's yoke of oxen and when the latter was returning from Beatrice, in the first days of October, 1870, they were overtaken by a wagon drawn by horses. In this wagon were Elder Kennedy, generally called "Grandpap," and his son, Thomas Kennedy, with James Vaughan and William Fennimore, and, perhaps, William McKinney and August Pierstorff. These parties selected their lands on Walnut Creek and returned to get their papers in time to meet Gurney, Roats and Brice still plodding along with their slow gaited oxen.

Of these last-named parties, Pierstorff and McKinney returned, and made their home for the winter in a dugout on the bank of Crooked Creek.

The First Birth in the County

While living in this dugout, there was born to Mrs. McKinney, a boy, who because he was the first child born in the county, was named Charles Webster McKinney.

Stockade

In the spring of 1871, the residents of Walnut Creek

began construction of a stockade on Elder Kennedy's place. This was a small affair, and was never completed. James Vaughan declared that there might be a chance of their being attacked by Indians and killed in that way, but there was an absolute certainty that they would starve to death unless they broke out some ground and began the raising of crops. This view prevailed and Walnut Creek postponed the Indian subject for further debate.

The Holdreges

In the spring of 1871, H. H. Holdrege appeared within the boundaries of the township, and Jim Vaughan and William McKinney helped him to find and locate a piece of land. Mr. Holdrege's settlement proved a sad disappointment to August Pierstorff, who had taken his land in continuous forties along the creek with the idea of holding the adjacent land on the east open for his father-in-law, Uncle John Mitchell. After making his entry, Mr. Holdrege returned to the eastern part of the state, sending his two boys out to break out some prairie and plant the breaking to sod corn for winter feed. When he returned in the fall he found several other settlers in the vicinity, some of whom had brought stock which had devoured his sod corn.

Mr. Holdrege and wife are entitled to the credit of being the oldest couple who settled in the south west part of the county in the first years. The old gentleman is eighty-two and his wife is seventy-two years of age. The old couple are entitled to another distinction. Their son Himan is the youngest grandfather in the county. Why, Grandpa Holdrege is so young, his son is often spoken of as his brother; so young that the mother of his wife—Great Grandma Hummel, that was until last winter—is youthful enough in appearance and activity to have been sought and won in marriage.

In the fall of 1871, the following families were settled in the neighborhood: The Kennedys, Jesse ("Grandpap" or "Elder") and his son Thomas; the Holcombs, Joseph and his sister Mary, now Mrs. Arneson; William Fennimore and his three sons, William, Zachary and Jackson; William McKinney, James Vaughan, James Murphy and family; John Deolen, Uncle Thomas Jones, with his three boys, John, Joe and Tom, the latter but a lad, and five girls; Uncle Johnny Mitchell with his two boys and three girls; the Arnesons with two boys and three girls, and George Heaton and family.

Walnut Creek became immediately distinguished for the number and beauty of its big girls. The Jones family rather took the lead, in this respect. There were, first, the two twins, Mary, now Mrs. Ed Smith, and Bessie, who married William Fennimore, Jr.; then Sarah, who became Mrs. James Frazier; Kate, who is now Mrs. John Fulton of Riverton, and Maggie. Such a dugout of blooming beauty was probably nowhere else in the state, or, for that matter, the entire west. There was not a single one of the girls who would not have been regarded as singularly attractive, were it not for her sisters, who were equally, or more charming.

Bobier--Haakes Murder

The earliest and most terrible crime case in Webster county occurred in the Garfield settlement in the early seventies. It was the murder of William Haakes by Richard Bobier.

William Haakes had already staked out a claim on Ash Creek. His family consisted of his wife and children, his aged mother and a young man by the name of Dan Hoover. Haakes' mother had also taken out a claim on Haakes Creek on the quarter where the Garfield Church stood.

Bobier had been a teamster or freighter in Kansas prior to the war, during the days when John Brown and Quantrell filled the state with terror. A teamster in those days learned to be very prompt with his rifle.

Bobier, who had homesteaded farther up the creek from Haakes, and Haakes had both scoured the country for a tree from which to split shingles. They found a large scrub oak with a high trunk, which grew on public land which suited them both. Bobier cut the tree down and hewed out the main log, when a big rain washed it down on the Haakes homestead. When Bobier wanted to move the log back to his place he and Haakes quarreled over it. Another incident occurred which brought the quarrel between the two men to white heat. Dan Hoover, the young man who had come with the Haakes family, had been paying attention to the sixteen year old daughter of Haakes', and wanted to marry her, but her father refused to consent to the marriage. Hoover not knowing what to do talked to Bobier about his love affair, and Bobier, who was angry at Haakes, took this occasion to get even with him and encouraged the young people to elope. He said to Hoover:

"Bring the girl up to my place. She can wear my wife's dress, and you can take my team and drive to Mankato to get married."

Hoover remonstrated, saying: "He'll shoot me if I do that."

Bobier replied: "You go ahead. Leave the old man to me, I'll take care of him!" So on the morning of July 3, 1872, the young couple slipped away to Mankato and were married. Late that evening Bobier with a couple of mischievous young settlers who were in sympathy with Bobier, came down the creek to where the log had lodged and in their attempts to load it made considerable noise which attracted Haakes' attention. Hearing the racket he said to his wife:

"I believe they are over there trying to steal my log. I will go over to see what's going on." She tried to keep him from going, but he went anyway, and shouldering his rifle he went towards where the log lay. It was not long until she heard a shot ring out and when she got to the clearing she found her husband dead near the log. Later Bobier gave himself over to the authorities and Haakes was laid out in the shade of his mother's dugout across the creek. A large crowd of men and boys gathered at the Haakes' place. Then men who examined the wound in Haakes' side, and the stock of his rifle thought Bobier could not have shot in self defense, because the

bullet from Bobier's rifle cut Haakes' rifle stock in such a manner that Haakes must have been carrying the rifle on his shoulder. Bobier had kept his word with the elopers and had taken care of the old man, and that day Haakes was buried in his mother's dooryard near where the Garfield church stood, and not far from where he had fallen the night before.

The day after the murder a great Fourth of July celebration was in progress on Dry Creek near Elm Creek between Red Cloud and Guide Rock, and when the news of the murder reached the gathering a mob began to form, but Joseph Garber talked them out of the notion to lynch Bobier. Bobier had delivered himself up to Mr. Garber, there being no sheriff in the county. Dr. Peter Head and Isaac B. Hampton acted as counsel for the defendant, and Bobier pled self defense.

Noah Wagoner, who bought Old Lady Haakes' relinquishment, had Haakes' body moved to the Wagoner cemetery on the hill years afterwards.

Because of the sympathetic attitude toward Bobier of some of the settlers in Garfield community, his punishment was not pressed locally.

Bobier was sent to Beatrice, the nearest jail. Mr. Garber wrote to Judge O. P. Mason of the fact. At that time there were but three Judges in the whole state of Nebraska, and they constituted the supreme as well as the district courts of the state. Judge Mason wrote back that it was impossible to hold a term of court in Webster county for some years yet, if ever. Bobier was finally tried in 1874, the trial resulting in a disagreement of the jury. The prisoner was allowed to go at large, and lived for a number of years in this state. Later he went to Oklahoma where it is rumored he shot another man, and that he later killed a man in Colorado. When last heard of Bobier was in South Dakota. Haakes' widow, the newly weds, and Haakes' mother, together with the other children, left as soon as their claims were sold. George Houchin declared later that years afterwards at a dance he danced with a granddaughter of Haakes'.

About 1910 a middle aged man, who claimed he was a son of Haakes' came to Red Cloud to avenge his father's death, but at that late date no witnesses were available and he left in disgust and disappointment.



Webster's Old Frame Court House.

Webster County In 1874

Most of the early settlers had come from points east, from more thickly settled communities and numerous opportunities afforded social entertainments of varied interests. These people were most of them young, and they had transplanted themselves from such an atmosphere to lonely places enlivened only by the hideous howling of wolves and coyotes, and the "who-who-who's" of the prairie owls. It furnished a contradictive environment which naturally produced lonesomeness, and homesickness, especially during the long evenings and Sundays. It is interesting to note their activities in the Elm Creek stockade.

One Sunday one of the boys spotted slow moving herd of buffalo on a far-off ridge and soon a strategic attack was organized. Two of the "best shots" were to sneak up the ravine on either side of the divide and hide while the third was to mount the fastest pony and in a large circular movement, get behind the herd in an effort to stampede them down the divide where the riflemen would get in their work. As the herd came nearer, it was evident they were veering to the east, to the extent that the rifleman to the west was going to lose out. So he endeavored to cross over to the eastward part. When part way over he was confronted with the stampede. He dropped to his knees and began to fire. It was a herd of cows and calves, the calves being on the inside.

The hunter succeeded in dividing the herd so that one calf got out of the herd and lagged behind. The man on the pony gave chase and was able to grasp the tail of the calf and slow it up, but alas, its mother charged and the tail-hold was released. But again, as soon as the mother cow took for the herd the tail-hold was resumed. The calf pulled ahead and the pony held back with the rider as a line strained between them. After another attack the mother gave up the rescue and rejoined the herd. The afternoon ended with the rider and pony bringing in a small calf. At the stockade there was no milk so the captors made a broth of grass and syrup from their own tables, but lonesome pining and the unbalanced diet failed to keep the calf alive.

One Sunday that fall, as the men loitered around the stockade, a flock of wild turkeys was spotted up the creek. The athlete and rifle man, dressed in Sunday clothes, was chosen to make the kill. With his new gun he sneaked close enough to get a shot and broke a large tom's wing while the others made off on the wing. The winged turkey made off on foot with our champion footracer tracking. The warming rifleman soon discarded his gun, later his boots, coat, vest and shirt, leaving them in his trail. His reasoning was that his endurance would capture in time, but the turkey proved superior in speed and endurance and after three or four miles the man gave up the chase. After a rest the next job was for him to find his way home. It was open prairie and the chase ambled over a zig-zag course, in a semi-circle, with no landmarks, so the recovery of his clothing, new boots and the gun was no easy task, but he managed to land at the stockade in time for supper. He ceased to boast of his running ability, but was not allowed to soon forget his Sunday afternoon experience by his stockade brothers.

In an issue of this year the editor of the Red Cloud Chief asked for a settlement of his accounts. He announced the birth of a baby and therefore needed the money.

Note—It is gratifying to see the newspaper space taken up regarding the activities of the early teachers of Webster county, and we chronicle a first Teachers' Institute program.

Teachers' Institute held in April: A teachers' institute was held at Red Cloud last week commencing on Tuesday and closing with an examination Friday, April 24. It was called to order by H. S. Kaley, county superintendent. Charles W. Springer was named secretary.

C. B. Palmer, editor of Nebraska Teacher, was the principal instructor, assisted by local teachers.

On Friday, a county teachers' association was formed with H. S. Kaley president and A. L. Burton as secretary. The first meeting will be held in Red Cloud on Friday, May 22, 1874. Eleven teachers remained for the examination which continued throughout the day.

The following teachers and others were present: Red Cloud, M. Jones, Lydia F. Manger, Sarah L. Fisher, Francis Beauchamp, C. Smith, Fannie Barber, Laura J. Ludlow, Sarah C. Tulleys, Marq C. Metcalf, Bertha E. Brown, and Amelia E. Smith; Wells: Eliza A. Tuttle, Cora Smith; Inavale: Mrs. G. W. Knight, and from Guide Rock, Vina C. Tyler.

Your market prices of 1874 furnished by Garber and Company:

Crushed Sugar, 6 lbs. \$1.00
 A Coffee Sgr. 6½ lbs. \$1.00
 C Coffee Sugar, 7 lbs. \$1.00
 Yellow Sugar, 7 lbs. \$1.00
 Dark Brown Sugar, 9 lbs. \$1.00
 Choice Rio Coffee, 3 lbs. \$1.00; Rice, 8 lbs. \$1.00;
 Gunpowder Tea, per lb. \$1.80; Colony Tea, per lb. 90c;
 Young Hyson Tea, per lb. 90c.

Smoked side meat, per lb. 12½c; Butter per lb. 20c;
 Eggs per doz. 15c; Flour per 100 lbs. \$3.40 and \$3.25.

Red Flannels, 50-60c yd.; Brown shirting, 13-18c per yd.; Prints, 10-12½c; Brown Denims, 25c; Heavy Brown Duck, 25-30c per yard.

Heavy Boots, \$4.50-\$5.50; light boots, \$4.50-\$6.25; heavy shoes, \$2.25-\$2.75; nails 7½-8½c per pound.

A new postmaster this year—Mr. M. B. McNitt. Announcing a dance at Hummel's Ranch on Elm Creek.

A free ferry across the Republican river was planned for this year and contracted, but the contractors defaulted. It was to have been the Red Cloud Bridge.

Three young soldiers were driving a team of mules in the upper part of town where one of the animals took the bit in his teeth and whirled around, upsetting the wagon and throwing the soldiers out, laying them up for a few days.

The paper also published the registrations at the hotels. Note the out-of-town guests for one week in

1874: P. Wagner, New York; F. I. Foss, Boston; H. Kuler, T. Monka, L. Miller, Ohio; I. Moser, Aaron Blue, Lev Book, P. McHale, A. Garlock, St. Louis; G. S. Larkin, St. Joe; J. W. Thompson, Rockford, Illinois; and E. R. Lawrence, Sandwich Islands.

Buzzard Glory, Nebr., March 29, 1874. To the editor of the Chief: Permit me, through the columns of your paper, to give your readers an account of what is transpiring in this part of the (im)mortal vineyard. Spring has come at last, and the farmers are busy plowing and sowing again. The unusual amount of snow which has fallen and melted upon the ground during the winter has left the soil in excellent condition for planting and with a reasonable amount of care, abundant harvests may be expected. The Elm Creek lyceum has closed for the season, to be opened again upon the return of long nights and wintry days. It appears that that short letter which I wrote for the emigration column in the Chief, has got me into

business. I have received letters from different parts of the East making inquiries about the country.

Now I wish to inform the inquirers that I am no land speculator, neither am I an agent, but I am interested, as every citizen should be, in the development of our country, consequently I will cheerfully answer any questions that may be addressed to me by those who intend coming to this part of the state.

"Gentle Betsey" says I am in search of a wife, taking the ladies alphabetically and recommends me to come up that way. I hardly think it is worth while. I have gotten almost through the alphabet and have met only with indifferent success. I am almost discouraged. Oh, for one glowing ray of hope! Yours truly, XERXES.

The free ferry spoken of in the last issue of the Chief is a "fizzle" and the parties to whom it was let have gone back on their contract. They neither gave the bond required nor purchased the lumber and material necessary.

ARTICLE 12

1876

The county continued to increase in population and improvements. The acreage of crops was large and the yield was good.

The State Fair was in the fall. Webster county products were awarded a medal.

The election of 1876, in November, saw Governor Silas Garber reelected by a large majority. J. S. Gilham was elected state senator for the district of which Webster county forms a part. J. E. Smith of Webster county, was elected Representative to the Legislature and L. H. Luce and G. W. Ball were elected County Commissioners.

As the immigration increased this year, Red Cloud made marked improvements.

The Red Cloud Chief changed hands in 1875 when C. L. Mather sold to M. Warner and again this year when Warner sold to M. L. Thomas, a farmer and homesteader of Elm Creek.

A good flouring mill, though small, was built this year by Polly and son on Elm Creek, east of Red Cloud at a place named Amboy. It was merely a flag station and it had one little store and post office.

The result of Presidential election: Republican for President, Hayes 509 votes; Democrat for President, Tilden 115 votes; total votes 624.

Public officials for the year: A. S. Paddock, U. S. Senator; W. Hitchcock, U. S. Senator; Lorenzo Crounce, Legislator.

Governor: Silas Garber.

County: E. H. Jones, treasurer; J. A. Tulleys, clerk; I. W. Tulleys, judge; M. C. Bill, sheriff; J. S. Gilham, school superintendent; C. C. Coon, coroner; County Commissioners: W. E. Thorn, A. M. Hardy, G. W. Ball, F. Nelleson.

Note: the reader will please note the unusual proclamation of Governor Garber as it is presented by the Red Cloud Chief:

"We call the attention of the people of the state to a proclamation of Governor Garber, recommending the

preparation of a historical sketch of each county to be read on the Fourth of July at local celebrations and to be filed in offices of the respective county offices and copies to be sent to the Congressional Library. These sketches will be a valuable collection of facts for future historians of the county and will doubtlessly be published some time as a public document and distributed over the country. It would be a good idea for the county commissioners of each county to designate some person to write up the sketch, to prevent confusion and secure the carrying out of the Congressional resolution and the proclamation of Governor Garber."

75 years later as a retired dentist, the chronicler of these Webster County Chronicles, after hours and days, weeks and months of continuous study, research and compiling from records, memoirs, and newspapers, hereby endeavors to give to Webster County the ideas and objectives that were called to our attention by the proclamation of Governor Garber and the congressional resolution.

The trouble I have encountered only goes to show that what is everybody's business is nobody's business and that unless a project is supported by some endowment perpetuated through generations by some organization of national scope with an objective, activity, warranting personal interest, much of local history is lost. This is the function of county historical associations whose records should be preserved in a designated depository, a county office or endowed public library. This is to contain all published historical documents properly condensed and filed for future reference.

Why should I interest myself in this? I was born and raised in Webster county. My father and mother were among the very earliest pioneers. I had two grandparents, also early settlers, and many other relatives resting under Webster county soil. I had ten uncles and one aunt who resided at one time or another in Webster county. It is where all my brothers and sisters were born, a county I call home, deserving of any contribution I can make.

Married—Thomas-Nutting. At the residence of the

bride's father in Elm Creek Township by Nicholas Haney, Justice of Peace, a brother-in-law of the groom, a pioneer settler and neighbor of the bride's family. The groom, homesteader S. M. Thomas and Miss Alice Nutting, all of Webster county. The Chief wish the happy couple all the happiness in the world and hope they may never regret the step they have taken. May their shadows never grow less.

Note: The bridegroom, the justice of peace, who married them, the editor who chronicled the wedding, were all uncles of the writer.—Dr. E. A. Thomas.

Our celebration was a glorious success, the day was all that could be desired. Early in the morning the wagons came in from all directions until something like 1200 people were assembled on the grounds. Several bands were present. Father Brice, one of the oldest men in the county and among the earliest read the declaration. That the oration of which it does not become us to say more, than that the speaker did his best. (The orator was the writer, Mr. James Gillam, a pioneer attorney.)

After dinner, which was enjoyed by many families and community gatherings, the reading of histories of the several precincts, Potsdam, Inavale, Walnut Creek, Stillwater and Red Cloud were enjoyed.

The baseball game, Red Cloud vs. Pioneers of the Blue, ended in victory for the latter, 33-32.

Ed Smith, one of the enterprising farmers in 1876 was boasting of ears of corn that measured 15 inches long.

One of our chronic grumblers was getting ready to express his views about the country and to growl about the drouth last Friday when the clouds began to gather and before he could untie his team and get home, we had abundance of rain and just at the right time. The crops

are looking lively vigorous.

Oct. 12. Chief changes editors. Mr. H. H. Warner, out-going editor, writes:

"The gentleman to whom I have surrendered my keys, Mr. M. L. Thomas, is an old resident of the county, being one of the oldest settlers on Elm Creek. He has been long known to the readers of the Chief as XERXES from Buzzards' Glory. (M. L. Thomas' homestead was just below the high bluff, just north of Cowles, which he named Buzzards' Glory.) Here the buzzards had a grand view of surrounding country and approaching enemies.

"His time has been mainly occupied by agriculture. From the fact that the farmers from the north part of the county trade in Hastings, there has not in times past been that acquaintance and sympathy between the two sections of the county . . . And henceforth he will do a great deal to build the north and south together."

The new editor speaks:

"It will probably be expected that upon assuming control of the Chief that we will inform our patrons for the future and the position of the Chief will occupy politically. We have only to say that the Chief will be in the future as it has been in the past. Republican in politics and will ever strive to secure the nomination and election of the best of men to fill the various positions of honor and trust within the gift of the people of the county and state. We have always been more of a farmer than a politician and would rather make the Chief a paper for farmers rather than for politicians . . . In conclusion we would say to you all, 'Come in and see us, we want to see how you look.'—M. L. Thomas."

The Sunday School convention, an annual affair was in session on September 11, and a splendid meeting was reported. The spiritual atmosphere was outstanding.

ARTICLE 13

1880

In the summer of this year, H. S. Kaley, who had for many years been a Regent of the State Normal School, was elected to be Representative to the Legislature; Hugh Stevenson, Commissioner; and J. R. Wilcox, Judge.

Presidential election results: For President, Republican Garfield 1,006 votes; Democrat Hancock 389 votes.

A comparison of the three Presidential election votes reveals our growth in votes.

| | 1872 | 1876 | 1880 |
|------------------|------|------|------|
| Republican | 170 | 509 | 1006 |
| Democratic | 21 | 115 | 389 |
| Total..... | 191 | 624 | 1395 |

The Red Cloud post office had then become a third class office. The popular postmaster, Mr. McNitt, had been continued in that office for several years. The railroad had install regular post cars that year.

Mr. Henry Cook, who had recently purchased the drug store of C. H. Potter, had resolved to furnish a nice cool drink for the thirsty during the hot weather and had put up a first class soda fountain in his store and would

deal out soda water "cold as the Arctic icebergs" to all who wished a nice healthy drink.

A thirteen year old son of Mr. Joe Fogle, who lived in this county, prepared the ground for corn and planted that spring, one hundred acres of corn, without other assistance other than a boy to drop the corn.

One of the builders of the Elm Creek stockade and one of the earliest pioneers died of typhoid fever that year. His name was Edwin W. Edson of Cowles. He received an injured back during the Civil war and that had troubled him at times. He had come from Pennsylvania and Illinois and had settled on Elm Creek during the latter part of 1790 and the spring of 1871. He left a wife and three small children. He was a thrifty and industrious farmer and business man and left his wife and family with a compensation.

Mr. W. A. McKeighan comes into the limelight. He addressed a large audience at the court house last Saturday night and the Red Cloud Chief had this to say:

"His address was very good and showed considerable thought and research. Mr. McKeighan is evidently blessed with a retentive memory, if not a sound mind. The

main effort of the speaker seemed to be to show why Mr. Garfield should not be elected president this fall. As Mr. McKeighan is a 'Greenbacker' and as the 'flit bubble' has long since faded into the misty past, we will not contradict any of the numerous assertions made by him which are not supported by the proofs. Greenbackers are not supposed to be responsible for what they say anyway."

The acidity of compliments hurled at each other by these early editors is exemplified in the following:

(Chief): "The editor of the Argus says in the last issue of his dirty little sheet that the editor of the Chief was drunk and lousy. Just think of it; a fearful charge isn't it?"

"The editor of the Chief will not enter into a controversy with the long-eared individual of the subject, but will simply say that even if the charges preferred against us by the Argus were true, our condition, would in our opinion, be enviable compared with that of the Argus editor. The man who ambles about town with a precious part of his anatomy carefully and artistically done up in linen clothes, and chewing shingle nails certainly can't be expected to receive the individual sympathy of the community."

WEBSTER COUNTY'S SECOND DECADE FROM 1880 TO 1890

Webster has discarded his short pants and waist and is now wearing a shirt, and pants held up with suspenders. He is washing behind the ears and combing his hair without being told. He has begun to count his pennies and to talk about taxes. He has lost most of his first teeth.

He begins to take stock of his assets, he embraces townships 1 to 4 inclusive, north of the base line, and Ranges 9 to 12 inclusive, west of the sixth principal meridian. This makes twenty-four miles square, 368,640 acres. It is now mostly occupied in farm land and pasture. Steady progress. The winter of 1880 and '81 was a severe one, and was very hard on livestock. The cattle in the spring were in very poor condition, as they had been exposed to the inclemency of the winter with little protection from the storms. In the spring of 1881, as the snow began to melt, the creeks and river were flooded and much damage was done to bridges by the ice gorges. In many places the valley land was overflowed and some damage was done to farm buildings and property.

Following this, the immigration was somewhat rapid, and its growth gradual until the year of 1886. Then followed three years during which time the crops were shortened to some extent on account of too small a supply of rainfall. In 1889 there was an abundance of moisture, and the crops were excellent.

On several occasions the early settlers of the county were much alarmed on account of anticipated attacks by the Indians. Reference to one of these "scares" will suffice to show the nature of all of them. Those very few settlers of Red Cloud were residing in the stockade, they had a law of their own enacting, to the effect that no one should fire a gun in the vicinity of premises unless, a party out by permission, for the purpose of hunting; consequently the firing of a gun was taken as a signal of the approach of hostile Indians. These wild men were always fond of bells, and by this time they had obtained a supply, and nearly every one of them had a bell on his pony. Mr. William E. Jackson, one of the dwellers of the stockade, had a cow with a bell on her. About this time all the men within the stockade, excepting William E. Jackson

and one other man, took ox teams and went out to get timber along the river a short distance away. After the party reached the timber, Dr. T. B. Williams, afterwards first clerk of the county, accidentally cut his foot, and a young man named Penney was sent in to get a saddle horse to carry the doctor home. Before reaching the stockade the young man forgot the law and commenced firing his gun at prairie dogs. Just before this, Mr. Jackson's cow had broken out of her pen and followed the oxen, so when the men in the timber heard the cow bell, they supposed it was on some Indian's pony. This to them was a double alarm and though they could see no enemy, that the savages were certainly upon them. Mr. Jackson, upon hearing the gun, started out to see what occasioned the alarm. He soon met young Penney, who was "as pale as a sheet" having discovered his error. He then told Penney to hurry up and notify the women at the stockade, to remove their fright, that it was a false alarm while he (Jackson) would go on to the timber to notify the men there. Mr. Jackson jocosely says that the fright was so great that upon reaching the timber he could hardly find a man, as all had hidden away for safety. Finally he succeeded in calling them out of their retreat, and the scare was over. No Indians were near. The men said the women were terribly alarmed, and the women retorted by saying that the men were frightened equally as much, or they would not have hidden away so carefully.

Another scare, and an amusing one, too, followed this. Dr. Williams wore a moccasin on his wounded foot, and before it got well and whole; wearing the moccasin he went again to assist in getting timber. The track of his moccasin was discovered and thoughtlessly taken to be the track of an Indian, hence another false alarm, which when explained, caused considerable merriment. The Indians stole a little hay and corn occasionally, but did not otherwise disturb or injure the settlers of Webster county.

It seems one of the inherent dispositions of man that he should love to hunt possibly from the cave man's time. The stories of numerous buffalo, elk, deer, antelope, coyotes, wildcats, wild turkey, prairie chicken, timber squirrels, prairie dogs and small animals along the streams, had a lure for many a settler coupled with a chance to secure cheap land and a possible chance of adventure. For the first few years the settlers got their meat supply almost absolutely by killing the butchering buffalo. The animals were so plentiful and so easily obtained that no part of the carcass except the best was used for food. The citizens supplied themselves, as far as they could with buffalo meat, but at the end of this time these animals became almost extinct. The settlers of this county saw more buffalo and had more experience with them than the pioneers of other settlements. In all the older states, where civilization advanced gradually in a body, the buffalo seemed to scent the approach of the white man and fled in advance. Formerly the frontier settler seldom saw a buffalo unless he went out beyond the advanced line of settlement. In the settlement of this country, the pioneers passed the front line of civilization, and jumped over, as it was, a broad strip of unsettled territory, and located among the Indians, buffalo and other wild animals named above.

Soon after the settlement of the territory of Webster county began, a number of human skeletons were found on the south side of the Republican river some distance below Red Cloud, where a number of persons had undoubtedly been massacred several years before by the Indians. There were other similar discoveries made by the earliest settlers.

ARTICLE 14

First Settlers

Pioneers of this territory, not unlike the pioneers who first landed on our eastern shores, as they pressed ever westward towards the setting sun met in a great measure the same resistance, difficulties and hardships. First, the American Indian watched the landing of the white man in a sort of awed curiosity, for he had never seen or experienced meeting the foreign white man, from where, he did not know. The Indian by nature, by training and environment had taken on much of the wild, but exhibited a desire to become civilized. He was in a great measure not unlike the wild animal that had been tamed but remained semi-domestic, always on the alert, suspicious, never at ease. And he remained such a critter from the time the first boat tied up at landing until he was lassoed, corralled and forcibly made to adhere to the wishes of the white man. However the white man has had many causes to hang his head in shame and disgrace, for many times his actions and behavior towards the Indian, has been as disgraceful, debauching and cruel as was his treatment of the white man.

And thus it was and remained so, that the pioneers not only had to contend with the wilds of the frontier and untamed elements but to contend with lawlessness. Preceding the advance of the early settlers the national government has established forts and had soldiers and mounts for protection but it must be remembered there was no telephone or telegraph or other means of communications other than the pony and often no available person to ride the pony.

So following in the wake of this no-mans land, this gap of time between the organized territory and frontier, the time when there were enough settlers to organize, here came the scum of the white man, from the jails, penitentiaries, reformatories, con men, swindlers, thieves, robbers, murderers, men who would stop at nothing to gain their

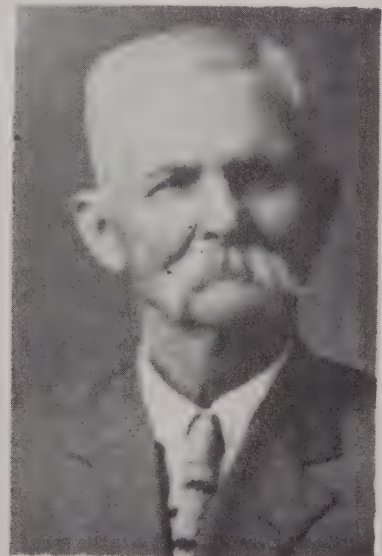
desires. These were the times and places of the Wild Bill Hickocks and the U. S. marshals. It was this class of hoodlums who traded whiskey and other liquors to the Indians, who persuaded small bands to leave their Chief's command and go out on their killing, robbing, scalping. These were the days when the citizens many times took the law into their own hands meting out justice according to their own interpretation.

EARLIEST ATTEMPTS AT SETTLEMENT

In these chronicles we are restrained to confining ourselves to the territory in and about what is now known as the Geographical Center of U. S. A., and to remind our readers of this fact. Settlements were attempted in the south central part of Nebraska and the north central part of Kansas as early as the Civil War. Through the establishing of Ft. Kearny and keeping it supplied, the Oregon trail and Mormon trail, the Forty-niners, the establishment of the pony express, the Overland Stage Line, many travelers became attracted to certain localities and ignoring warnings, attempted settlement, of course along streams of running water where timber could be found. These small settlements became easy prey for the renegade Indians and it was here the atrocities and Indian massacres occurred. It was here many blood-curdling experiences were enacted that now seem fantastic. Space will not permit recording authority, names and details but a brief narrative of facts. A father and mother with four boys and three girls who could not believe the stories coming out of the west. To them the opportunities offered, over-balanced the dangers and their faith in God's protection had no meaning to savage Indians. It was at the beginning of the war in 1861, also, may have been a factor in their coming. Here they remained during strenuous years spent in farming and stock raising; seemly safe until 1867.



They built of Buffalo Grass sod.



*Emanuel Peters
First homesteader in county*

THE LAWLESS WHITE MAN

They had induced a few friends to join them, and all seemed well until one day there appeared, seemingly out of nowhere, a band of Indians on the war path and in less time than it would take to describe it, massacre of the entire group except one was complete and their homes destroyed and their livestock driven off. The one man who escaped within a week fell by the tomahawk and scalping knife.

At another time not far away a shrewdly planned and skillfully executed raid of forty braves was assigned to this location which was protected by a stockade. The Indians reached the stockade, having left their ponies concealed in a nearby ravine. The husband and head of the family was away. They were admitted and given dinner and a liberal helping of tobacco, when without warning they drew their bows and opened war. Fortunately one of the men in the stockade had a revolver. But the attack came so suddenly he could not use it and fell a victim to the first volley of arrows. One of the older boys of the family grabbed the revolver and shot the nearest redskin, who had made an effort to get it. At the report of the gun the Indians raced for the door, but three failed to get out alive, as the young man with the revolver proved to be a skilled marksman. However white men lost their lives and one man and a boy were wounded in the attack.

Not far away a boy of eighteen years was met by two Indians and while one was shaking hands with him the other ran him through with his spear and was scalping him as his life faded out.

With no way of communication and the small settlements far apart people were not aware of what was going on and there was no means of warning. And there were those who were not aware of the nature of the savage Indian and many times had the opinion that stories of them had been overdrawn. One such family had built a little log hut and was getting well and happily settled when the Indians in war paint and with hideous war cries were seen coming, the family rushed for the timber as a hiding place but only two got to shelter. The young wife of one of the sons and a young girl who was visiting the family. Nine were killed and scalped and stripped of their clothing. Cries from the babe held in the mother's arms gave their hiding place away and they were captured. The restlessness of the babe infuriated the Indians and an Indian crushed the skull of the babe in the mother's arms. The two captive women underwent many hardships of living with these savages for two months when they were ransomed for a good sum.

Previous to county organization and not far from the writer's birthplace two men and two sons were putting up hay when they spied two prowling Indians who seemed to be planning an attack. The men unhooked the team, unharnessed them and put the boys, who were around twelve years old, on the fastest horse and started them home when the Indians on their ponies gave chase and just as they were entering the yard an arrow was directed at their backs; going through both and pinning them together. The Indians, confronted by the mother with a gun and the approaching men, fled. The arrow was removed, the boys treated and they recovered. The arrow had missed a vital spot. These boys grew to manhood, became quite wealthy and prominent and lived to a ripe old age, in the same locality where they had the experience with Indians.

We have already treated of the lawless white criminals as they preceded law and order, in other articles and we will now give the reader some examples that took place in and around my home.

It was a pioneer community and village, peaceful and quiet, typical of many western small towns and farming communities, blended together with mutual interests. One afternoon word was brought to town that one of the respected farmers was found along the road with a bullet hole in his head. That morning he had brought to town a load of hogs for which he had received the sum of \$52.50. It was learned that as he was leaving town early that afternoon he granted a ride to a new stranger in town, who asked for a lift into the country, where he was to get work. Circumstantial evidence and suspicion pointed to this newcomer who had only been in town a few days and showed by actions and words evidence of bad character. After a coroner's jury trial he was taken into custody and held for a court trial. For two or three days and nights anger and cries for revenge worked to great heat and after midnight the third night a large hooded band of men gathered in the park and quietly proceeded to the jail, secured the man and under the darkness of the night took him to a nearby railroad bridge, adjusted a rope about his neck and tied the other to a rail and helped him to jump. The train next morning on its way into town cut the rope and it was here he was found.

He had refused to give an account of himself and had no friends and was taken to a newly acquired potters field and buried. While such treatment was not the order of the day, it was tolerated only as a means of quick and inexpensive justice and where the guilt was unquestionable.

There is however, a second chapter to this story that depicts another side to drama of the times. At the time of this murder incident there was a traveling entertainer who claimed to be a professor of craniology and was holding forth in the new entertainment hall. He was handicapped in not possessing cranial evidence substantiating his claims of superior knowledge of the bumps on the skull showing the difference of high and low mentality. Strange as it may seem, a short time later, after he had gone and was being forgotten this grave in the potters' field had been entered and it was found that the head was missing. Later one of the citizens was entertaining a relative from a town several miles distance and related a story of there visiting their town a very remarkable professor of craniology who was exhibiting a skull of a criminal and mental deficient. Comparison showed that he was the same lecturing professor who had entertained in the local town some time before and the skull was no doubt the skull of the itinerant murderer "Jimmy the Cook."

Not far from here one of the most notorious criminal trials was held at a time when organized county courts was not quite complete, in all counties. It happened at the edge of the cattle country and had to do with a wealthy cattle man, his brother and employees. It was at a time when the large cattle men and their free cattle range was being encroached upon by the homesteader. It appears that two homesteaders had dared to stake out choice land in the midst of this cattle range. The trial was one where this brother, and gang leader was arrested for lynching these two homesteaders who were accused of stealing cat-

tle. This man and his gang who claimed to be clothed with authority went to the home of one of these men for the purpose, they claimed, of arresting him and his friend near by, for alleged cattle stealing. Instead of quietly requesting his surrender they began by shooting at him and wounded him; Then he returned the shots killing one claimed deputy sheriff. His name was the same as the ringleader, the wealthy cattleman, who offered a reward of \$1,000 for the capture of these two men dead or alive. The two homesteaders. These men were both ready to surrender to the proper authorities but were afraid of these cowboys. They were however soon arrested by sheriffs and deputies from adjoining counties who shared this \$1,000 reward. As these men were being taken from one section to another for preliminary examination they were taken from the officers by a party of armed men and were hanged and burned.

The bodies were found the next afternoon. One was still hanging but the rope about the neck of the other had broken and he was laying in the ashes of a still smouldering fire partly supported by the arm fastened to that of the other man by handcuffs.

The brutal circumstances of their death, being hanged, shot and burned perhaps alive was such as to cause great excitement, and a strong demand from the people that those guilty of the crime be hunted down and punished. The state offered a \$10,000 reward and the governor added \$200 from his own pocket. Suspicion at once pointed to the brother of the wealthy cattleman and his friends and they were jailed in the county where the crime was committed. This county had not at this time been attached to any judicial district and thus it was that the case was tried in our judicial district. This trial was one of significant interest to the writer for later he became a

friend and worked with the brother of one of the men murdered.

The State in this case was represented by the Attorney General, District Attorney and an outstanding criminal attorney all for the State, while representing the defendants were two of the best, outstanding attorneys to be had, for it must be remembered that the brother of the defendant was a wealthy man as well as a very defiant, determined one. The jury brought in a verdict of guilty against the ring leader, the brother of the man of wealth, and one other and they were sentenced for life while the others were released.

The fact that the state had appropriated \$10,000 for the prosecution of the case, the number of men under indictment, the ability of the attorneys on both sides who used all their brilliancy and cunning each to win his case, and the heinousness of the crime charged, made it the most outstanding case ever tried in this territory. The proceedings were reported by the Associated Press all over the United States while some papers had special correspondents located at the seat of trial.

After this ringleader had been in the pen about one year his lawyers succeeded in having his case brought before the Superior Court of the State and there it was held the verdict and place of trial was in error; that the proceedings against him should have been brought in another county and the two prisoners were released. The grand jury in the county named by the higher court never acted so the prisoners were never brought to trial again.

(Author) We not only had as our friend the brother of one of the men murdered but we had as our friend and dental patient the Attorney General of Nebraska who tried this important case.



And they built of native rock.



*Fannie Barber McCune
Red Cloud's first teacher*

ARTICLE 15

Official Beginning

The first courts of the county consisted of the board of supervisors, the county court and the district court. The county court was established under the name of probate court, November 16, 1871, and continued under the name until 1875, when it was changed to the present name. The first term of the district court, in Webster County, was held June 6, 1873, with Judge Daniel Gantt presiding; A. J. Weaver was district attorney. The county then belonged to the First judicial district. In 1876, Judge Gantt was succeeded by Judge William Gastin.

The first attempt at a legal trial was that of a man named King, who was arrested and brought before the county commissioners on a charge of selling liquor without a license. It was interesting to note the charge, the first one in the county and that the commissioners found that they had no authority to try the case and that it was dropped. The first real law suit is recorded in another article.

The first grand jury impaneled at the first term of district court was composed of the following gentlemen: J. L. Columbia, Edward Smith, Columbia Harris, L. S. Miller, A. T. Reed, E. O. Doil, M. C. Sherman, J. J. Has-kins, Thomas Kennedy, C. C. Coon, J. P. Earl, Osborn Ayers, F. P. Reed, James Kirkwood, George B. Lea, and M. C. Maxwell.

Ironical but true one of the first physicians to come to the county and who was elected the first county clerk had the first trial in the county court as plaintiff in a divorce suit vs. Mary E. Williams. He was granted the divorce. Note: There is a little monument in the Red Cloud cemetery inscribed T. B. Williams, surgeon 121 Ohio Infantry, died 1875, age 38 years.

The second case was that of Noah Perry vs. Elizabeth Perry for divorce. Decree granted plaintiff. This gave the divorce business a start. Then came appeals from lower courts. The first indictment was found against William Finnimore, for selling liquor without a license. He plead guilty and was fined \$45 and costs.

The local bar of Webster County in 1890 consisted of the following-named attorneys: A. C. Case, James McNeeny, G. R. Chaney, D. S. Cooms, J. R. Wilcox, G. W. Baker, J. S. Gilham, F. R. Gump, J. L. Kaley, W. G. Smith, D. F. Trunkey, J. Jorter Jr., and J. A. Tulleys of Red Cloud; A. M. Walters, P. A. Wells, F. W. Sweezy, D. P. Newcomer, and A. D. Ranney of Blue Hill; J. M. Chaffin, Guide Rock and H. L. Hopkins, Cowles.

For reasons of limited space we will only record the country officers up and to 1890.

COUNTY CLERKS: Thomas B. Williams, 1871-73; J. A. Tulleys, 1874-81; John Bayha, 1882-85; J. H. Bailey, 1886-89; and H. D. Ranny, 1890 on.

SHERIFFS: Emanuel Peters, 1871; James Calvert, 1872-73; H. G. Bill, 1874-75; J. D. Jost, 1878-79; J. W. Warren, 1880-85; Henry C. Scott, 1886-90; Charles A. Teel, the incumbent elected November 1889.

TREASURERS: William A. Brice, 1871; William B. Jackson, 1872-73; E. H. Jones, 1874-81; Chas. Buschow,

1882-85; W. B. McNitt, 1886-89; Chris Fassler, incumbent, 1889.

COUNTY JUDGES: Silas Garber, 1871-72; James Kirkwood, 1873; I. N. Tulleys, 1874-77; J. R. Wilcox, 1878-79; C. W. Kaley, 1880; J. R. Wilcox, 1881-83; G. O. Yiser, 1884-5; W. A. McKeigan, 1886-87; F. A. Sweezy, 1888-89; D. F. Trunkey, incumbent, 1889.

CORONERS: Peter Head, 1871-73; F. L. Munsel, 1874-75; W. J. Finnimore, 1876-77; R. R. Sherer, 1878-83; J. M. Mosena, 1884-85; C. Schenck, incumbent elected in 1885 and served to date.

SURVEYORS: Donald McCallum, 1871-74; W. E. Thorn, 1874-79; W. H. Strom, 1880-81; C. P. Rinker, 1882-85; F. P. Reed, 186-87; W. E. Thorn, incumbent having served since 1887.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS: Ed Kellogg, 1871-73; H. S. Kaley, 1874-75; J. S. Gilham, 1876-77; A. A. Pope, 1878-81; Chas. W. Springer, 1882-87; Miss Eva J. King, the incumbent elected November, 1887.

REPRESENTATIVES IN STATE LEGISLATURE: Silas Garber, 1872-76; J. E. Smith, 1877-80; H. S. Kaley died before close of term; C. W. Kaley, 1882; H. D. Ranney, 1883-84; D. P. Newcomer, 1885-88; Isiah B. Hampton incumbent, November, 1888.

STATE SENATOR: John S. Hoover, of Blue Hill.

U. S. CONGRESS: Gilbert L. Lewis of McCook.

COUNTY ORGANIZATION COURT DOING COUNTY BUSINESS

From the county's organization until the year 1885, the court doing county business consisted of three county commissioners, elected at large by the electors of the county—one from each of the three commissioners' districts, which extended from the northern to the southern boundary of the county. As the early settlements were mostly made along the Republican River, it followed that the south end of each commissioner's district was by far the most populous, and as an almost natural consequence the commissioners were for the greater part of the time selected from the southern part of the county, thus leaving the northern part without a representative on the board. This led to jealousy on the part of the electors in the northern part of the county. The bridges across the Republican River were built at the expense of the whole county, while the people of the northern half seldom had occasion to use them, and many taxpayers had the impression that township organization would relieve them from building bridges outside the township in which they resided, this having been the law in states from which they had emigrated. This impression, however, was erroneous, as the county, and not the townships, still continues to build the bridges. Others thought that a "change" would be better—that it would probably be better for each township to have a representative on the board doing county business. Consequently, on October 15, 1885, a petition was presented to the court doing county business, petitioning that question of township organization be submitted to the voters at the general election to be held on

the Tuesday succeeding the first Monday in the month of November, A.D. 1885.

This petition was signed by E. H. Cox, A. B. Canfield, F. A. Sweezy, E. B. Tuttle, S. S. Wells, and 123 others. The prayer of the petition was granted, and the question of township organization submitted to the people accordingly. On the 18th of November the supervisors elected assembled at the courthouse temporarily, electing C. G. Wilson as chairman, and R. V. Shirey as clerk. The following named gentlemen then presented the certificate of George O. Yeiser, county judge, showing that each had filed his official bond as supervisor of Webster county, as follows: Charles Gust, Line precinct; J. M. Stoddard, Walnut Creek precinct; A. J. Kenney, First Ward of Red Cloud City; C. G. Eustis, Batin precinct; Joseph Garber, Red Cloud precinct; Charles Hunter, Inavale precinct; J. C. Brooks, Catherton precinct; James Groves, Stillwater precinct; Robert V. Shirey, Second Ward Red Cloud City; S. W. Fulton, Harmony precinct; John Street, Garfield precinct; C. G. Wilson, Potsdam precinct; T. C. Wilder, Pleasant Hill Precinct; B. M. Jones, Oak Creek Precinct; I. B. Hampton, Guide Rock precinct; William A. Wriker, Beaver Creek precinct; W. H. How, Elm Creek precinct. A permanent organization of the new supervisors' court was then completed by the election of C. G. Wilson as chairman and R. V. Shirey was elected temporary clerk in the absence of the county clerk.

A committee composed of C. Gust, A. J. Kenney, I. B. Hampton, T. G. Wilder, John Street, Charles Hunter, Joseph Garber, J. M. Stoddard, R. V. Shirey were appointed to divide the county into townships and give their boundary lines. They recommended the divisions to be formed as precincts and such townships to bear the names designated by the precincts. The only change was the substituting "township" for "precinct". There being sixteen townships and two Red Cloud wards made the board of supervisors consist of eighteen members.

The county up to this time had been functioning from 1871 to 1885 as county commissioners with three commissioners. It was very evident from the start that with eighteen township supervisors the county expenses would be greatly increased. However it functioned for ten years under this setup when another county election was held and the results carried to the courts, the supreme court holding the election valid reversing the decision of the district court which held for the plaintiff contesting the election. The State Supreme Court ordered the County Judge, Treasurer, and Clerk to appoint three commissioners to act until the regular election when three were elected, then the electors increased it to five in 1899 where it has remained to this date, 1953.

County Commissioners have been, in order of election: Peter Head, Joseph Garber, William Fennimore, Allen T. Ayers, A. M. Hardy, G. W. Ball, Frank Mattison, A. M. Hardy, I. H. Hobert, L. H. Luce, A. H. Crary, Isaac May, Hugh Stevenson, James E. Smith, Jacob L. Miller, John McCallum, Isaiah P. Hampton.

Board of Supervisors for 1886: C. G. Wilson, A. H. Kenney, R. V. Shirey, Joseph Garber, W. H. Howe, J. C. Brooks, Jno. Street, Carl Gust, T. G. Wilder, Isaiah Hampton, C. G. Eustis, S. W. Fulton, W. W. Hogate, J. M. Stoddard, Chas. Hunter, James Groves, B. M. Groves, B. M. Jones, William A. Ryker.

Board of Supervisors for 1887: G. P. Cather, Carl Gust, D. G. Grice, Thomas Humphrey, T. G. Wilder,

Joseph Garber, Austin Riley, A. J. Worthington, Chris Fassler, Peter Hill, Reese B. Thompson, C. F. Cather, R. V. Shirey, J. S. Marsh, Alfred McCall, S. W. Fulton, Thomas T. Finney, Barney Luhn.

Board of Supervisors for 1888: A. H. Kaley, A. O. Berg, Joseph Garber, George E. Coon, I. B. Hampton, Sol Mendelbaum, William Jones, George P. Hummel, S. S. Wells, George P. Cather, L. D. Thomas, Mark Noble, J. L. Frame, James Groves, Austin Riley, C. C. Cox, Chris Fassler, W. H. Barcus.

Board of Supervisors for 1889: D. McCallum, W. H. Barcus, James Groves, W. H. Laird, Jotham Martin, L. D. Thomas, T. C. Wilder, George E. Coon, George W. Hummel, M. F. Dickenson, A. H. Kaley, Joseph Garber, J. L. Frame, Issac Fish, S. S. Wells, G. P. Cather, E. H. Jones, Samuel Heaton.

Board of Supervisors for 1890: D. McCullum, W. H. Barcus, James Groves, W. C. Laird, Gotham Martin, L. D. Thomas, T. G. Wilder, C. E. Coon, G. W. Hummel, R. L. Alyea, Samuel Foe, A. H. Kaley, J. L. Frame, Issac Fish, S. S. Wells, G. P. Cather, E. H. Jones, A. McCall.

Board of Supervisors for 1891: A. H. Crary, W. H. Barcus, M. M. Miller, W. C. Laird, Philip Zimmerman, L. D. Thomas, John Rasser, G. C. Coon, G. W. Hummel, R. L. Alyea, A. O. Berg, D. Kesler, A. H. Hoffman, Isaac Fish, W. H. Patterson, C. P. Cather, H. H. Holdrege, A. McCall.

Board of Supervisors for 1892: A. H. Crary, Joe Kincher, A. H. Spracher, W. C. Laird, P. Zimmerman, E. H. Foe, John Rasser, G. E. Coon, G. W. Hummel, G. P. Cather, A. O. Burg, Glington, A. H. Hoffman, Isaac Fish, W. H. Patterson, C. P. Cather, W. Irons, A. McCall.

Board of Supervisors for 1893: James Wall, J. Kincher, A. H. Spracher, W. C. Laird, P. Zimmerman, E. H. Foe, Wm. H. Norris, G. E. Coon, G. W. Hummel, R. B. Fulton, A. O. Berg, D. Kesler, A. H. Hoffman, Robert Best, Wm. Patterson, G. P. Cather, Wm. Irons, A. McCall.

Board of Supervisors for 1894: James Wall, Jacob Kindscher, A. H. Spracher, W. C. Laird, P. Zimmerman, P. Hill, W. H. Norris, Chas Schultz, G. W. Hummel, A. H. Kaley, W. M. Crabill, D. Kesler, A. H. Hoffman, A. W. Cox, Wm. Patterson, R. G. Lewis, Wm. Irons, A. McCall.

Board of Supervisors for 1895: Jas. F. Watt, J. Kincher, A. H. Spracher, W. C. Laird, Albert Kort, Peter Hill, Wm. Hurd, Chas. Schultz, G. W. Hummel, C. F. Cather, Wm. Crabill, D. Kesler, A. H. Hoffman, A. W. Cox, R. C. Best, R. G. Lewis, James Brownfield, A. McCall.

Board of Supervisors for 1896: During this year the report is so incomplete that we cannot say just who was serving and who was not. The situation was tied up in the courts and waiting for a decision.

Commissioners appointed for 1897: Chas. Wiener, W. R. Riker, John McCallum.

Elected for 1898: E. B. Smith, John McCallum, W. R. Riker.

Elected for 1899: Jerome Vance, George P. Weber, Wm. Irons, E. B. Smith, Wm. A. May. A change from three to five.

Elected for 1900: Jerome Vance, Geo. P. Weber, Wm. Irons, James Overman, Wm. A. May.

Lynching

Radio programs featuring detective stories, blood curdling murder narratives and horrifying and cruel law defiance and law breaking by gangs and gangsters, were never dreamed of during the early homestead days of Webster County.

However the town of Blue Hill, during the year 1884, experienced one of the most unusual, exciting poolhall murders on March 29, in which a sister's brother killed her husband in a fit of anger while under the influence of liquor, by hitting him over the head with a billiard cue.

Then, following this on Monday, November 1, word was spread over the county and to Red Cloud, the county seat, that another more horrible and fiendish murder had been committed near Blue Hill. This news created a great deal of excitement in both the county seat and at Blue Hill from the fact that only a few short weeks before another human being had met a like fate in that part of the county. All manner of stories were told in regard to the last tragedy and none seemed to be as bad as the result showed it to be.

The murdered man was well known in Blue Hill and had lived in that vicinity since 1878 during which time he had gained a large number of friends and had succeeded in accumulating a farm and considerable stock. He was an inoffensive, hard working farmer and no man had anything to say against him. He labored hard to make an honest living and attended strictly to his own welfare. This fact alone made the crime heinous in its nature. The villain, whoever he was, could not possibly have had a grudge against this man as he had only worked for him a week and could not have engendered any animosity in that time that would lead him to commit the horrible crime that took place on the night of November 1.

The man Roll was simply decoyed and murdered in cold blood by this fiend incarnate in human form. It so shocked the peaceful citizens of Blue Hill and the surrounding country that all business was suspended during the investigation by the coroner. A Red Cloud Chief reporter, in company with Dr. Mosena, coroner of Webster county, visited the scene of the murder on Monday and was therefore able to glean the following facts:

It seems that about one week previous to the death of Roll a tramp appeared at Blue Hill in search of work and was directed to several parties living near there who were known to want to hire help. But each man refused him until, as he stated later, he made application to the murdered man who at once engaged him for the season. All went well while the tramp worked for Roll and the employer became quite attached to him for he appeared to be a good worker and willing to do any kind of work set before him. This fact alone would naturally make a man think well of the fellow.

No suspicions were aroused in the minds of Roll or his family in regard to this tramp, although the investigation by the coroner plainly showed that he was planning for the crime which he finally executed on the night of November 1.

His stories, when analyzed, were very transparent, and if they had been carefully weighed, would have caused suspicion. He told various stories about asking for work, which, repeated after the murder of Roll, would have lead anyone to believe that the crime was premeditated in a cold and deliberate manner by the depraved man, or fiend, who had scarcely arrived at his majority. It seemed awful to contemplate the perpetration of such a horrible crime at the hand of so young a man.

If there could have been any cause the aspect of the case would have been seen in a different light.

Cook, as he gave his name, had finally culminated his plans and fixed up a story that his folks, who he said lived in Nodaway County, Mo., had sent him a letter stating they had sold their farm for \$1,800 and wanted him to meet them in Lincoln, Nebr. They were enroute to California. So he said he had to quit work and wanted Roll to take him to Blue Hill on Saturday night to take the 9 p. m. train. This was the part of his scheme to entrap Roll and on Saturday afternoon he set about to complete the plan.

He went to the house to ask Mrs. Roll for the hammer, remarking that the wagon was out of kelter and that he wanted to fix it. Not knowing where the hammer was, she told him to take the hatchet that lay near where she stood. Cook picked it up and went back to the wagon where he secreted the weapon either in the wagon or on his person, as will hereafter be shown. To further his diabolical scheme he told another story about some fellow he had seen prowling around the wheat stack and suggested that the prowler should be looked after. This story was evidently concocted in order to get Roll to go that way so that they would not be apt to meet anyone who might interfere with the plans.

The stacks of grain were located about a half mile north of the Roll residence in a big meadow and in an unfrequented spot—a good place to commit just such a crime as was perpetrated. It was known to Cook that Roll had money in the home, so just before they started for town Cook remarked that he wanted him to go in and get some money to treat him with. This Roll did, but the evidence found by the coroner's jury showed that he only took ten cents. Roll soon returned and between seven and eight o'clock in the evening the men started for Blue Hill, one bent on a ghastly murder, the other on a kindly errand.

When they arrived on the north side of the stacks it is supposed that Cook and his confederates, if he had any, struck Roll a heavy blow with the hatchet over the eye, which so stunned Roll that he was unable to cope with the fiend who followed with six more terrible blows with the small axe which layed open the skull in several places. The murderer then is supposed to have thrown the body out of the wagon and searched the clothing for money. He took the team and escaped, leaving his victim where he had cruelly murdered him for what little money he might have had, and his team.

Roll's absence from home did not create any anxiety with his family or neighbors for it was his custom to go

to Blue Hill and stay over night with relatives, and the following day being Sunday, it was supposed he had gone to church at St. Stephens.

When he did not return Sunday night or Monday morning, his wife and neighbors became anxious as to his whereabouts. It was apparent that he had met with foul play. His neighbors and searching parties from Blue Hill started out with the result above mentioned.

William Kirk, Ernest Kerst and Otto Stoffregan found the body lying on its face as it had been placed by the murderer. Word was telegraphed to Coroner Mosenen and he proceeded at once to Blue Hill and there impaneled a jury and later in the day, in a very thorough examination, questioned eight or ten witnesses.

At the inquest it was learned that Mrs. Roll wanted to accompany her husband to a neighbors as they drove to town, but Cook insisted that she better not as it would be late when they returned home. The balance of the evidence was substantially the same as we have related here. The verdict of the jury we hereto append.

Verdict of the Jury

State of Nebraska, Webster County: In an inquisition holden at Blue Hill in Webster County, on the third day of November, A. D., 1884, before me, J. M. Mosenen, coroner of said county, upon the body of Leonard Roll lying dead, by the jurors whose names are hereto subscribed, the said jurors upon their oaths do say that he was murdered November first 1884, between the hours of 7 o'clock p. m. and 6 o'clock a. m., November second, 1884; was killed by a hatchet or some short instrument in the hands of one Joseph Cook, a hired hand, and he, the said Cook murdered him feloniously. The crime was done about two miles west of Blue Hill, Nebraska, Webster county. In testimony thereof the said jurors have hereunto set their hands the day and year aforesaid.—John Ekroot, Sol Mandelbaum, Philip Bock, Jr., J. W. Morris, J. O. Burgess, A. Kopsich, J. M. Mosenen, M.D., Coroner.

Leonard Roll was about thirty-seven years old, had lived in Nebraska six years after a number of years at LaSalle, Illinois. He was a heavy built man, five feet, eight inches tall.

His supposed murderer, Joe Cook, was a young man twenty to twenty-three years of age, five feet six or seven inches tall, light complected, middling short hair; he wore a thin mustache and his eyes were bleary. The people of Blue Hill, a determined and law-abiding citizenry, were expected to use every endeavor to have the instigator of this terrible crime apprehended and brought to justice and righteous account for this inhuman butchery of one of their best citizens.

From a Red Cloud newspaper: "Our reporter heard the indignant remarks from the people and with one accord they inferred that it would not be healthy for the fiend to reappear in that locality. Hemp was freely spoken of as a quick and certain remedy for such characters. The crime of murder is becoming too general for the public safety. A too low price is placed on human life and The Chief believes in 'letting no guilty man escape'."

Whoever has the blood of this innocent man, Leonard Roll on his hands may expect to have the wrath and condemnation of every good citizen upon his head and will, and should be meted the severest penalty that the law

affords. There should be no such thing as leniency, and cases of this nature should be severely dealt with.

\$700 Reward Offered

Five hundred dollars of which had been subscribed by the people of Blue Hill, \$200 offered by Governor Dawes for the apprehension and conviction of the culprit. The case was then in the hands of the proper officials and in the next few days it was thought Cook would be arrested. At any rate no stone was to be left unturned that might lead to his capture and punishment.

The following is also quoted from the Red Cloud Chief:

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Joseph Cook

He is under arrest at St. Joseph, Missouri, charged with murder. Mrs. Roll identifies him as the hired man who was last seen with her husband. At Blue Hill Cook is mobbed and lynched by the infuriated citizens. After hanging ten minutes he is cut down by Sheriff Warren and brought back to life. On last Friday excitement was caused in this city over the announcement that Sheriff Warren had arrested and was bringing Joseph Cook, the alleged murderer of Leonard Roll, to the city, and they would reach here that morning at 9:24. In consequence a large crowd was at the depot anxious to see the man who would commit such a crime. Finally the train came in and the prisoner was taken to the Gardner House strongly guarded.

All day long the streets of Red Cloud were swarming with people from the Blue Hill area, all anxious to avenge the death of Roll, by lynching Cook, and had it not been for the influence of prominent citizens, we dare say Cook would have been in his grave as the people were bent on having blood. Here and there could be seen groups of excited men discussing the crime and the man who committed it. It could be plainly observed what was passing through their minds. Excitement ran high but the better counselling of our citizens and the lynchers decided it was only fair to give him a trial and along toward evening they dispersed. But we suppose the more they thought over the matter, the more intense became their feelings. However the sheriff prepared to quell any outbreak that might have occurred in the city. Later in the day Charles Winfrey came with the team and wagon Roll was riding when murdered. They were found near White Rock, Kansas where Cook had traded them to a farmer for a black team and something to boot. Many people visited the wagon and team out of curiosity during the day. It seems from what could be learned from Cooks' own story that he must have had a confederate and after the crime had been committed, they took a southeasterly course for the Kansas line, crossing the Republican river at Superior, and from there to St. Joe where he was arrested later by the sheriff.

One thing is certain, as a criminal, Cook did not show good judgment, for at nearly every corner he would inquire for the road. By this means Sheriff Warren was able to easily trace him with a certainty that would lead to his arrest very soon. Once upon his trail, the sheriff followed with all possible haste to St. Joe. "Murder will out" and a man who dabbles in human blood is sure to reap the consequences sooner or later. When arrested, Cook denied the murder but admitted he had worked for Roll, but did not know that he was dead, and to this story he clung with great tenacity. However, after coming to

Nebraska he admitted to have taken the team and was identified as the man by Mr. Casson of White Rock who had traded horses with him, and who came to Red Cloud to identify the man. A gentleman by the name of Richard Myers had the wagon when it was found. We presume that Cook thought that he would destroy all trace of himself by disposing of the booty at White Rock, but his persistent inquiring of the way to St. Joe and other points along the line wove a web around him which was to be the means that would ultimately ensnare him.

The Chief believes that Cook should be given a fair trial by the courts and if found guilty, should receive the extreme penalty of the law, but deplors the false idea now prevalent, that the people should take the case in their own hands. Mob law is now, as well as in time past, the instrument that destroys the very bulwark of organized judicial institutions.

Once at Blue Hill the excitement grew intense, though it did not appear in visible form until almost train time when it became evident that something was up, as nearly every man had a revolver or firearm of some kind, which would lead one to believe that they did not propose to live up to the contract they had made with Sheriff Warren, to give the prisoner a chance for trial. Sheriff Warren and his deputies did their best but were outnumbered.

The following are the facts given by the reporter in regard to the mobbing in Blue Hill:

One excited citizen forced his way into the room of the prisoner but was resisted quickly; the citizens were poorly organized to tackle so well an organized posse, all of whom were resolute against force.

After considerable parleying, it was finally arranged that Cook should be taken to Blue Hill on Monday for the preliminary examination, the Blue Hill parties including some of their most influential citizens of the place pledging their word that if this was done, violence would not be attempted, and that the law would be allowed to take its course. This pledge on the part of the citizens was grossly violated, as what happened will show.

The Lynching

On Monday morning Sheriff Warren, accompanied by several deputies started for Blue Hill with the prisoner.

Note: My father's home was about midway between Red Cloud and Blue Hill, and the road between those two towns passed through our yard. I was ten years old at the time and I well remember the gruesome sight. The vehicle was a two-seated open buggy drawn by a fine looking team of horses. In the carriage were the sheriff and three armed deputies who occupied the seats and in front of the first seat sitting flat on the bottom of the buggy was the prisoner. He was not too well dressed and had a cap pulled down over his eyes, his head hanging forward over his chest giving the appearance of being a dejected and frightened spectacle. For a boy of ten years and knowing something of what was going on, this scene is still vivid in my memory.

Upon arriving in Blue Hill the prisoner was taken before Justice Frank Buschow where he was identified by Mrs. Roll, the wife of the murdered man, as the person who left their home on the night of the murder in company with her husband. Other evidence was introduced.

At the close of the examination, the prisoner was committed for trial on the charge of murder and remanded into the hand of the sheriff. There being no secure jail in Webster county, it was necessary to take Cook to Lincoln for safe keeping until the next session of the district court, which commenced on December 9. Sheriff Warren had made arrangements with the railroad officials for a special train to take himself and party to Hastings and by a pre-arranged signal agreed upon by the trainmen, started with his man and three special deputies to board the train. But through the treachery of one or two Blue Hill citizens, the mob which had congregated on the street was told of the move. Hundreds of men, women and children were seen to be howling widely and jostling each other in every direction. Curses and cries of "hang the SOB" rent the air. A number of special deputies appointed at Blue Hill failed to be present when needed most.

Pandemonium seemed to have been turned loose as some 50 or 60 men made a bold dash for the prisoner and by a most violent effort, a grand flourishing of revolvers and a rugged tussel, succeeded in taking Cook from the hands of the officers and chucked him in a coal wagon from which Deputy Sheriff George Doll succeeded in pulling him out, but the prisoner was again taken by the mob and thrown into the wagon which was driven rapidly out of town to halt at a windmill on the farm of Sol Mendellbaum, about one mile from town. In the confusion on the streets Deputies George Dodd and M. W. Dickerson of Red Cloud attempted to pull the men off the prisoner, but only succeeded in pulling off a man's coat in which a rope was found. This rope being missed at the windmill, a halter was taken from one of the horses, but it proved too short for the purpose intended, so a clothesline was stolen and placed around the neck of Cook. On being asked if he had anything to say, the prisoner replied that he had said all he had to say. Again being told that if he had anything to say he'd better say it damned quick, he merely replied that he had nothing to say. The rope was thrown over a crosspiece of the windmill and the victim hauled up some eighteen inches from the ground where he hung for about ten minutes. Deputy Ball followed the mob and on his arrival at the windmill attempted to cut the rope but was prevented from doing so. Sheriff Warren arrived a few moments later and cut the rope amidst the cries of "don't cut him down, let him hang." The mob thinking their victim to be already dead, made no forcible resistance. Cook was taken back to town more dead than alive where he was bled and other means used for his resuscitation. During the night it took four men to hold him, the frightful contortions and convulsions through which he passed being indescribably horrible. On Tuesday morning he was returned to Red Cloud and again taken to the Gardner House. The Chief then lamented the horrible outrage. He was a young man 21 years of age who left his home and his parents, two brothers and four sisters at Guilford, Nodaway county, Missouri.

Note: The writer of these Webster County Chronicles had an aunt by marriage who lived in this county at the time and knew these folks very well. I have heard her talk about it and wondering why such a thing would come to such a God-fearing family of three boys and four girls, all of the same father and mother, with the same home training, attending the same public school and the same Sunday school and church services, when one of the brothers, all at once, should wander away from the fold

and commit such a heinous crime and have meted out to him such an unusual sad ending.

As soon as arrangements could be made, Sheriff Warren secretly spirited his prisoner out of town and had him safely behind bars at the state penitentiary in Lincoln to await trial by the District court.

Trial for Murder

Joseph Cook, before the District court charged with murdering Leonard Roll November 1, 1884. The insanity theory made the basis of his defense before the court. A most exciting trial and witnessed by many spectators.

From the pages of the Red Cloud Chief under date of January 9, 1885:

Joseph Cook, the alleged murderer of Leonard Roll was again brought to Red Cloud on Saturday evening last in custody of Sheriff Warren. Joe was looking hale and hearty and appeared fresh as a daisy. He has an excellent appetite and apparently enjoys the best of health. He is in his 22nd year but presents a very youthful appearance and might easily be taken for a much younger man than he really is. He was indicted by the grand jury at the December term of the district court, charged with murder in the first degree, and Monday January 5, 1885, set for trial of the same. The court convened on Monday pursuant to adjournment. His Honor, Wm. Gaslin, Jr., presiding, the court stenographer failing to put in an appearance and the counsels for both prosecution and defense being unwilling to proceed with the trial in his absence, the work of impaneling a jury was not commenced until Tuesday afternoon and occupied until the hour of adjournment. In the impaneling of a jury, the prosecution being represented by District Attorney Morlan assisted by F. A. Sweezy of Blue Hill while Messrs. Case and McNeny, and Gillham and Richards of Red Cloud appeared for the defense. At 7:30 p. m. the prosecution made the opening plea for the State followed by the defense. Then began one of the most thrilling and interesting criminal cases ever witnessed in Webster county. The courtroom was densely crowded, every day hundreds of ladies being present and accorded seats by courteous officials, making standing room at a premium among the sterner sex. The most interesting excitement has prevailed during the progress of the trial but the best of order maintained. The prosecution examined ten witnesses.

The following is a brief digest of the evidence adduced. On October last Leonard Roll, a farmer living on his farm two miles west of Blue Hill, Webster county, employed Joseph Cook as a farm hand. (From here the testimony covered is a repetition of our earlier report of the case reviewed by the prosecution). The defense introduced several witnesses from Missouri, all of whom pronounced Cook a young man of good moral character, but apparently the defense was to rely mainly on the plea of the prisoner's insanity. A number of witness testified that some of the near relatives of the prisoner's mother had been insane and that one female relative had committed suicide while in the state of insanity, several instances were cited wherein the prisoner had acted strangely, at different places, just previous to his going to Blue Hill in October last; also that he had been disappointed in love and was apparently in a melancholic state of mind when about to leave his home for Nebraska. Dr. McKeeby of this place testified as a medical expert and gave it as his opinion that Cook was insane when the crime was

committed. At 2:30 p. m. on Thursday the evidence for the defense was closed and Mr. Sweezy made the closing plea for the State, followed by Richards, McNeny and Gillham for the defense. Court adjourned until 8 o'clock Friday morning when Mr. Case made the final argument in behalf of the prisoner, and Mr. Morlan on the part of the State.

Says the Chief, the prosecution have certainly made a strong case against the prisoner based principally on circumstantial evidence while the defense has fought ably and stubbornly and have introduced every means of rebuttal in their power. The Chief reports as its belief that Cook had a fair and impartial trial.

The Grand Finale

The great murder trial of Joseph Cook which occupied the time of the District Court for almost an entire week came to final termination on Saturday last. On Friday morning Hon. O. C. Case delivered the closing argument on behalf of the prisoner in an eloquent and impressive manner after which District Attorney Morlin made an able and exhaustive address on the part of the State, carefully reviewing all the pros and cons of the evidence. Mr. Morlan is a forcible and logical reasoner and his remarks commanded the closest attention of the audience throughout his address. At the close of Mr. Morlin's speech on Friday afternoon, the jury was ably and carefully instructed by the court, after which they returned to the jury room for consultation. The result of their first ballot was ten guilty and two not guilty; second ballot, six guilty in the first degree; three in the second degree, and three for manslaughter.

The third ballot, six guilty of murder and six in the second degree. Balloting took place at intervals during the entire night with various results until a little before eleven o'clock on Saturday morning when a verdict of murder in the second degree was finally agreed upon. After the reading of the verdict by the clerk of the court, the prisoner's counsel asked for permission to retire from the room for a brief consultation with their client, which was granted. Being again brought into court the prisoner was brought up for sentence and being asked by the court if he had anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced against him, he replied, "Nothing". The court then sentenced Joseph Cook to imprisonment in the Nebraska penitentiary for the term of his natural life and remanded him into the hands of the sheriff for the execution of the same. Joe Cook stood up and took his medicine like a little man, without whining, preserving the same stoical indifference he had exhibited since his arrest. Thus ended one of the most intensely interesting and strongly contested trial ever recorded in the annals of the county. Just before Joe started on his journey to his future home our reporter called at the Gardner House for the purpose of an interview with the prisoner, granted through the courtesy of Sheriff Warren. Joe was found seated at a table writing a letter to a friend. On being introduced, Joe arose and greeted him in the most cordial manner. The two were soon seated and engaged in a pleasant chat which lasted for a short time until Mr. Case, one of the prisoner's counsel appeared stating that they were well satisfied with the results of the trial and wished the matter to rest as it was and objecting to Joe's being questioned further because of the muddled condition of his mind. This of course put an end to the interview.

Enough, however, was gleaned from Joe for us to know that he was satisfied with the result of the trial, content with his future prospects and very grateful toward the officers who had had him in custody since his arrest, for their many acts of kindness and courteous treatment.

Early Saturday evening Sheriff Warren determined to guard against any possible attempt which might be made to repeat the windmill affair, quietly started for Guide Rock with his prisoner where they boarded the "Cannon Ball" for Wymore, arriving in Lincoln by way of Crete on Sunday morning. Cook was landed in the penitentiary where in the future he will pursue the avocation of a tailor.

The following is the verdict rendered in the Cook murder case, together with a list of the jurors and the sentence of the court. Verdict of the Jury: State of Nebraska and Webster County: We, the jury in the case, being duly impaneled and sworn, do find and say that we find the said Joseph Cook guilty of murder in the second degree, in the second count of this indictment and not in the first and third count. The jurors were R. B. Fulton, foreman; M. S. Ballard, Ed Parks, C. Munger, D. G. Grice, B. T. Reed, B. M. Crow, Wm. Dixon, George DeWit, Otto Skjelver, J. W. Brient and H. Dedrich.

Sentence:

State of Nebraska, Webster County, ss. On this day came the said Joseph Cook in his own proper person attended by counsel and being informed by the court of the verdict of the jury and asked by the court whether he had anything to say why judgment should not be pronounced against him, thereupon responded that he had nothing. It is therefore considered and adjudged by the court that the said Joseph Cook be confined and kept at hard labor in the penitentiary of the State of Nebraska during his natural life and pay the costs of his prosecution and that he remain and be kept in the custody of the sheriff until this judgment is carried into execution.—Wm. Gaslin, Jr., Judge.

The penitentiary records show that Joseph Cook was received at this institution to serve a life sentence on January 11, 1885. He was 21 years old at that time. On August 11, 1891, Governor John M. Thayer commuted the life sentence to ten years and Cook was discharged on February 11, 1892, after serving seven years and one month, which is a ten year sentence with statutory time credit. From here on we have no authentic history of the man, but it was at one time rumored that he went blind and later died from tuberculosis. So ends another story of crime not paying.

ARTICLE 17

The Pleasures of Pioneer Life

Although there was privation and hard work there was also much pleasure. Well does the writer remember the singing schools, the spelling schools and the literary societies, with programs running, according to our memory, first in importance was the debates in which some important local issue was used. Such as "should we vote bonds for a railroad?" "resolved that the beauties of art are more pleasing to the eye than the beauties of nature." Then there was local speaking, songs, dialogues and plays, many in unique costumes and make up and make shift scenes and settings. Then there was the popular lyceum paper with the news of the locality served up in the most unique fun and fancy jokes and announcements, with humor running something like, "Joe asks, what is straining sweetness? Henty Doe says he finds it kissing through the veil," "what time of life may a man be said to belong to the vegetable kingdom? Our old maid says when long experience in being turned down has made him a sage." "What is the difference between a farmer and a bottle of whisky? The farmer husbands the corn and the bottle of whiskey corns the husband." "The country without fair women would simply be stag-nation." People came from far and near to these literary entertainments. Buggies were scarce and people came on horseback or in lumber wagons, many without spring seats riding on a cross board on the wagon box. Quilting and husking bees, house warmings and camp meetings were other events of the days. Since there were no telephones and since it was often days from one mail to another, pioneer families counted it a pleasure to "visit around" and exchange the news. Those were the days of real hospitality; the latch string hung out at every door,

and all were welcome to enter. No house was too small or food supply too scanty for entertainment of friends or wayfarers. Those were the days when we children waited for a "second table" or stood up because of lack of seats that could be used at the table. Those were the days when we boys wore high topped boots. The writer remembers well his first, with red tops and copper toed tips, the calico dresses of my mother and sisters and the neat sun bonnets of various colors made from the same material of their dresses doubled and quilted or made with stalls for cardboard stays that were removed when they were washed. This kind of dress was good enough for any occasion, and the kind my mother was married in, and my first clothes were made from flour sacks and consisted mostly of didies. No baby finery in those days. The popular baseball of today was scarce. I am only able to find two recorded in the first decade. The first was played between Red Cloud and Burr Oak clubs at Burr Oak, Kansas, July 3rd, 1875. The game as recorded in the Red Cloud Chief under date of publication July 8, 1875, is as follows:

The game commenced at 3:30 p. m. The Red Cloud boys at the start were without their captain and pitcher. Garber was taken to fill up and the game proceeded with eight men until the 5th inning when Warner, the captain arrived. At the 6th inning Gillham took his place in the nine. Garber went home sick and the first baseman refused to play any more. The Red Cloud boys were, with the exception of one inning, without their full quota of men. With the exception of a little altercation among our own boys which resulted in the retirement of Tomlinson, the game passed off quietly. The Burr Oak

boys were thorough gentlemen and we shall be glad to see them again in our village. The game was umpired by Mr. Macumber who gave as impartial a decision as possible.

Below we give the score.

| Red Cloud | Runs | Outs |
|----------------|------|------|
| Potter, c | 2 | 5 |
| Gillham, p | 2 | 1 |
| Birris, ss | 4 | 3 |
| Tomlinson, 1b | 1 | 2 |
| Allen, 2b | 4 | 3 |
| Marsh, 3b | 1 | 4 |
| Hanner, rf | 3 | 3 |
| Warner, cf | 3 | 2 |
| Garber, Sub lf | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 20 | 25 |

| Burr Oak | Runs | Outs |
|---------------|------|------|
| Dison, p | 4 | 2 |
| Smith, c | 2 | 5 |
| W. Tugley, ss | 2 | 2 |

| | | |
|----------------|----|----|
| Gillet, 1b | 1 | 6 |
| L. Tingley, 2b | 3 | 3 |
| Owen, 3b | 2 | 2 |
| Thomas, rf | 3 | 2 |
| Huntington, cf | 4 | 2 |
| Ensign, lf | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 24 | 27 |

The next game played August 16, 1877 was played between the Red Cloud and Guide Rock clubs. The score published was Red Cloud 18, Guide Rock 23.

In December 30, 1875 issue the following advertisement appeared.

SHOOTING SHOOTING

A shooting match will take place on Friday, December the 31st at Red Cloud. It is to begin at 10 o'clock a. m. and continue all day. L. Baum, chairman of committee. B. Vandyke, secretary of committee. (No other mention is made).

ARTICLE 18

Education in Webster County

Hardly had these early settlers gotten their effects unloaded from their various conveyances when they turned their attention to schools. As one studies the principles and acts of these first settlers one can easily visualize, perhaps unknown to them, their wise program of procedure in goals to win education, religion, fraternities, agricultural and business cooperation.

Scarcely had the county been organized in April, 1871, when on May 1, 1871 Miss Mary Kingsley began teaching the county's first school at Guide Rock and commencing the next month, June 3, school district No. 2 was started at Red Cloud with Miss Fannie Barber as teacher. Then next to follow, No. 3, in Walnut Creek, the southwest corner with No. 4, in the southeast corner, and No. 5 in the extreme northeast corner of the county in Oak Creek township, and then back to Inavale as 6th. Thus several districts were organized from the very beginning of the county's birth the first year after settlement. So rapid was this demand of school need that in 1880, only nine years after the county was organized, it had seventy-five school districts, sixty-seven provided with school houses. Of these, twenty-six were frame buildings, five were built of stone, thirty of sod, and six of logs. There were then in the county a little over 2,500 children of school age.

On April 24, 1874, the friends of education called a meeting for the purpose of organizing the first teachers' institute in Webster County. H. S. Kaley, the county superintendent of schools, presided, and Charles W. Springer acted as secretary. The following Wednesday the Hon. J. M. McKenzie, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Prof. C. B. Palmer, editor of the Nebraska Teacher, were present as instructors and conducted the exercises which continued for three days.

At this meeting a temporary teachers' association was

formed with H. S. Kaley, president, and A. L. Burton, secretary, and the 22nd of May following was the time set to meet and perfect the association. Accordingly at the time set the teachers assembled and effected a permanent organization with A. L. Burton, president, Dr. Fetz, vice-president, and Mrs. M. E. Brown, secretary.

Here was a county west of the Mississippi River wherein a teachers' institute was held and a teacher's association organized in just four years after the first white settler stepped upon its soil. The teachers and officers at this meeting were the pioneer educators of Webster county. Mr. Charles W. Springer was a prominent teacher in the Red Cloud schools and was county superintendent of schools from 1882 to 1887. Among these first educators and friends of education was the first county superintendent, Edwin Kellogg, Attorneys, Judge Wilcox, H. S. Kaley, Lee S. Estell and Jim S. Gilham, who possibly contributed more to the educational activities from the beginning and during his lifetime than any other individual, possessing the greatest vocabulary and the brilliant mind from which he gave copiously and unselfishly. He was in greater demand as an orator, counselor and contributor to worthy causes than any other man Webster County has produced. And there was A. A. Pope and Miss Eva J. King, later Mrs. Eva J. King Case, D. M. Hunter among the county superintendents of the first three decades of the county history and then there were such friends of education as Rev. A. Maxwell, Rev. Reilly, T. J. Wright, John Q. Potter, William C. Reilly, J. L. Hull, David Fetz, M. Wilson, O. P. Q. Rorrick, and J. W. Luce, A. B. Pierce, Timothy Lawler, Corry Beal, Mrs. Jessie Brooks, Mrs. Paschel Laird and many others who contributed to the monumental educational foundation in the county.

The following statistics taken from the last published report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (for the year ending December 31, 1888) will serve to

indicate the condition of the public schools and the working of the free school system in this county. The report shows that the number of children within the county between the ages of five and twenty-one was, males 1,957, females 1,898, total 3,855, and that the number who attended school during the school year, was males 1,485, females 1,540, total 3,025; twenty-nine under the age of five and ten over the age of twenty-one were enrolled in the public schools.

The number of school districts was 79, and the number of school houses 78. The value of the houses was 64,571 dollars, the value of sites \$8,591, and the books and apparatus \$3,434.21. There were four grade schools in the county, and the whole number of teachers employed in all the schools was males 34, females 102, total 136. Seventy-one districts had six months school, five had four months and three had no school. A teachers' institute continuing two weeks was held and eighty-five teachers out of ninety in the county were enrolled.

The total receipts of the school year, including the amount on hand at the beginning, was \$49,932.71, and the total expenditures, \$41,506.25, thus leaving \$8,425.96 on hand at the close of the year. During the school year the county school superintendent made seventy-four visits to the schools, was employed all the time in official work, and received a salary of \$1,000.

Superintendent Curran of the public schools of Red

Cloud made this report: "Upon taking charge of these schools at the commencement of the school year, I found a course of study which meets the requirements of the minor course in the university. It covers a period of twelve years' school work—four years each in the primary, grammar and high school departments." We have two brick buildings, one of four and one of five rooms, and also two frame buildings, one of which is used for a kindergarten school. We have an enrollment of 600 pupils and a corps of twelve teachers." A fair geological cabinet and philosophical apparatus have recently been placed in our schools. Our people manifest a deep interest in our schools, a fact amply demonstrated by the large audience that greets each session of our public teachers meetings, held semi-monthly in the high school building. The large high school room has not sufficient seating capacity for the school patrons who attend these meetings. The program for each meeting consists of class drill by one of our teachers, and such suggestions as visitors may desire teachers, after which we have a professional criticism by to make on educational subjects, or welfare of our schools. A brief talk on some subject of didactic nature, select reading and music, complete our program. The great aid of these meetings is to create a bond of true sympathy between school patrons and teachers.

"Moral teaching receives due consideration, and I am pleased to find a school moral tone—above the average—to pervade the pupils of these schools."

ARTICLE 19

The Guerneys

During the latter days of September, 1870, Charles Gurney and his brother, "Al," retired seamen from Boston, found themselves in the budding city of Lincoln, on a quest for lands. While walking about the vicinity, a friendly farmer suggested they try the Republican Valley, where one hundred and sixty acres of land could be had for nothing, and where the tide of emigration was turning. The young men, who knew as much about farming as the ordinary resident of these prairies does about sailing vessels or catching codfish, started to walk to Beatrice full of ambition and energy. Charles had on a new pair of boots which hurt his feet. He therefore took them off and proceeded barefooted. Then he found that his feet had become so swollen that he could not put his boots on again. The boys arrived at night a few miles from Beatrice, where they found a German settler who kindly gave them a night's rest. This was the first house they saw after leaving Salt Creek. There was no fear of tramps in those days. Any man who was roaming over the prairies of Nebraska was *primafacie* a good man, worthy of encouragement and help. The next morning when they reached Beatrice they received a welcoming "hello" from a man who appeared to be an emigrant like themselves. With this man they rapidly struck up an acquaintance. It proved to be "Gus" Roats, who had returned for his wife, Celia, and was waiting for the birth of his next child, Lizzie. "Gus" could tell the strangers all about the Republican Valley and Red Cloud, and suggested that the Guerneys might throw their bundles in with his and Father Brices and drive his oxen back to Red Cloud. The

boys were glad to avail themselves of the opportunity.

Walnut Creek Settlers

On the road they were overtaken by a party which was coming up the valley with a mule team. This party became the first settlers of Walnut Creek, and consisted of William Finnemore, Thomas Kennedy, James Vaughan, August Pierstorff and W. H. McKinney. They went so much faster than the oxen that they reached Walnut Creek selected their lands, and, returning to Beatrice to make their entries, met the Guerneys and Father Brice still trudging along beside the ox team. Reaching Red Cloud the boys helped old man Brice finish his dug-out, in return for which the old man helped them select the land near the town, breaking the rules enacted against the location of single men so near the prospective city. However, nobody could now have the heart to censure the old man for this violation of the law, because Charley certainly has done his full duty to make the census list a pleasure to the president this 1905. Six men grown and one daughter stand to his credit. Charles took the land now, "this 1952" known as "the Gurney homestead," and his brother took what was later known as the Winton farm. Again returning to our information written in 1905, this farm saw the first agricultural labors of the Hon. C. W. Kaley in Nebraska. Mr. Kaley bought the relinquishment of "Al" Gurney, and homesteaded the quarter for himself. He dug a hole in the ground, and once every six months walked up to his home where he spent at least an hour and pretended sleep, until he could prove up on his claim.

Mistaken Surveys

The land between the Gurneys was taken up by John Barber in 1871. The two Gurneys got separated because nobody knew precisely where the lines were during the first year. For some reason in 1870 settlers had got the lines about sixty rods south and east of the exact locations. This will explain why Silas Garber made such a mistake in the entry of his land. He thought he was getting the land west and north of that which he did get, the high flat land upon which the city of Red Cloud was actually built. The stockade was supposed to be on Roat's land. When the prairie fires swept the country bare in the spring of 1871 the corner stones were exposed, and, to their chagrined surprise, most of the original settlers in the vicinity of Red Cloud found that they had to move their boundaries sixty rods east and north of what they had considered their lines. The bottom land at that time was an unditched swamp, which nobody valued.

After selecting their lands the Gurneys walked back to Beatrice to take out their papers and returned to Lincoln for the rest of their clothes, which they had left at a hotel. Thence back to Beatrice again on foot. Walking was good in those days. The boys laid in a supply of flour at Beatrice, enough to last them for the next year, and then looking about to get some way to get the flour hauled to Red Cloud. They fortunately found a party of men who were looking for land and provided with a team and wagon. These strangers offered to haul their flour if they would help them to select lands and push the wagon up hill when needed.

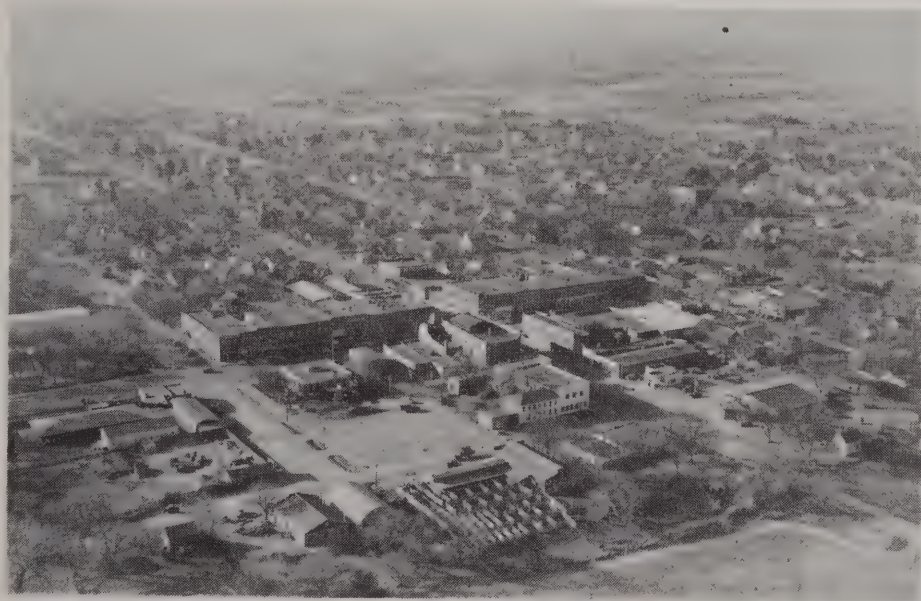
They got along nicely until they reached the river near where Superior exists. There the strangers became frightened at the possibility of attacks from Indians and refused to proceed further into the wilderness. They unloaded the flour and left the Gurneys in the middle of the prairie with eight or ten sacks of flour. Charley's experience of ship wrecks on the seas was of no use in this emergency. There seemed to be nothing for them to do except camp in the neighborhood of the flour and wait for a chance wagon. But good luck waited on them. Within an hour or two they hailed a man on his way to Guide

Rock. For a half a dollar he agreed to haul the flour to that point. There the flour was stored in Joe Garber's wagon which was still in the stockade. "Al" remained to guard it, while Charley walked to Red Cloud and got Father Brice's oxen with which he brought the flour to his dugout. He then helped Baldwin and Vance build the Baldwin house for which he received some potatoes and groceries.

In the following March, Baldwin, Vance and Gurneys went back to the eastern part of the state. The Gurneys worked for a while on the railway, then building from Nebraska City to Lincoln. Charley had sent back east for some money which was due him, and returned to Red Cloud for the letter which should be there. He found his letter which contained a postal order for one hundred dollars. This could not be cashed at any place nearer than Beatrice. Walking was good in April, 1870.

When he obtained his money, he concluded he needed a yoke of oxen. He went to a friend in Palmyra who gave him a couple of young unbroken steers for his hundred dollars. The next thing was to get a breaking plow. He contracted enough breaking to pay for his plow which cost him thirty dollars. He had no wagon and hauled his plow from place to place on a sled, finally traded for an old wagon. Sometimes he would get money for breaking, sometimes provisions only and a few traded sod breaking for a cow.

One of the means of revenue the first two years was to sell hay in the winter to travelers. This hay had been cut by hand and was sold in small lots at the rate of twenty dollars per ton. The writer has heard our old friend Charley Gurney relate how he and Gus Roats had to resort to bran mash as a substitute for bread those first two years, when the weather prevented the long trip to Beatrice to replenish the cupboard. Charley's experience as a sailor came in handy in the handling of ropes and he it was, that unfurled the stars and stripes to the breeze from the top of a tall pole, by the use of lariat rope in celebrating those early Fourth of Julys, and he lent color, tradition and mirth to many an old pioneer celebration by relating his early experiences.



Red Cloud 1952. These mistaken surveys were corrected early and the city developed to its present population early in the century and has held its own.

The Town of Blue Hill

We have been unable to learn just how or where Blue Hill got its name. The first citizen to erect a building in Blue Hill was Albert Blumenthal who selected a lot as soon as the survey was completed and began digging a cellar. He put up a hotel 16x24 feet in size to which he afterward built an addition. The hotel was opened for business on October 9, 1878. The following month Hall and Wetmore opened an agricultural implement store. About this time the post office was established and John A. Wetmore became the first postmaster.

James Martauge opened a blacksmith shop on November 10 and John S. Hoover, once a member of General Logan's staff, commenced buying grain on the 16th of the same month. Also in this month, John W. Davis of Hastings opened a general store in Blue Hill with John F. Grimes, formerly of Knoxville, Illinois, in charge. (Note: This J. W. Davis was a father of ex-mayor and well known business man of Hastings, and J. F. Grimes was the father of the well known druggist of Red Cloud, E. L. Grimes.)

A lumber yard was also opened by Kettler and Kriegsmann; Andrew Dice opened a hotel in December 1878 and in February following D. Wineburg of Chicago and Hastings opened a fine stock of merchandise with Saul Mandelbaum as manager. The same month Joseph W. Moore opened the business of selling agricultural implements and fruit trees.

David Smith opened the first feed and livery stable on March 19, 1879; A. Kopisch opened the first hardware store in the town early in February. H. B. Munson opened a wagon and blacksmith shop in April and later Andrew Dice started a boarding house west of the depot. Fred Jaeger established a boot and shoe shop on April 21 and J. O. Burgess opened his harness shop on May 16. Philip Everhart, formerly of Hancock County, Ill., located in Blue Hill in March, 1879 and soon after engaged in the coal trade. Nick Henger opened the first butcher shop and in the summer of 1879 W. L. Thatcher and John S. Hoover erected a grain elevator.

The town's first bad storm was on July 28, 1879 and threatened complete destruction. Mr. Tierman's store was unroofed; the Smith livery stable lost its roof and the end was blown out; the front of Mandelbaum's store was blown out, and the Davis store was badly damaged, including the stock of merchandise. Eight cars were blown off the Burlington track, windmills blown down and everything in its path badly wrecked by the wind. The storm extended over a small area but much damage was done in the near vicinity.

The village's first trustees were J. W. C. Thierman, A. Kopisch, H. B. Munson, J. O. Burgess and J. S. Hoover.

In 1890 it was a thriving town with the following business directory: Banks, State, Blue Hill and First National; general stores, Philip Bock, Higgins and Price, Farmers Alliance, M. W. Hornberger; groceries, Snyder & Co., T. Delehoy, Honicks, Walker and Son, Jno. Brummer, Ed Hilton; drugs, Hicks Brothers, J. T. Grimes; bakery, John Bruner; furniture, Munson Brothers; hardware, William Parker, Farmers Alliance, O. H. Martin and Co.; clothing, Panzer, Lanz Brothers, J. W. Norris & Son; hotels, City by H. P. Munson, Central by Charles Conrad; livery stable, Kinney and Randall, M. B. Bird, H. Smith, Watkins and Walters, Shockey; harness, R. L. Pelz; millinery, Mrs. Hansen, Miss Parks; boots and shoes, F. Hopka, Yager; farm implements, W. O. Dimmick, O. C. Klingerman, Jacob Schunk; meat market, F. Kick, A. Martin; lumber, William Whitten; photography, F. P. Steele; books and music, C. E. Norris.

In addition to the above, the town had two grain elevators (one owned by H. Gund and Co., the other by J. S. Hoover), the IXL Store, "where wall paper, paints, etc., are sold," two saloons, the postoffice, Ed Hilton, postmaster, one barber shop and two blacksmith shops, an opera house, a two-story brick school house with four rooms, an imported stock company with R. P. Price as manager, four churches, six business houses built of brick—the rest were of wood construction.

The physicians were Drs. Wegmann, Snook and Ives.

Organizations included the Masonic, I. O. O. F., A. O. U. W., and Modern Woodman societies, and the usual societies associated with the churches, and the Temperance League.

The Blue Hill Times was established in the spring of 1881 by Watkins Brothers who published it until March 12, 1888 when they sold to George L. Burr. The Webster County Winner was established in Blue Hill in June, 1886, by Layton and Mollineaux who issued it until December 18, 1887 when they also sold it to George L. Burr. He afterward merged it with the Times. The Blue Hill Leader was established July 16, 1887 by F. P. Shields.

The writer has, since his early boyhood, lived in the vicinity of Blue Hill and has visited it from year to year since its organization, first as a small boy, making the trip in a lumber wagon and bringing butter and eggs to trade for groceries, many times riding a spring seat mounted on the top of the second sideboards with a load of hogs.

One of the most interesting things to me as a boy was the German language being used on the streets and in the stores. Those rugged men and women of German ways and dress made the town stand out differently than did Cowles or Red Cloud. Later I made trips from Cowles to Hastings on the railroad which was then quite a treat although that mode of travel was nearly as slow as by team. The outstanding passengers those days were the commercial travelers with their trunks and other baggage which was packed full of sample merchandise. Outstanding in memory was their large twisted mustaches and small rimmed, stiff, squatted hats—and their jovial dispositions.

The Pioneer Fuel Problem

In this day of prosperity and plenty, it is hard for us who may be a part of the second, third and perhaps fourth generation, to imagine the conditions existing in the decade of the 70's. Previous to that time the vast expanse of territory which now forms the hub of this great nation, was an expanse of uninhabited territory covered in most part by wild buffalo grass with here and there a clump of wild flowers. Around the numerous buffalo chips grew stunted native weeds. There was considerable native timber along the creeks and draws to which were attached clinging vines bearing wild grapes and along the running streams could be found clusters of stunted mistletoe, wild ivy and other small shrubs; clumps of sumac and wild plums. On the bottom lands grew red bunch and blue stem grasses and many types of thrifty native weeds, the exuberance of their growth depending on the season.

The greatest menace to native shrubs and trees were the prairie fires which came during the dry seasons of fall and winter. It is hard for one today to imagine the fury and destruction of one of these early-day fires. With the unobstructed winds, one of these fires could kindle, advance and back-fire and burn out miles of land while a timber fire of today could get started. Flames in a mat of dry buffalo grass creating a draft, even with a mild breeze, would challenge the swiftest Indian ponies.

The writer has seen a lighted buffalo chip become upended and forced by the wind to roll down a level ridge far in advance of the long rows of flame it would start as it traveled.

Well do we remember the night Uncle Nicholas Haney died. Word came that there was a prairie fire approaching from the northwest at a rapid rate and as it hit this homestead a short while after dark it seemed to me the entire heavens were on fire. Although long before, fire guards had been plowed and a safety zone burned, it did not prevent lighted buffalo chips from rolling across the plowed ground or flying in the air to ignite hay stacks and hay covered sheds.

Knowing this, neighbors hurried to my uncle's place. Drawing water from a deep well the hay had just been wet down when the fire struck. My father related that he had just raised his bucket to throw its contents on to the hay when a burning chip splashed into it. This night was one I shall never forget.

I can remember three outstanding incidents that took place that night. First was the death of my father's only sister's husband, second was the prairie fire and the third was a fight that took place between two neighbors. The men were both hot headed, and entirely worn out after fighting the fire, when an argument arose over some trifling thing that terminated in blows and finally a knife wound for one of them.

While discussing these prairie fires of my boyhood days with a neighbor who is now over 80 years of age, we both remembered the one that came near wiping out their entire home, and the occupants. They lived farther down

the creek from us. After the fire had been directed around our place my father hurried to their place to help them chase the flames around and away from the hay stacks. In this fight grain sacks and old clothes were kept wet and used to whip out the flames. Many times the settlers would work so fast and furiously they would drop from exhaustion. Had heart disease been as prevalent as it is today the death toll would have been much higher. The many experiences that required the utmost in nerve and muscular endurance were far in excess of those of today.

Our reminiscences drifted to the moral and religious questions of those days. My neighbor said, "My father often related that the nearest he ever heard my father swear was during a prairie fire. He told how he had just turned the fire from a stack of hay when Ren appeared around the stack and said, "Give her Hell, Bill."

Neither of these men belonged to a church or made any pretense of religion but they lived their days under the sun, the rain, the snow and the cold and roamed the prairies gathering buffalo chips, sumac and various other wood from afar to cook their food and to keep warm in winter they matched wit with the fowl and wild animals, not for the sport of it, but in order that their families could eat. They scoured the prairies for wild hay to keep the domestic animals alive during the storms and blizzards.

During their long walks behind the breaking plows and their faithful horses, their encounters with thousands of rattle snakes during the days and the fights with fleas and bedbugs at night, the mice and the rats which were common household pests, the short and unbalanced rations and sometimes stark hunger—these handicaps seemed to be in counter balance with the beauties provided by the virgin soil. The wild flowers, their thorny limbs homely and naked during the winter season but clothed in beauty as the growing seasons descended and all nature seemed to smile in the great open stillness beneath the sun, the moon and the stars. All, about the pioneers, gave them a consciousness of God of the universe. These pioneers were the salt of the earth—the best of mankind. They listened to nature, they visioned, they hoped and prayed; they walked and talked with God.

During those boyhood days, we children, especially on Sunday afternoons, found ourselves listening to discussions on religion. With no telephones, no radio, no rural delivery of mail and being several miles from a post office, and with less than a dozen books in the home, the Bible was the most generally read in the pioneer homes and furnished a variety of subjects for discussion. It was a rare event to be visited by a man of the cloth and there were church services no more often than twice a month, so the Good Book resolved itself into individual thinking and opinions to substantiate beliefs required many hours of reading and searching during the long winter evenings.

The words that made the most indelible impression on me were "heaven" and "hell".

To me the spring time with the new carpet of grass, the coming of the leaves, the buds and the blossoms, the

chirping of the crickets, the songs of the katy-dids, the birds and their nesting, the planting and sprouting of the seed, and the warm sunshine and rain—this was heaven!

The roaring, crackling, and devastating monster as it rolled over hill and valley leaving only blackened stubs where once stood bounteous plum thickets and the picturesque sumac bedecked with large clusters of colored

berries, the velvety carpet of buffalo grass, the slender blue stem grass, all now blackened ghosts of better days, this was hell. Here and there could be seen the carcass of a trapped rabbit and the decaying skeletons of antelope that had not out-distanced the fire, the presence of buzzards, crows and other scavengers, this all furnished the picture I preferred to call Hell.

ARTICLE 22

The Horse Drawn Street Car

Franchise for Street Railroad September 28, 1887

Council met pursuant to adjournment. Mayor McKeeby presiding. Cather, Richardson and Goble present.

Thereupon a proposition was submitted by Flaisig Bros., asking for an exclusive franchise to build and operate a horse street railroad in the City of Red Cloud along such streets and on such grades as council may direct from time to time and space between rail shall be properly macadamized or paved. Said franchise to be granted for a period of twenty-five years (25) years. Said company agrees to use all new material for said road and to equip and operate the same in first class manner. To begin the construction of same within sixty days from date of franchise, also to complete one mile of said road between the B&M depot and business part of town on or before July 1, 1888. Cars to be run at intervals not exceeding thirty (30) minutes from six o'clock a. m. to ten (10) o'clock p. m., and to meet all passenger trains night and day. Said line to be expanded from time to time on said streets as council may direct. Work on said extensions to be commenced within thirty (30) days and completed within a reasonable length of time. Fare not to exceed five (5) cents in one direction within city limits. This franchise to be void and forfeited to the city if any and all of the provisions of the contract for building and operating said road are not complied with.

Motion made and seconded that the following resolution be adopted:

Resolve that the Mayor of the city of Red Cloud be and he is hereby requested to call a special election for the purpose of submitting to the election of said city the question of granting to Flaisig Brothers the privilege of constructing and operating a line of street railroad along the streets of the city of Red Cloud. The ayes and nays being called vote stood as follows: Vis Cather aye, Richardson aye, Goble aye. All voting aye. Motion declared carried.

February 4, 1888

Council met in regular session. Mayor McKeeby, Councilmen Cather, Richardson and Crone present. Whereupon the following preamble and resolution was introduced by Councilman Cather:

Whereas it appears that due and legal notice has been given for the proposition heretofore submitted the electors of the City of Red Cloud at the general election held on November 8, 1888 to grant certain franchises and privileges to Flaisig Bros., to build and operate and maintain a horse street railroad in certain streets of said city and whereas a canvass of the vote cast upon said proposition shows 315 votes cast in favor of said proposition and 4 votes cast against said proposition therefore be it resolved that the said proposition be and the same is hereby declared carried.

(Note): The records show this transaction completed February 4, 1888 and on April 7, 1888, at the city election George B. Holland was elected mayor by a majority of votes cast, 216, and John Peterson was elected councilman of the first ward by 104 votes and J. S. Emigh second ward by 115 votes. T. C. Hacker was elected city treasurer by 225 votes and L. H. Fort city clerk by 223 votes.

April 29, 1887

The Board of Trade at its last meeting held April 26, passed the following resolution. That is the sense of this meeting to instruct the city council to take necessary steps toward lighting the city of Red Cloud by the electric light and the secretary notify the city council of this action. Respectfully, E. M. Perkins, Secretary.

The project was dedicated in the spring of 1888. Trial trips were made by using the freight car. It was a car of the same proportions without top. There were sides and ends about three feet high detachable from the flat floor. They were painted red as was the rest of the car. The writer was one of a gang of kids who followed this first run in hopes of getting a free ride but we failed as there was a group of business men who also wanted this free ride. The first run was not what could have been called successful as the track had not been properly leveled and the car jumped off, especially on the turns. However there were enough men to lift it back on easily. We were a disappointed bunch of kids. It did not run long under the original owners for by September 1889 it was sold at sheriff's sale. It was purchased by one Lloyd Crabbill who proved a popular owner and manager and ran it for many years successfully.

It was in operation for over a quarter of a century and at the turn of the century became sort of a national curiosity, a subject for eastern journal comment, and if these cars had been preserved they would have, at this writing, a very valuable intrinsic historic significance. This track gave way to the automobile and paved streets but was one of the first and the last of its kind. Hastings boasted at one time of two such railroads with two competing companies. It was not for long, however, as the steam railroads traversed the business intersections of the town, while at Red Cloud the one track paralleled the river on its first and second bottom land while the town was located a mile to the north of third level so it remains that the railroad and town are somewhat divorced through a topography, defiant to the integrity of man. And so it is the Indian and his happy hunting ground, the buffalo and his grazing pasture, and pioneer homesteader and his cheap farm, the horse street car and its old "Dobbin and Pete" are of the past, having given way for the modern ingenuity of inventions and gas powered machinery.

Queen of Webster County Pioneers

Significant of Webster county is the Republican river running east and west along its southern border. Water and timber and water power were important factors in the lure of pioneer homesteading. In evaluating pioneer history one is inclined to emphasize these topographical qualities in relation to the human qualities. We think of the years of 1870 and 71 as belonging to the southern part of Webster county and lose sight of the fact that there were many early pioneers exploring and staking out homesteads during these first years all over the county. We must not forget their modes of travel without highways and lack of communication when we think of county organization and realize that those who participated most, were those in closer contact with central government.

Significant in our study of this question is Oak Creek township in the far northeast corner of the county. Here we find school district number five, the fifth district to organize in the county involving Sections 1, 2 and 11, 12. To this community came one Mr. Tom Laird as early as 1869 and returning to the east sold his four brothers who returned with him to homestead.

While the Civil War was in its incipency a 15-year-old boy emigrant direct from his birthplace in Germany found employment as a tailor in Hartford, Connecticut, making clothes for the government. In a very few years we find he has married an emigrant girl from his country. Soon the family is increasing and his work and living quarters require a change and he, with family, locate on a farm near Davenport, Iowa. Hard work in farming and stock raising has increased his herds and the need for more pasture. With his oldest boy and girl they drive their cattle to the Laird neighborhood and leaving his children to live with the Lairds and herd the cattle while he drives back to Iowa to work through harvest, after which he is again on his way back to Nebraska and Webster county and his new home, the fall of 1871. He homesteads the southwest quarter of Section 8 where he digs a dug-out not unlike the one in which Webster county was born in April 19, 1871. Just one year and two days from the birth of Webster county near Crooked Creek, there was born in a dug-out on the west bank of a little dry creek also named Crooked Creek, flowing north and east paralleling Oak Creek on their way to the Blue river, a baby girl April 21, 1872, next to the last of 7 girls and two boys. There are only two of this family now living—the boy who was seven years old when they came, now residing

with a daughter in Blue Hill, and our nominee, Margerete Leetsch Oatman, residing in Red Cloud.

Accompanied by the brother, Wm. H. Leetsch, we visited their old home and birthplace of our queen and he pointed out where at one time the dug-out existed with its dirt floor and roof, where Margerete played with her rag dolls, learning to stitch, sew and fashion their clothes and down by the watering trough by the garden where she made mud pies, and later when they moved into the log house with its dirt floor and roof, where she helped her mother with her washing in the front yard and morning sun, where she helped care for the garden, gathering for the meals radishes, lettuce, spinach and tomatoes, and then the school days.

While Margerete was still very young school district number 55 was organized with a three month per term being taught. She was eager for an education and according to the records in the county superintendent's office she took the teachers examination on November 15, 1890 and got her teacher certificate with an average grade of 90. This certificate was renewed every year until 1899 when it seems her days of teaching came to an end.

In 1876 there came to this community from Arlington, Virginia, a family and in that family was a young man by the name of Edwin George Oatman and he it was put an end to Margerete's teaching, for on January 18, 1899 we find them before the M. E. pastor in Blue Hill, the Rev. Geo. Hummel, pioneer homesteader, preacher, and distinguished citizen answering the questions with "I do." They retired to a nearby farm where they farmed and raised stock along with a fine family of three girls and one boy. Accepting a good price for their farm they moved to a new farm just east of Red Cloud where the husband and father's health failed and his death occurred in the 71st year of his life.

Our Webster county's Pioneer Queen Margerete Leetsch Oatman lives in Red Cloud where she enjoys her grandchildren and now a great grandchild, and takes great interest in her neighbors and friends, a distinguished citizen in that she is the oldest child born in Webster county now living, and having lived continuously since birth within the county confines, never having a home in any other place. It can well be said of her as a pioneer, teacher, wife, mother, councilor and exemplary citizen, "Well done our worthy queen." You have shown great faith and love for your native county and state, its citizenry who I am sure one and all join me in crowning you "Our Pioneer Queen Margerete."

Note—Since this was written the Queen has passed away.

My Parents' Courtship and Marriage

In the summer of 1871 one Wm. Brown from Illinois made his way into Webster county and staked out a homestead in Elm Creek township near the one by young Thomas. He built a sod house and dug out stables, turned over a few acres of sod and made off on his way to spend Christmas with his wife and family in Illinois. He was enthusiastic and loud in his praise for his new home and by spring had a number of his relatives sold on homesteading in the west. Among them was his brother-in-law, Joseph Chambers, who had three unmarried sons eligible to homestead, a daughter eligible to marriage, and a younger son.

During the winter they had rigged up three covered wagons heavily loaded with household goods, provisions and feed for the teams. They also planned to lead two young cows and had three young pregnant sows in a crate fastened to the side of the newest wagon box. There was an extra horse equipped with a good saddle. For a day or so the cows were tied to the rear wagon, had not been trained to lead, but with the boy on the saddle horse with a whip, they soon learned and were turned loose to follow and graze as the boy on the horse brought up the rear. It was the last of winter and they encountered some bad winter weather and suffered with cold winds from the northwest, but not once did they think of turning back. They found all along the way pioneers who were nicely established, very hospitable and glad to assist them over night and on their way. Such was the predominant characteristic of the first generation of pioneers, not so prevalent in the second or third generation.

One sunshiny day with a soft balmy wind from the south the first of March, this family caravan was sighted making its way over the prairies to the home of Wm. Brown, who, with his wife and two brothers, had preceded them and awaited their arrival with great glee, for loneliness was prevalent, more especially after a recent visit to the home folks back east.

Mr. Brown's near neighbor, young Thomas, had helped in spying out some good homestead land nearby and early next morning the men were not only selecting their 160 acres of land but a likely spot to build a home, and before nightfall sod was being broken from which sod brick was to be cut to lay up a two room house for the elder, father and mother. As was the custom, nearby neighbors (in this case one lone young bachelor) laid off work at home and proceeded in helping a newcomer build a primitive home. In the case of this young bachelor who had been introduced to a charming young blonde girl, the first to come to the country for miles around, the welcome and zealous effort in helping with a new home was unbounded.

This land was all raw prairie and no timber. So he saw his opportunity and made good use of it by going into his creek bottom and cutting select poles from ash and elm trees, ridge and rafter poles, and delivered them before the

sod walls had been completed. In this he became sort of a hero as all were tired of living in covered wagons.

In due time there was a housewarming, not the kind to end up with wine and dance, but thanksgiving for this family were devout Christians, members of the Presbyterian Church. There was singing of old church hymns and a long ardent prayer led by the father. This family of singers soon became outstanding entertainers in evening and Sunday afternoon sings. The mother at the little old organ they had brought with them, the father with his rich deep base voice, the daughter with a sweet alto, backed up by the four boys, all good in their part. What a wonderful addition to the new sparsely settled country.

Soon the young bachelor and blonde with the sweet alto voice were seen taking long Sunday afternoon walks over carpets of buffalo grass, soft, smooth, extending for miles in all directions, with here and there patches of bunch grass, wild rose bushes, wild sage or maybe some weeds found growing around a decaying buffalo chip that had made way in destroying a small circle of buffalo sod. In these natural hiding places one could scare out cottontail rabbits, jack rabbits, so near the color of their hiding places they were not detected until almost stepped upon. They would lay their long ears down over their backs, nestle close to the ground with a hope you would pass them up. But when discovered they would spring into action and be out of reach by the time you could collect your thoughts and transmit to your muscles if you were lucky enough to have a gun with you. Before our young couple had gone far on that first Sunday afternoon walk one of these fluffy jack rabbits jumped out of hiding and with ears laid back made off when like a flash, the young lady gave chase, but only for a short way, remarking to her escort, "that she surely would have liked to have caught that young lamb." Long after they were married and the jack rabbit had become a favorite dish on their table, he kidded her over her prairie lamb.

These long walks supplemented by horse back rides, soon developed into love. A love sincere, pure and deep, fostered and nurtured by the stars and moon and sun above the wild roses, the katy-dids and crickets all about singing their evening love songs. It was out there under the dark blue sky all around about the awe of nature that he told her of his love and he felt her answer from her hand in his. It was in this setting he took her in his arms and kissed her. Only the stars in the blue heaven and the wild virgin soil upon which they stood witnessed that first embrace and kiss. Where could one find a more fitting, more appropriate, more sacred setting for a betrothal. Everywhere was nature in the raw, naked, never adulterated by the hand of man.

They set the wedding date for the 25th of September, 1873.

The Wedding

The marriage records in the County Judge's office at Red Cloud, Webster county, Nebraska, show that Lorenzo Dow Thomas and Mary Ann Chambers were married on the 25th of September, 1873. The 19th couple married

in the county, that they were married by a Justice of the Peace, Wm. Brown.

Wm. Brown, an uncle of the bride, a brother of her mother, the first Justice of the Peace married the first homesteader to the first young woman in Elm Creek township, Webster county, Nebraska. The wedding took place in the home of the bride's parents. She was gowned in a new calico dress, very plain and extending to the dirt floor, thereby concealing a pair of leather shoes, from one there protruded two stocking covered toes. The groom was dressed in a striped gray suit, a Sunday suit he had worn for over three years.

It must be remembered that a dry goods, shoe store and men's furnishing was over 100 miles away and the only means of getting there was in a heavy horse drawn lumber wagon, with no roads, bridges or definite wagon trail, and that if there had been they had no money to buy with. However, they were dressed as well as the average in the community, were happy, contented making the best of what they had. Any other sort of a wedding would have been out of place.

By ten thirty the wedding was over, the usual kidding and wedding dinner was in full swing. Yes, there was a wedding cake. It was not made with Swansdown flour or cake mix but from spring wheat raised on the sod and

ground between mill stones several miles down Elm Creek. The screening only removed the coarser bran and shorts, leaving a rich brown flour from which by the help of home made yeast the bread and cake were made and baked and in this case the heat was furnished by burning buffalo chips from a huge pile that had been gathered for the winter fuel.

There were two kinds of bread, wheat and corn, and for spread, sorghum, molasses, butter, wild grape jelly and wild plum butter. There were three kinds of meat, prairie chicken, rabbit and some dried buffalo meat that had been saved for the occasion, two kinds of potatoes, Irish and sweet out of the new garden, as was baked squash and pumpkin pie. The table was extended by the use of side-boards from the wagon boxes, as were the seats about the table laid on kegs and boxes. It took some engineering to get the table and seats leveled and stabilized on the dirt floor. The bride's father, a well built, ruddy, whiskered individual, said grace in his deep bass voice, including a few prayerful exhortations on behalf of the newlyweds. The dinner over, the evening was spent in singing and joking, pulling taffy and eating popcorn. The next morning the newlyweds moved into the groom's log house and set up housekeeping. The spirit of the early settler, the virgin soil, the sunshine, altitude and the prevailing winds, all contributed to the happiness, contentment and determination of pioneers.

ARTICLE 25

Eighty Years Progress

It must be assumed that this period of time, the beginning and end, is fixed. The beginning 1870, the period when the first white man appeared to make this land his home. On this date we must accept the land and its products as presented by nature, its topography, soil, water, native trees and grass. Its acquirement, its exploration, its surveyed geography, has all been predetermined. At this point, 1870, the U. S. census shows but 16 people in the county. From this small beginning the next census of 1880 shows 7,088 people had found their way into the county, and by the 1890 census we had made another substantial gain of 4,111.

From a published biographical sketch in 1890 of 210 residents we find that the population came from nine foreign countries and twenty-three states. By the 1910 census the county reached its highest peak with a population of 12,008, and then came a decline of 4,604 shown in the 1950 census.

Along with this shifting it is interesting to note and compare an abstract of an assessment made in 1897 and 1952. Beginning with horses and mules and asses of all ages, comparison shows a decline in our muscle power of 7,049, from 8,468 to 1,419. It is interesting to note the listing of 24 steam engines but no mention of tractors, while in 1952 there are listed 1,311 tractors, 101 gas powered lawn mowers and garden tractors, five airplanes, 3,011 motor vehicles and two water craft. There were in 1952, 27,982 cattle of all ages against 15,438 in 1897, but we find the reverse in the number of hogs, 31,688

against 9,117 in 1952. With sheep the ratio in change shows a slight gain of 601 to 694. While there was no mention of poultry in 1897 the 1952 census shows a valuation of \$37,215. In 1897 there were 2,683 carriages and wagons and no mention of these in 1952. There were 489 pianofortes, melodeons, and organs while listed today are 610 pianos and musical instruments. Today's records show 1,903 radios and record players and seven television sets. Bicycles show a gain from 28 to 206.

Foreign to the assessor of 1897 are 1,673 gas stoves, 1,728 refrigerators, 126 deepfreezers, 1,648 powered washers, driers and mangles. 55 years ago the valuation of household equipment was \$12,428 against \$377,520 today. Money other than in bank, bond broker or stock jobber \$616.00. Bonds, stocks and state, county, city, village, or school district warrants and municipal securities of any kind whatever \$1,502 against 1952 money-on-hand or in saving associations \$2,224,540.00 and to be added to this \$205,490 Postal Savings, and check drafts and bills of exchange amounting to \$1,625.00. The first reference is from assessment books made and on file in the county clerk's office; L. H. Fort, clerk of Webster County, and from the county assessors books under the supervision of a duly elected County Assessor, Mr. Robert Skjelver.

From 1910 to 1950 the county shows a loss in population of 4,603. The loss from 1910 to 1920 was 1,189; 1920 to 1930, 712; 1930 to 1940, 2,139; 1940 to 1950, 676. Red Cloud city shows a gain of 55 people since 1910, and Guide Rock, Blue Hill, Bladen and Cowles show

a combined loss of 503. Guide Rock, 14; Blue Hill, 181; Bladen, 212; Cowles, 90.

Webster County outside of towns: 1919, 8,131; 1950, 3,973—a county loss of 4,157. From 1920 to 1930 there was a loss of 712 and from 1940 to 1950, 676. While from 1910 to 1920 there was a loss of 1,189, and from 1930 to 1940 there was a loss of 2,139. Our problem then is, what caused this extra population slump in these two decades over and above the other two decades? We are inclined to think that the average of the 694 loss in population is a result of the change from muscles to motor farm-power. This would leave a population of 495 to be accounted for in this decade of 1910 to 1920. The first World War was on from 1914 to 1918. While we did not have such a large draft of men, war psychology did upset the plans and calm of the regular routine of life, producing an unrest and changing vocational aspirations, causing people to find occupation elsewhere.

But now comes a loss of 1,445 in the decade of the thirties to be accounted for. The years of drouth during almost the entire decade of the thirties coupled with the low prices of farm commodities more particularly the first few years of the decade, makes it difficult to arrive at accurate figures covering the number of people who left the Great Plains in these years. Were "blown out," "burned out", or "starved out." This migration reached its peak in the year 1936. Many farmers were forced to leave the region to seek employment in industrial centers already overcrowded with unemployed, or wherever they might have a friend or relative to help them. California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho got a large per cent of those who migrated from the farms in and around the geographical center of the U. S. A. Most farmers, when they decided to leave their farms, loaded their household possessions in trucks or trailers, and took to the highways under power.

There were those in every walk of life, farmers among them, who saved nothing even in prosperous years. Some with poor reasoning, trading in used machinery on the purchase of a new one; obtaining a trade-in value of one third of its original cost, and accepting that rather than make repairs. Determined to "keep up with the times," and demanding the benefit of every slight improvement that might make the equipment easier to handle. Many preferred leaving the farm to engage in business or labor rather than accept the red tape and questionable relief offered the farmers; including grants and rehabilitation loans, farm security, etc.

While Webster county was not in the Dust Bowl and its soil and topography not subject to the great "blow outs" nevertheless it did share in the aftermath of these historical dust blizzards of the thirties, which contaminated the air and settled over all outdoors and even found its way into the best of well-built homes. Farmers were used to gambling with weather and markets, and many who left could have remained, surviving two or three successive crop failures in the period of 1934-36 if it had not been for the previous crop failures on the one hand and the permanent after effects of the drouths on the other.

As one studies the ups and downs of the eighty years in Webster County, it's quick adjustment without fanfare or fuss is remarkable and complimentary to its population. It has had its grasshopper years, its wind storms

and blizzards, and its periods of drouth and resulting migration, but none so depressing, with a devastation in successive years as those years of the third decade in 1900.

A few of the pioneers gave up and returned to their homes in those earliest days, but most of them were of the sturdy type and remained, always believing that the day of better things was to come. Though they had little money and few of the comforts and conveniences of life; though they were often filled with home-sickness for the friends and scenes they had left behind, they stayed and worked and hoped. Webster County had its boom in the coming of the railroad and the building during the last two years of the seventies and the early eighties. Money was quite easy to borrow in those days and banks sprang up; much money was loaned for speculation in real estate. Property was bought not to use but to sell again at a higher price. Land bordering towns was laid out into lots and sold for large sums. Extensive improvements were made, many hotels were built to accommodate the newcomer, seeker of trade and for speculation. A street railroad was built in Red Cloud. Many grist mills were built and operated to grind the corn and wheat of the nearby farmers. 1887 came and with it a severe drouth. Money could not be borrowed and mortgages were foreclosed. People who bought property at high prices and expected to sell at a profit, found themselves unable to sell at any price. Many who counted themselves wealthy found their property valueless. Banks and businesses had a struggle to live. Many left during the time previous to 1887, however there followed several good crop seasons.

In 1893 a financial panic extended over the whole country, with a partial failure of crops. These were dark days for many of the people were still burdened with heavy mortgages. Within two or three years conditions had greatly improved. The years following that time up to 1910, brought almost uninterrupted prosperity. In 1898 the long period of peace that the country had enjoyed since the Civil War was broken by the Spanish-American War. And so it was that the County of Webster gained during its first four decades its highest peak in population, as shown by the 1910 U. S. census. From here on, during the next four decades and the drop in farm population of the county. It was the beginning of World War I when the "age of tractor power" really began, and it is still making progress. It was preceded by steam power which was proven to be impractical in farm transit. Gradually the all purpose tractor with its rubber tires and light frame made its way into farm service to the extent it has almost eliminated horse power and they are fast being converted into uses and interest once monopolized by cattle, sheep and hogs. Tractors have given their owners power to farm better and time to live better. Tractor manufacturing as a large scale industry had its beginning in 1906 with eleven companies in the business. Their output in 1907 was 600 machines. By 1909, 31 manufacturers of tractors were listed in the industry's trade directory and production totaled 2,000.

It took courage and fortitude for a farmer to invest in one of these new contraptions. He had been the victim of many a worthless new contraption and shyster salesman. He not only risked the taunts of his neighbors but his arm, especially on cold mornings as he proceeded to crank it up. But progress could not be stopped and tractors became a little better year by year. The use of an impulse coupling for the magneto. A model with frameless, or unit design with their so called motor culti-

vator, not too well adapted for drawbar work, made their appearance in the early part of the second decade.

The period during and immediately following World War I, probably the real birthdate of power farming, touched off a series of improvements. By 1918 engineering for mass production was well on its way. In 1919 a built-in power take-off became available to operate tractor binders. This opened the way to an entirely new phase of tractor use—the operation of power driven machines which now include corn pickers, forage harvesters, combines, sprayers and many others. Starters and lights were available on tractors as early as 1920.

The Iowa State Experimental Station found in 1936 that farmers with two-plow tractors were growing and harvesting 100 acres of corn with 51 days of field work, compared to 141 days with horses. At this writing more than 90 per cent of all small grains are harvested with tractor power. More than 80 per cent of such work as plowing, listing, bedding, disking, harrowing and drilling was done with tractors, with the percentage increasing every year. Farm output for 1948 was estimated at 140 per cent of the prewar 1935-39 average. Between World Wars I and II the number of man-hours per crop year was reduced about 9 per cent, while agricultural production went up 29 per cent. 15 per cent of our working force today does the farming with the aid of modern labor-saving devices, where not many years ago it required 85 per cent.

We must not overlook other factors that have made increased production and decreased man power on the farm. Contributors like better seed and improved varieties; more efficient livestock; better feeding; more effective control of insects and disease; greater use of fertilizer; more cover and soil building crops; improved roads and transportation facilities—to name only a few. However, the greatest contributor has been the farm tractor, and the equipment it operates. The number of persons supported by one farm worker in 1900 was 8.05 while in 1949 it had almost doubled, 15.30. Had farmers in 1944 been compelled to go back to the equipment and methods of 25 years ago it would have taken 4½ million more farm workers to produce the same amount of food. Strange as it may seem farm machinery, although it has saved labor and made life easier for us, they have actually created jobs. All we need to do is look at the record. In 1890, when we were just beginning to think of farm mechanization the total number of gainfully employed persons in the United States was less than 25 million; now it is more than 60 million. Horses proved a better source of power than human muscles, but farming with horses was still a long, hard daily grind. Horse chores alone took between 50 and 60 man hours per horse per year. In effect, the horse and mule farmer spent a large part of his work year laboring with his work animals. The horse and mule population reached its peak in 1918 and then started downward as tractor population came up.



There were 31,688 hogs in 1897 against 9,117 in 1952.

There were 15,438 cattle in 1897 against 27,982 in 1952.



Webster County Schools

In response to a petition sent to the acting governor at Lincoln, Nebraska, there came from the executive chamber a proclamation that began like this: Whereas, a large number of citizens of the unorganized county of Webster have united in a petition asking that an election be called for the purpose of choosing county officers preliminary to the organization of said county. He then set Wednesday, April 19, 1871 as the date for the first election. The election was held and among the county officers a Mr. W. B. Jackson was chosen for the office of county superintendent of schools but he failed to qualify and at the first regular election in the county, after its organization, was held October 10, 1871 at which time Edwin Kellogg was elected and qualified for the term of two years and it was he who did some real organizing and laid the foundation of our present county school system. The school patrons around the stockade at Guide Rock proceeded county organization, built a log school house and hired a Miss Mary Kinsley who became the county's first teacher and the district became District No. 1. Prof. Kellogg soon found coming to his office petitions from various parts of the county asking for district organization and permission to secure a school room. A qualifying procedure was a school census after which the district received a number and an election was held and school officers elected and qualified.

We have chosen District No. 5 from among the early organized districts as an illustration of procedure, its records being the most complete.

This district is located in Oak Creek township in the northeast part of Webster county. The foremost leader in the movement was a Mr. A. D. Ranney, who later became one of Webster's foremost leaders in public affairs.

The first term of school was taught in the home of Mr. Robert Laird and was for three months.

The first teachers contract is agreed between A. D. Ranney, director of School District No. 5 of Webster county, Nebraska and Mrs. Wm. Laird, a legal qualified teacher in said county that the said Mrs. Laird shall teach the primary school of said district for the term of three months commencing on the 30th day of September, A.D., 1872, and the said Mrs. Wm. Laird agrees faithfully to observe and enforce the rules and regulations established by the district board.

The said director in behalf of said district agrees to pay Mrs. Laird for the said services as teacher to be faithfully rendered the sum of twenty-five dollars (25) per month, the same being the amount of wages agreed to be paid from the district treasury as fast as the money is collected for teachers' fund. Dated this 26th day of September, A.D., 1872. Signed: A. D. Ranney, Director; Margaret A. Laird, Teacher.

Now comes a call to build a school house.

Ugunda, Webster County, Nebraska. September 23, 1872. To the School Director, District No. 5: We, the undersigned legal voters of School District No. 5, hereby

request that you call a school meeting for the purpose of voting bonds for the purpose of building a school house. Signed: W. C. Laird, Alcetas Riley, R. C. Laird, Alexander Riley, T. C. Laird.

Another call for the purpose of procuring land on which to build a school house:

Request for a call of special school meeting of District 5, Webster County, Nebraska, September 23, 1872. Signed: J. R. Laird, T. C. Laird, P. L. Laird, Alcetas Riley and John Riley.

Land is secured as per the following contract:

Known by all men by these presents that Jesse H. Cary of Webster County, State of Nebraska, for the consideration herein mentioned, does hereby lease unto School District No. 5 of Webster County, State of Nebraska, and their assign the following parcel of land commencing at the northwest corner of the northwest one-fourth of section (10) ten township (4) four range (9) nine west running 40 yards east thence 40 yards south, thence 40 yards west, thence 40 yards north to the place of beginning, with all the privileges and appurtenances to the same belonging to have and to hold as long as needed for school purposes from the first day of April A.D., 1873, and School District No. five (5), county and state aforesaid mentioned and their assigns do covenant and agree to pay the said Jesse H. Cary, his heirs and their assigns for the said premises the annual rent of two dollars in testimony wherefore the said parties have hitherto set their hands and seal this first day of April A.D., 1873. Signed: Jesse H. Cary, Seal Lessor; Wm. Leetsch, L. S.; A. D. Ranney, L. S.; S. Dewhirst, L. S. Signed and sealed in the presence of J. Henry Hobart and W. H. Hobart.

A special meeting notice: A special meeting of legal voters of School District No. (5) five of Webster county, Nebraska, called on written request of five legal voters will be held at the house of Mr. Robert Laird on Saturday, the 19th day of October, A.D., 1872 at one o'clock p. m., for the purpose of voting bonds for building a school house in said district and also for voting tax to pay teachers and interest on bonds and also for location of school house.

The election was held and bonds in the amount of \$2,000 were legally voted and later the contract was let and the school built. It is interesting to note that the coupon notes having been redeemed and all checks written on that \$2,000 have been filed and preserved in the office of the county superintendent at Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Red Cloud, Nebraska, first annual report to State Superintendent of Instruction, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1873:

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Lincoln, Nebraska. Sir: I herewith submit the special report requested:

General summary of statistics—number of districts 21; number of children of school age, males 221, females

210; number attending school 212; per cent of children not attending school 21; number of districts having six months or more of school 4; average number of days school in all districts 58; number of qualified teachers, male 4, female 14; number days taught by, male 240, female 980; highest wages paid, male \$30, female \$35 per month; lowest wages paid, male \$25, female \$10 per month; average wages paid, male \$26.25, female \$22 per month; number of school houses, stone 2, brick 0, frame 8, log, sod or dug-out 8; average of surface of blackboard to each school in square feet 30; number of school houses with no blackboard 8; number of school houses with well furnished desks and seats with patent 10; number of school houses with two privies 4, one privy 2, no privies 6; number of visits of school superintendent 15; number by district directors 12; value of school property 9828 dollars; total receipts for the year 1088.24 dollars; expenditures for the year 1364.00 dollars; average cost of tuition for each child attending school \$4.69; total district tax for teachers' wages .0010 mills; number of days employed by county superintendent 24; compensation per day \$3.00; total compensation for the year \$72.00.

Following is a list of the teachers, along with the district number, certificate grade, number of months taught and compensation per month:

Judson Bailey, District 1, certificate grade 2, taught 6 months, \$30 monthly.

Mary L. Kingsley, District 1, certificate grade 2, taught 6 months, \$20 monthly.

J. R. Wilcox, District 2, certificate grade 2, taught 6 months, \$25 monthly.

Anna Sager, District 2, certificate grade 2, taught 6 months, \$30 monthly.

Sadia F. Tulley, District 2, certificate grade 2, taught 6 months, \$35 monthly.

Mary E. Downs, District 3, certificate grade 2, taught 3 months, \$20 monthly.

Stephen Balis, District 4, certificate grade 3, taught 3 months, \$25 monthly.

Mary A. Laird, District 5, certificate grade 2, taught 3 months, \$25 monthly.

No school at District 6.

Jennie E. Wicks, District 7, certificate grade 3, taught 6 months, \$20 monthly.

Zellia Downs, District 8, certificate grade 3, taught 3 months, \$17 monthly.

Mary E. Downs, District 9, certificate grade 3, taught 3 months, \$15 monthly.

J. L. Hull, District 10, certificate grade 3, taught 3 months, \$25 monthly.

No school at District 12.

No school in 13.

Fannie M. Barber, District 14, certificate grade 3, taught 3 months, \$21 monthly.

No school at District 15, 16 and 17.

Mrs. C. H. Smith, District 18, certificate grade 2, taught 6 months, \$20 monthly.

Mrs. J. Garber, District 19, certificate grade 2, taught 3 months, \$25 monthly.

No school at District 20.

Amelia E. Smith, District 21, certificate grade 2, taught 3 months, \$25 monthly.

Edwin Kellogg, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Webster County, Nebraska.

ARTICLE 27

The Past and the Present



Crooked Creek courses down from the north so if continued in its course would bisect Red Cloud, but just at city limits it encounters a small bluff changing its course to the east and south, again as it hugs the east bank past the city, just before it enters the river valley, it meets a prominence of land diverting it to the west and south where it enters the valley of the Republican River. Early settlers took advantage of such topography that furnished unobstructed vision about the points of the compass for home protection. So here it was some three blocks south of the U. S. P. O. and across the creek that Capt. Silas Garber established, first the dug-out and later, after serving as governor, a spacious mansion, later burned down.

Webster County Newspapers

One of the greatest contributing factors in colonizing the plains was "the newspapers". Heralding the Homestead Act, the newspapers over the eastern states chronicled the lure of the west. Mightiest in this was that able journalist and statesman, Horace Greeley, who issued that notorious admonition, "Go west young man, and grow up with the new country". While homes were being fashioned from conceivable makeshift material and merchants were unpacking and displaying their goods, room was being found in a back room or alley, up stairs—any place for a hand printing press and a few cases of type, and a weekly paper was being printed. It must be remembered there were no roads, no telephones, radios, rural free mail deliveries, railroads—and the only means of getting mail was by stage not more than once a week. The early settlers had to find their own way of getting to and from the postoffice to pick up the long delayed letters from home. The post office department helped by establishing many rural offices along the route, in dug-outs and sod houses, in log houses, homes and stores, anywhere reached on the early mail route where willing hands were found to care for it. At one time there were near two dozen such post offices in Webster county. The only supplement for walking was horse-back riding, or use of the heavy horse or ox drawn lumber wagons, so the local newspaper took the place of the long awaited letter from home. While lacking in state and national news it took up the grapevine, the gossip column and the woes of the community. At any rate, it was a welcome visitor and most small towns could boast of one and in many county seats and larger towns there were as many as half a dozen.

In the horse and buggy days a thriving little town was to be found every ten miles or closer for the convenient distribution of the necessary commodities. They were the days of rural districts which were like one big family and where everyone belonged, regardless of background or length of residence. There were dances, literary societies, spelling bees, taffy pulls, and Sunday afternoon singing enjoyed by the neighbors coming from many miles around—five to twelve or fifteen miles, the trip taking hours. The father and mother usually sat on the spring seat while the kids played in the wild hay carpet over the bottom of the wagon box. Sweethearts generally came horseback or now and then in a buggy—and what a luxury!

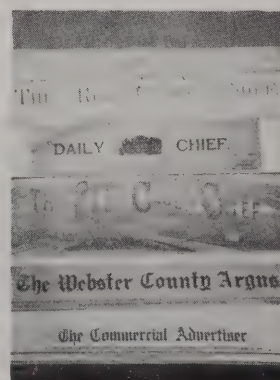
The local newspaper served as a clearing house for all social, economic, political, religious gatherings, gossip, marriages and deaths, sales and everything concerning its community without even benefit of boiler plate, patent print or continued stories. If the editor did not have enough type to fill the page, the editor filled it up with a

broadside attack on a near-by editor, some local, state or national politician, some socialite, a batch or an old maid, always refreshing his memory of all the latest adjectives, descriptive and otherwise, the meanest, nastiest and most abusive. His dictionary was well worn in places that indicated his greatest need. He sometimes went to the gutter, the local saloon or the pool hall to find the proper words, all of which furnished amusement and recreation for the long winter nights in the days gone by.

I remember my father and some of his neighbors subscribed for a national weekly paper, the Toledo Blade, published in Ohio. These papers, to a great extent, were the bibles on national affairs and served to settle arguments in politics, economics and sports. Many a local editor found himself confronted with a reader armed with one of these national weeklies hoping to prove his point, or he had to sneak down a back alley to dodge some irate reader who had taken offense when none was intended. Well I remember how we would read and reread the old and new for it must be remembered that we had no radio, movies, no Sunday paper and its comic section, no funny books and few if any toys.

These small town newspapers did their bit to bring the railroads, the highways, telegraph, telephone, rural free mail delivery, parcel post, the modern equipped homes and the resulting happiness. They promoted new and better homes, schools, churches, modern play grounds, and sports, civic and numerous other constructive enterprises. They have done their bit in making this virgin land into one of the greatest and happiest, wealthiest and productive in the shortest space of time of any in history. However, they, like the small town, the country post office, the horse and buggy days, are luxuries of the past, their yellowed copies brought to light where they have been kept as birth records, marriages and deaths, or in the wreckage of old buildings which have also served their usefulness.

They rose to mastery of storms and wants;
They went like soldiers grimly into strife,
They colonized the plains. They plowed, they sowed,
They fertilized the sod with their own lives,
As did the Indians and the buffalo.



THE
COMMERCIAL
ADVERTISER



The above is a picture of the front office, with Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Smith at their respective desks. The occasion of this picture was the 50th anniversary of the paper and the 36 years that Mr. Smith has been in the newspaper business at Red Cloud, Nebraska. Mrs. Smith not only gathers and writes the news, but reads the proofs, keeps the books and pinch hits on the Model C Intertype when the occasion demands. The man at the rear desk, Walter as he is known about town, prefers to stay in the background and is reluctant to take credit where credit is due.



THE
BLUE HILL
LEADER

Meet Vaughans, the Printers . . . Left to right are Tom and Winifred, "Mom and Dad", Irene, Bill and Evadne.

The father in this group Byron B. Vaughn is the son of an old pioneer family at Guide Rock and a younger brother of the late Harry Vaughn a long time publisher and editor of the Guide Rock Signal, Post Master and a most beloved citizen of the state and county.

FIRST ONE ESTABLISHED JULY 1873

The Red Cloud Chief

The Red Cloud Chief was established in July, 1873, by C. L. Mather who continued its publication for two years.

Vol. 1 September 25th, October 2nd and October 9th, numbers 13, 14 and 15 are the only preserved issues that we can find of the first six months 1873. These and the remaining issues during its life are preserved in the archives of the Commercial Advertiser, Red Cloud, Nebraska.

It was a four page, seven column paper, 18 columns ready print and 10 columns home print. There were 5 single columns and one double column of advertising and 3 columns of news.

RED CLOUD CHIEF

\$2.00 per annum, devoted to the interests of southwest Nebraska. Vol. 1 Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska, Thursday, September 25, 1873. No. 13.

The Red Cloud Chief, published weekly at Red Cloud, Webster county, Nebraska. Terms, two dollars per year in advance. Rates of advertising: 1 inch first insertion \$1.00; 1 each subsequent insertion 50c; 3 months \$5.00; 6 months \$8.00; 12 months \$15.00; $\frac{1}{4}$ column \$15.00 three months; $\frac{1}{4}$ column \$20.00 six months; $\frac{1}{4}$ column \$30.00 one year; $\frac{1}{2}$ column \$20.00 three months; $\frac{1}{2}$ column \$35.00 six months; $\frac{1}{2}$ column \$60.00 twelve months; full column \$35.00 three months; full column \$60.00 six months; full column \$100.00 twelve months.

Single column ads, business director:

Lee and Estell, attorneys and counsellors at law, Red Cloud, Nebraska. We buy and sell real estate on commission. Pay taxes for non-residents. Special attention to location of soldiers' claims under act of June 8th, 1872. Claims contested and all manner of business before the U. S. Land Office with promptness and dispatch.

H. S. Kaley, attorney at law. Notary public, Real estate agent, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Will negotiate and sell school bonds, etc. Special agent for school furniture.

J. R. Willcox, attorney at law. Notary public and real estate agent, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Homesteads and preemptions secured. Special attention to paying taxes and discount. Cash paid for county warrants.

A. H. Bowen, Jas. Laird, attorneys at law and real estate agents. Will practice in all courts of the state. Juniata, Nebraska.

Proctor House, G. D. Proctor, proprietor, Hebron, Nebraska. The traveling public will find this hotel to be first class in every respect. Carriage runs daily to Belvidere and most stations on the St. Joe and D.C.R.R.

E. H. Jones, watch maker and jeweler, Inavale, Nebraska, Webster county. Particular attention to repairing fine watches and satisfaction guaranteed.

J. W. Tulleys, Homeopathic Physician. Residence one mile east of Red Cloud.

Dr. T. B. Williams, U. S. examining surgeon and pension. Family physician. Tenders his service to the public and will attend to all professional calls.

F. P. Reed, surveyor and civil engineer and real estate agent, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Will properly attend to all business entrusted to his care. Corners established, lines run, city service engineering a specialty.

A. G. Granger, contractor and builder of all kinds of buildings, bridges, etc. Also home and sign painter. Mill work, all kinds of patterns made to order, Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Carl Weber, gunsmith. Repairs done on short notice, in best style and reasonable rates.

Red Cloud Ferry, M. C. Sherman, proprietor. Will be until the bridge is built. Teams and stock crossing safely at all reasonable hours.

Red Cloud Native Lumber. Feed and meal constantly on hand. Custom work warranted. John Q. Potter and Brother, Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Buy your hedge plants at home and you will get good stock. Mitchell and Dingree. Offer for sale the coming fall 200,000 osage hedge plants, 1,000 peach trees. Nursery six miles southwest of Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Buck House, George Buck, Jr., proprietor, Franklin, Nebraska. Good accommodations, livery and feed stables.

The only boot and shoe shop in Webster county. John S. Parks. Perfect fit warranted, repairs on short notice. Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Oldest drug store in Red Cloud. Opposite Garber's Store. Drugs, stationery, fine soaps and spices, patent medicines and the thousand and one things usually kept in similar establishments constantly on hand and for sale cheap, and for cash. Call and see Mrs. H. F. Lutz.

Hedge your farms. Hedge Nursery, Red Cloud. I will sell this fall 100,000 hedge plants, all home grown and the best quality. Plants and nursery one mile east of Red Cloud.

Valley House, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Joe C. Warner, proprietor. The above hotel is entirely new, having been built the present season and is fitted up thorough in regard to comfort and convenience. Board by day or week at reasonable rates. Good stables. Good barber shop in connection with hotel.

Oldest store in Red Cloud. The best in trading point in the Republican valley. S. Garber and Co. Dealers in general merchandise consisting of dry goods, groceries, hardware, furniture, glass sash and a great variety of other articles. Dress goods, ready made clothing, groceries, tobacco, cigars, tinware, wooden ware, flour and meal. Boots and shoes, low prices. S. Garber and Co., Red Cloud, Nebraska. (one full column.)

Joseph A. Perry. Real estate and tax paying agent. Franklin county, Franklin city.

Armstrong and Martin Brothers. Dealers in live-stock. Cash paid for Cattle, hogs and sheep. Livestock of every description. Red Cloud, Nebraska.

George Zeiss, dealer in wines and liquors, cigars, chewing and smoking tobacco, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Canned fruits of all kinds and confectionaries a specialty.

Red River Stage Line, John Exelby, proprietor. Regular trips will be made between Juniata and Red Cloud.

New drug store, Williams and Potter, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Drugs, medicines, school books, stationery, paints and oils, stationery, die stuffs and fine soaps, hair brushes, tooth brushes, fancy toilet articles of every description. Call and look. Wines and liquors for medical purposes. Give us a trial. Williams and Potter. (one column.)

John M. Jacobsons Hotel. Feed sales and livery stable. Juniata, Nebraska. (one-half column.)

Two Column Ads

Lumber, lumber, lumber. W. L. Vanalslyne. Dealer in pine lumber, lath, shingles, doors, blinds, sash, moldings, lime, tarred paper, etc. Every article kept in a first class lumber yard. Prices invariable for dollars advance of railroad prices. I guarantee to duplicate any bill that can be got at Juniata or Hastings.

New store, new goods, Penny and Perry takes this method to inform the public that we have opened up a new and complete stock of drygoods and groceries consisting in part calicoes, dark, light pink, chambrays, delaines, lawns, dress trimmings and lacing, corsets and shirts, veils and gloves, bleached and unbleached muslins, table linens and towelings, pants, overalls and shirts, boots and shoes, hats and caps, coffee, sugar, tea of all kinds, canned fruits, oysters and crackers, chewing and smoking tobacco, flour, meal and bacon and everything usually kept in a dry goods and grocery store. Call at our show case for notions and fancy goods. Penny and Perry, Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Hardware, hardware, hardware, Manley B. McNitt, Red Cloud, dealer in heavy and shelf hardware. Stock is very large and comprises everything known to the trade. A full assortment of iron, nails, axes, saws, screws, bolts, locks and door knobs, dinner bells, harness, trimmings, coffin trimmings, pocket and table cutlery, agricultural implements, Champion mowers, the best mower on the market, plows, cultivators, shovels, spades, forks, scythes, rakes and cradles, revolving horse rakes and everything else not mentioned and needed to assist in labors of the farm. Stoves, tinware, full sets of mason tools, carpenter tools, wooden ware.

Webster county: T. B. Williams, county clerk; Wm. Jackson, county treasurer; James Calvert, county sheriff; Peter Head, county coroner; James Kirkwood, county judge; Donald McCallum, county surveyor; Peter Head, A. T. Ayres, A. M. Hardy, county commissioners.

Religious

Preaching by Elder Kennedy every fourth Sunday at 11 o'clock a. m.

Preaching by Rev. Mr. Latten once every four weeks at 11 o'clock a. m., commencing September 7th.

Union prayer meetings every Thursday evening at 8 o'clock p. m. All are cordially invited to attend.

Union Sabbath school at 9½ o'clock a. m. All are invited to come on every Sabbath morning.

B. and Mo. Railroad in Nebraska time table:

Number 26 going west.

Omaha branch north.

Beatrice branch southwards and northwards.—C. F. Morse, superintendent.

There are many things that should have been noticed this week and a number of communications on hand that we would be glad to publish, but owing to the cold weather we cannot do much of anything on the paper.

Take notice: All persons knowing themselves indebted to the firm of Penny and Perry are requested to call and settle their accounts.

Ready made clothing just arrived.—Garber and Co.

Dr. D. Morris, lately of Danville, Indiana, has located at Red Cloud and will commence the practice of medicine immediately.

Go to Garber and Co. and get a good suit of clothes for \$10.

W. N. Richardson will pay the highest price for County Warrants.

Cheroots at Garber and Co.

Black walnut falling leaf table for \$6 at Garber and Co.

New stock of groceries at Penny and Perry.

Red Cloud Chief—Local Matters Notice in these columns 10 cents a line.

Official Directory

Congressional: T. W. Tipton, U. S. Senator, Brownville; P. H. Hitchcock, U. S. Senator, Omaha; John Tuffe, Representative, Omaha.

Executive: R. W. Furnas, Governor, Brownville; J. J. Gosper, Secretary of State, Lincoln; J. B. Western, Auditor, Beatrice; H. H. Koening, Treasurer, Columbus; J. R. Webster, Attorney General, Beatrice; J. M. McKenzie, Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Judiciary: George B. Lake, Chief Justice; Daniel Gautt and Samuel Maxwell, Associate Justices.

Save money and go to Penny and Perry's for dry goods and groceries.

Best brand of plug and fine cut tobacco just received at Garber and Co.

New books, Phelps, Dodge and Palmer, Chicago; hand made glove fitting boots—seven cases just arrived, Garber and Co.

Notice to Pensioners: The biennial exam for pensions will commence on the fourth day of September, 1873.—Thos. B. Williams, Examining Surgeon, Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska.

Notice to Taxpayers: Notice is hereby given that all delinquent taxes on personal property must be immediately settled and if not paid on or before October first, I shall proceed to collect by distraint and sale of property according to law.—W. E. Jackson, Treasurer, Webster County.

Turned maple beds for \$4.50, Garber and Co.

Good brown sugar just arrived of which they will sell 8 lbs. for a dollar. Garber and Co.

Look out for McNitt's stock of stoves. He has a full assortment coming which he will sell as cheap as any house west of Lincoln.

This number of the Chief will finish the first three month of its existence and next week advertisers will be presented their quarterly bills for advertising.

The Good Old Days

The other day while musing over the world's chaotic condition, the chances of a lasting peace and the sacrifices and hardships of these war times, I find myself pining for the old times of early days gone by. But on second thought, I find I have no regret because of the passing of those old times and am thankful they are gone. Of course, there never was a day since civilization dawned that there were not some generations of men who saw farther than their predecessors, who really get more out of life than their neighbors. But in the good old days men of this type appeared only once in a generation. The men who really thought, who were brave enough to unpinion their wings and take a mental flight out into the unknown who dared to run counter to the prevailing opinion of the day, were few and far between. Now the men of thought and action are myriad in number. Every man knows that he has a right to think for himself and he also knows his thought may take any form he wishes. Not so in the past or war past in the axis world.

But here in America every man is a mental king and there are no serfs. Every man can look the world in the face and think as freely as he fancies, and no ruler will clamp the manacles on him. Time was when men, even in America, feared to express their thoughts lest they should chance to run counter to popular belief, or to offend the elite.

The splendid courage of certain men—Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and many others—has toppled the pedestal of pretense and brought down the pretenders. Now all men are on the same level, not mentally, that can never be, but in opportunity.

Of course in the emancipation, some men have thought wildly, foolishly, fatally. Emancipation of thought was never intended for loose thinking, to wrong thinking or to lawlessness, but that freedom of mind that gives full rein to the intellect. What is the effect of this mental emancipation of our American life? Progress such as the world has never known or ever dreamed such as had never before entered the hearts of men!

Thank God this emancipation has not been only spiritual, but also physical. Mental freedom has led to inventions that have approached near the miraculous. From utter darkness to the smoking fagot used by the beloved Lincoln, the tallow dip, the kerosene lamp of our pioneer days, but now we press a button and whole areas are illuminated bright as day.

From transportation on the naked backs of men, to oxen, to horses and now we place a few gallons of liquid which Nature has provided us in a tank and develop the power that transports us over hill and dale at a pace never imagined in times gone by. We travel farther with comfort over the country roads in a day than a horse could take us in a week, or an ox in a month. With the same liquid in a plane we have entered the air with the birds, exceeding in speed and comfort the auto to as great or greater extent than it did to the horse and ox days.

We speak to each other across the continent and across the seas. We sit in cozy homes in the evening and listen

to entrancing music played a thousand miles away or on the other side of the world. The air is made vibrant with beautiful melody and we reach out and capture it. A great part of this progress has been made in the last three score and ten years.

Yes, to be sure, there have been some wrecks by the way, some lives have been lost, some grief, some agonies. Penalties are always exacted for progress. We cannot accomplish, or come suddenly and serenely into our heritage. We must grope a bit, we must blunder, we must stumble, and sometimes we must fall. But the splendid spirit of America has buoyed us up, and we have arisen above our handicaps. We have overcome our obstacles, we have profited by our mistakes, we have forgotten our agonies, and have gone resolutely on in the achievement of new triumphs.

Compared with our age of world chaos, the good old times seem like a nightmare. There was such misery, so much universal suffering, so much helpless deprivation. In the winter it was a struggle to fight back the frost, to keep it out of the home. Countless little children suffered miserably for lack of warmth, sometimes for lack of proper food. They grew up with a hundred handicaps, some good for them, but most of which retarded their best development. It was a fight to live, with no leeway to expand and little incentive to excel. What a narrow life lived the farmer, the tiller of the soil, the man who provided the sustenance for all the earth.

If sickness came, and come it did, he was helpless. He could only lift his benumbed hands to heaven in pathetic appeal for help. Physicians were scarce and the means of getting to the bedside slow and uncertain. People died for lack of proper care. It was literally a struggle for existence, a struggle often fruitless. Children were clothed from grim necessity and not for beauty. No thought was given to adornment and many a glorious face and form was made hideous through incongruity of apparel. To get enough to eat and wear was the problem, without a thought for the cultivation of the finer graces of life—art, music, literature.

Go out in the country today and see the children on their way to school. They are clean, neat, beautifully and tastefully dressed, a joy to the eye. There is more happiness in one schoolroom today, more means of pure enjoyment, than there was in a whole community in the days gone by. Children are coming into their proper heritage, and the generations of the future will be infinitely better than those of the past, notwithstanding the cry of delinquent youth of today.

Older people sometimes like to prate about the delinquency of today and indulge in dire predictions as to the declining race. They see nothing but disaster ahead and seem to assume that happiness is demoralizing, forgetting that happiness is humanity's greatest good. To be happy is man's manifest destiny and the reason we have not achieved more happiness is because of the handicaps of the good old times—not enough of wealth to go around and most of this was in the hands of a few while many grovelled in poverty.

And think of the devastating diseases of the days gone by, when humanity sat benumbed and helpless in the face of sweeping plague. Think of smallpox and yellow fever; think of the horror in every household where there were little children when the dread menace of diphtheria clutched the throats of helpless babes and strangled them to death before the eyes of agonizing mothers and fathers.

The good old days? We still hear from the croakers that morality is waning, that licentiousness is running riot, that society is degenerating. They forget, compared with the other generation, the beastiality and depravity of the past, the moral delinquency of today is stainless and sunlight. It would not be possible for our common humanity of today to sink to the level of some of the saints of the past and the axis world today.

We hear from the critic that simplicity is gone, that life is too complex, and that we are rushing aimlessly to confusion and destruction. Simplicity—we like that word. It is music in our ears and we long to go back to the simple life. Let us see. Mayhap if we had it again, we would not find it so interesting. Simplicity is so nearly akin to

ignorance that it is dangerous. They have worked hand in hand on too many occasions. Of all the handicaps of life, of all the calamities and disasters of human experiences, ignorance stands out supreme. It has spread its pall upon the earth and has waved its withering blight over the hearts and minds of men, and their sons and daughters. Ignorance is and has been the universal and colossal crime. Anything that dispells ignorance is good, anything that adds to it is bad. Since simplicity has always been so close to ignorance, let us not pine too much for simplicity. Let us pray only for the light and truth. Let us follow where they lead. We may sometimes be dazzled by the brightness and confusion of today, but that is better than groping blindly in the darkness and ignorance of the good old days that are gone.

Instead of wasting our breath over what the world war has brought us, and lamenting over the post-war depravity, let us pick up the problem where we find it and face the future without fear. We may rest in the assurance that it will never be so depressing as have been the past good old days.

ARTICLE 30

The First Directory of Red Cloud

Made and published by the Red Cloud Chief in the year 1879.

Our attention is called to its being located in the center of the southern half of the county in the great Republican Valley. That the townsite lies about twenty-five feet above the level of the Republican River. That the town was platted and laid out by Ex Governor Garber in October 1872. That its stimulus to new growth came with the building of the railroad into the Republican Valley which helped to expand its trade territory. That it is very advantageously located commanding as it does a trade territory some forty miles wide and sixty miles long. It compliments the city as to its society of unexceptional, that all are alike harmoniously inbred with the desire to build up their town and make it second to none in the southwest.

The writer for the Chief now proceeds with a tour of the city making its first directory.

He starts from the north with the first businesshouse on the right. It is L. Baum who has been here over four years and still holds out the sign of goods of all kinds usually kept in a general store. Passing on we reach Judge J. R. Willcox's office which he shares with Mr. Coombs, attorney, also L. B. Treeman, representing the Borbine Bank Co., Lincoln. Here we also find valuable geological collections. Next is the bowling alley belonging to Bedwell and Converse. Then comes the Hopper Bros., who have a saloon and billard hall. Adjoining is a store building belonging to Levi Moore Esq., and occupied by one of Libby Bros. of Lincoln who is working up a good trade.

The next store is the hardware store of Converse Godman and Co., presided over by the junior member of the firm, B. Holcomb. This company has enlarged its rooms and now have a large storeroom well filled.

Next comes the warehouse and storeroom of the pioneer store named and operated by S. Garber. Mr. Garber has added his already large apartments and the move-

ments of his busy clerks show that the new influx of trade has not caused his custom to lessen.

Turning the corner and going west on First Avenue, we come to the extensive shop of Sleeper, Tinker Co., which they have sold to a gentleman from the east. They manufacture everything made in a blacksmith shop that is malleable or can be planed.

Crossing the avenue we stop to listen to the bell in front of the Red Cloud Hotel, owned by A. J. Rennecker, but it is now leased. In connection is a large stable, while south of this is a stable covering a lot and rented by J. H. Cline.

West of the hotel the photograph gallery of Carl Weber who also is a practical gunsmith.

Passing the residence of Mr. Renniker, we come to the City Drug Store, kept by R. R. Sherer who came here about five years ago and by his steady perseverance has gained a good trade, and now is ready to dispose of cure-alls to the sick and needy. Over this is Mrs. Canfield's dressmaking rooms.

Adjoining is the old, old store once belonging to H. S. Kaley and in its time has been dwelling, store, meat market, bakery store and is now a bakery owned by R. H. McGill, who came here last spring.

Next is J. L. Miller's harness shop, the only one in town, and it is first in every respect. This is also the office of Miller and Ball, who are selling the Star wagon.

Going on we come to Mrs. Bentley's millinery rooms which are always full of goods in that line and sure to please.

We now come to W. N. Richardson's building now occupied by Smith Bros., and Thompson, bankers, who are and have been doing a large amount of business in their line.

Next is a new building by S. B. Duffield and occupied as a neat and attractive drug store.

Still south we stop at J. G. Potters, an old settler. He

has another addition and another clerk and shelves full of goods.

But another stop and we arrive at the post office building owned by McNitt, the front of which is occupied by J. A. Jury as a clothing store. The post office has assumed quite large proportions and Miss Munsell presides at the window while Mc attends to the financial business.

Next is the original hardware building of McNitt, but now including the two additions made by Minor Bros., who came here last spring from Iowa. That business is immense. On the second floor the Chief office, the oldest paper in the county, also the law office of Ex Senator Gilham, Edwin C. Hawley, both have an extended practice.

Crossing Second Avenue we come to the Stewarts new store just opened with a stock of general merchandise.

Next comes the clothing house of Rosenthal and Rothchild who have a lately arrived stock to open out.

Next is a building put up by W. W. Brown of Lincoln and occupied by E. McFarland as a grocery store.

Next comes Blum and Jagers' restaurant, new building.

Next Fern and Jacob's saloon which was built last spring, all done in the black, which is a new dressing.

Adjacent are two new buildings not yet finished but will soon be occupied stores.

Now we have reached the Argus office and looking in find a good, new office, everything very neat.

Next door is a millinery shop of Misses Dixon and Oustead, a new enterprise started by experienced parties.

Passing the Methodist parsonage we come to the milliner establishment of Mrs. McBride, who deals in that line.

Crossing Webster Street, we find nearly everything new. The first is Platt and Frees lumber yard, one of the most extensive and presided over by one of the most liberal hearted men in this county.

Going north we reach the block south and the wagon shop of I. B. Hampton, where we find several men steadily at work all the time.

Next is the lumber yard of Jones and Magee, whose popularity has made for them a large trade they so richly deserve.

John Willhelmson's meat market and dwelling house is next in line and is the oldest market in town.

Then comes J. S. Hope's jewelry store in which Geo. Banks has his law office. Mr. Hope came here a stranger last spring but has made for himself a good trade. The new store of James Calvert, one of our old settlers, attracts our attention next, and is full of goods for every taste.

Laulerback and Wittfell have just opened a bakery next door and are now ready to receive customers.

Next comes the old law office of Kaley Bros., whose extensive business has given them a state reputation. Here also the reliable doctor of the town, I. W. Tulleys, has his office.

Adjoining L. B. Small has his grocery well filled with all kinds of goods.

We next come to W. N. Richardson's building now leased to Besley and Whitson, who occupy it as a hardware store.

Next door is the boot and shoe shop owned and operated by J. D. Bonine, who has lately settled here.

Next stands the old Armstrong house now filled up and occupied as a millinery and boarding house by J. H. Hill.

The now abandoned court house stands next where court business and schemes have for the past seven years been transacted. It now belongs to E. Kellogg. On the corner opposite Dr. Sherer, is the building put up by C. H. Potter and occupied by Johnson and Crips, who have lately put in a large stock of merchandise. On the second floor are the offices of Dr. A. P. McCullough, the tailor shop of Forbes and Eagan who have settled here of late.

Looking east we find the popular barber shop of C. H. Rakeman. Then the carpentershop of Frank S. Smith and G. C. Maynard, where men continually are employed, doing fine work for buildings.

The residence, and large livery, belonging to J. D. Post, claims our attention here, and a team has found comfortable quarters here in ante railroad days. Still further east is the Valley House and livery stable of J. C. Warner. The house is kept by Fred C. Winton and is the oldest of the hotels.

Crossing the avenue and looking west we find ourselves at the door of a Boys Home, one of the largest and commodious hotels in town.

Next comes the billard room of Joe Carr, and the pioneer barber shop of Burr Hanner.

Another old land mark with new proprietor is the Red Cloud Drug Store, presided over by Dr. Morris and Westveer.

The next building and one on the corner is the large one of W. H. Reed, the lower floor of which is filled with elegant furniture, just received for sale by him.

Coming north we reach Mr. Lutz. Here Mrs. Lutz keeps a stock of millinery and is the oldest house of its kind in town.

The meat market of T. J. Mosher is thriving and well stocked.

Next building is S. C. Smith's residence of the Smith Bros., who are in the bank.

George B. Holland's restaurant is the next new enterprise.

Next is Riser and Sutton Meat Market, always well filled with the choicest.

Now comes the largest hardware business in town, owned by Mitchell and Morhart. They have by attention to business made for themselves a large trade. Now we come to the new blacksmith shop of Hill and Overlees, a new firm who are making pleasant acquaintances.

Two school houses adjoining where schools are presided over by J. F. Winters and Laura Ludlow.

A large court house has been put up by R. B. Fulton, architect, during the past season.

A neat M. E. church has also been erected by Smith and Maynard.

The great event of the year was the coming of the cars into the Republican Valley division of the B & M Railroad. At the new and commodious depot are the grain house and residence of J. Wiggins and son, also stables and residence houses belonging to H. S. Kaley as well as the grain house of Stewart and the rooming house of S. J. Dyer.

Among the new residences are those of J. L. Miner, Mitchell, Platt, Warner, Hampton, Ed Smith, Story, Becker, Levi Moore and others, besides a great many smaller ones.

Among the improvements looked for are those of Ex Governor Garber, S. C. Smith, the banker, and others whose names are guarantees that if done will be of no mean proportions.

ARTICLE 31

Indians in the Area

Previous to the advent of the white man the Indians dominated the entire region west of the Missouri river. The country lying between the river and the Rocky Mountains was divided among some forty or fifty tribes, some friendly to each other, others extremely hostile. The plains abounded in game, the climate was not severe, and all together, the life of the western Indians was more than ordinarily a happy and contented one. The principle tribes of this territory were Poncas, Omahas, Otoes, and Pawnees. Of these the Pawnees were the most warlike, and the history of the Poncas most interesting. They formerly resided on the Red River of Lake Winnepeg. Being oppressed by the Sioux they removed to the west side of the Missouri where they built a fortified village, and remained for some years. But being pursued by their ancient enemies, the Sioux, they joined the Mahas (Omahas) whose language they spoke. They were not a large tribe, estimated from 200 to 600. A great artist, Catlin by name, visited this tribe at one time to get some pictures for his collection. He gave an interesting account of the chief of the tribe, named Shoo-de-ga-ech (smoke) and his young and pretty wife, Hee-la'h-dee (the pure fountain). "The chief, who was wrapped in a buffalo robe, is a noble specimen of native dignity and philosophy."

Catlin, the artist, conversed with the chief, and from his delightful manners, as well as from the soundness of his reasoning, he became fully convinced that his subject deserved to be the sachem of a numerous and prosperous tribe. He related to the artist in coolness and frankness the poverty and distress of his nation, and with the method of a philosopher predicted the rapid extinction of his tribe which he had not the power to prevent.

The day before Catlin arrived at the village this old chief's son, the young Hong-kay-de, had created a sensation among the members of the tribe by accomplishing a most startling amount of dignity in a single day. Being the chief's son, he had been presented by his father with a handsome wigwam and nine horses. He had no difficulty whatever in gaining the good graces of the fathers of the most eligible marriagable daughters and he had, before, offered to and had been accepted by four successive fathers-in-law, promised to each of them two horses, and insisted on profound secrecy until a certain hour when he would announce to the whole tribe that he was to be married. At the time appointed he appeared, followed by some of his young friends leading eight horses. Addressing the prospective father-in-law who stood next to him, with his daughter by his side, he said: "You promised me your daughter; here are your two horses." A great hubbub immediately arose, the three others all springing forward, angry and perplexed, claiming his promise made to them. The triumphant young savage exclaimed, "You have all acknowledged your engagements to me and must fulfill them—here are your horses." There was nothing more to

be said. The horses were delivered and Hong-key-de, leading two brides with each hand, walked off with great dignity to his wigwam. This was an affair totally unprecedented in the annals of the tribe and it produced an impression as profound as it could have done in a civilized community, though of a different character—redounding to the young man's credit rather than to his shame—making him out as one daring and original to the extent of being "Big Medicine". The artist says he visited the bridal wigwam soon afterwards and "saw the four modest little wives seated around the fire, seeming to harmonize very well."

The Sioux, Cheyennes and Pawnees may be termed the original inhabitants of this section, within the historic period at least. The Sioux was a sort of renegade tribe inhabiting the plains as well. Through this territory passed the Fremont trail of later days, but owing to the fact that Fort Kearny was only a few miles away, the savages held aloof from this section when in war paint. However, during the Civil War, many an attack on this trail was carried out. Evidences during the early days were observed in south of Juniata and as late as 1870 four or five emigrants forming a small party, were killed.

In the history of Clay county, a story of an attack and massacre of a small group at Spring Ranch, and to the east along the Blue river has been recorded. The writer's father, L. D. Thomas, with a friend on the way back from Cass county to his claim on Elm Creek, camped one night near some recently made graves at Spring Ranch. After supper they walked over to view the battlefield and burial ground. During the night he was awakened by his friend who had reached the rifle at his side and had a bead on the new moon to their head in the east and was saying, "Keep still, Ren, I'll get him". He was dreaming, as the visit after supper had disturbed his sleeping period.

From reminiscences of an old trapper who roamed up and down the streams of south central Nebraska during the sixth decade is related the following anecdote: "Early in the spring of 1866 a man by the name of Cline and myself were trapping on the river Blue near where Ayr now stands. One morning, while cooking breakfast, two Indians we recognized as Sioux, appeared and asked for something to eat. After we had served them and while we were washing and putting away our dishes we discovered that they had our furs loaded on my pony and were making off with both. I made up my mind not to submit to it, and as I had just taken from the Dutch oven a cake, I concealed a knife in it and followed them. Near the camp was an icy place and the Indian leading the pony made his way across the ice and the other one went around. Thus they lost sight of each other. I had nearly reached the one with the pony when I made a noise which he heard and turned to face me and stopped. I came up to him and offered him the cake which with a sardonic grin he reached to take. As he did so I drew my knife and stuck him with it. As he fell I stuck him again across the throat and killed him. I followed number two, and before he was aware of it, I shot him dead and thus saved our pony and furs."

Storms of the Early Days

Although eighty years ago the repercussion of the "Great Easter Storm" of 1872 which commenced on the night of April 12 of that year and continued until the 15th is often mentioned and referred to in speaking of storms. It was not very cold, but a dense snow storm prevailed with a heavy pressure of wind. The snow was moist, and its density was so great that one could not see a house through it at a distance of 100 feet. People who were absent from home when the storm came on, had to remain away until it was over. Mr. William Fent, living on Indian Creek, happened to be absent from his residence, working for Mr. W. N. Richardson at Red Cloud. Before the storm ceased, his wife started with her child to seek her husband, and when the storm was over, she and the child were found dead in a snow bank. On this occasion the snow continued to fall for forty-eight hours without ceasing. Travel was impossible. Notwithstanding the storm's severity no human being other than those mentioned perished in Webster county. Some, however, lost their lives in adjoining territory.

A considerable number of cattle out in the open prairies for miles north of the Republican River were driven southward down the declining plain and into the river where they perished. The winter prior to this storm had not been unusually severe, and the spring had opened early, the weather had become warm and pleasant, and vegetation was far advanced.

The next great storm occurred in March, 1875, and was described as follows in the Red Cloud Chief issued on the 31st of that month:

Last Thursday evening about 5 o'clock a long line of black looking clouds were observed on the western horizon, betokening the approach of a storm, but there was nothing in the appearance that attracted any attention, more than a passing glance, and the remark that it might rain before morning. About 6 o'clock, however, the atmosphere was sadly filled with dust and sand, and a hurricane, swept through with a velocity never before experienced in the valley. There was not a minute's warning before it was almost as dark as midnight; the force of the wind and the flying gravel, sand and dust made it impossible to stand before it and those unfortunate enough to be out were obliged to lie down or seek shelter by flying with the wind. The fury of the hurricane lasted about half an hour. Nearly everyone on the main streets managed to get to the store of Garber and Company, which building was considered the safest, though some took shelter in other and more available places. Buildings shook and tottered as if about to be torn to pieces, and the alarm was fearful. The afternoon had been so pleasant and

spring like that almost everybody was out and a large party of ladies were at Mrs. McNitt's. Of course no one could get home, and there were many anxious hearts during the time the wind was at its height. As the tempest began to abate, it was discovered that to the north, the prairies were on fire, and a winding circle of light could be seen advancing with the rapidity of a race horse, until suddenly the blazing flames could be seen in full view and showed its full extent and horrors of the situation. Fortunately for the town the wind slightly changed, but enough to turn the direction of the fire and instead of jumping the creek on the north, it swept down the ridge east of the creek and passed through the bottom lands to the river, where its course was checked. In some places the flames were lifted up and carried bodily for some distance, when they would strike the earth again and leave strips of grass that were not burned, the wind was so strong. A large number barely escaped being burned.

All day on Friday and Saturday reports of destruction of houses and property through the country were brought in. The greatest of losses consisted of stables and contents, Joseph Casebeer, one mile east of town, lost his stable, considerable of grain, and a number of hogs and considerable of wood. Dr. Head lost stable, some grain and two large stacks of hay and forty rods of valuable fence. Charles Teachworth, of Indian Creek, lost stable, hay and grain of considerable value, a span of horses, harness and agricultural implements. His house caught fire also but by hard work he managed to save it. Mrs. Fisher, in the same neighborhood, lost hay sheds and other property. William Benson of Indian Creek lost stable and one horse, harness and agricultural implements, lumber, rails, etc. C. L. Brockman, living six miles of Red Cloud lost his house and contents and his stables, there being no one at home but some children, the oldest a girl sixteen years of age.

C. W. Fuller, living on Elm Creek, lost everything, house, stables, team, nothing about the place being saved. Peter Donnolly, in the same neighborhood, had his house burned and lost his team in Mr. Peck's stable which was also burned. Mrs. Donnolly was in the act of putting her two little girls to bed when the first struck the house but saved their lives and her own by fleeing with them to a cave. Everything in the house was destroyed even to their clothing. David Ralston lost stable, hay and harness. Charles Potter and E. B. Price also lost stables, stock and other property. In the western part of the county on Farmers Creek, Allen T. Ayers lost stable and hay, and Charles Thompson a horse that was in the stable. The house and stable of Mr. Riddle and all of their contents was destroyed. Charles Hunter lost eight head of cattle burned on the prairie. William Carter, Mr. Kincaid, William Baker, the latter living northeast of Red Cloud, lost stables and other property. The wind itself did little damage, but the fires spread by the wind wrought havoc. Much property in addition to that enumerated was destroyed and in those days they carried little or no insurance.

ARTICLE 33

The Honorable Silas Garber

Among the names that will live long in Nebraska history, none deserves a more prominent place than that of Silas Garber, ex-governor of Nebraska, and the subject of this sketch. The name Garber was borne by those great ancestors of Silas who were transplanted in this country from Switzerland before the Revolutionary War.

The branch from which our subject is descended settled in Virginia. The subject of this sketch is a son of Martin and Magdalena (Mohler) Garber, and grew to manhood and received a common school education in Ohio. He was a Union man, and when the war broke out, with the characteristic zeal that has always distinguished him as a leader of men, he entered the Federal army, and fought heroically for liberty and union.

He joined the third Missouri Infantry, but was afterwards promoted to a captaincy in Company D, 27th Iowa in which capacity he served for three years. His dauntless courage and soldierly mien so inspired his soldiers that they never thought of fear while "Captain Garber" as he was familiarly called by his friends, was at the front.

He participated in eight important battles. Governor Garber was a tall man, of commanding appearance, and was quite fleshy in later life but in the early days during the war was slim and well knit. He would have made a characteristic cavalier or courtier but was well adapted to the vicissitudes of pioneer life.

Seeking a broad field in which to operate, he went to California and there engaged in merchandising and subsequently in mining. He had intended entering the stock business, and was induced to come to the valley of the Republican River by the description given of its pasture lands by a Mexican in his employ.

He came here in the spring of 1870 and found only two settlers in all Webster county. His idea of entering the stock business was cut short by the tide of immigration which set in early in the seventies, so he became a pioneer general merchant of Red Cloud instead, one small grocery store being built before he entered the business. In business, Silas Garber was strictly honorable and honest, even in trading with the Indians. So great a name he had for square dealing with the Indians that he would get several hundred beaver hides while his competitors would get, perhaps, two or three in exchange for goods.

Mr. Garber was destined without his solicitation to fill high places to which he did not aspire. A gentleman of high standing who was intimately acquainted with Governor in those early days says "He could in those days pass into a crowd without it being remarked that he was a man of superior qualities." This fact coupled with his honesty and loyalty to friendship, caused him to be solicited to accept the position of register of public lands in Nebraska. He at first hesitated, but being prevailed upon, he accepted the appointment. So satisfactory was his work in the land office that soon gubernatorial honors were laid at his feet, and that before he had been register of lands one year.

In the fall of 1873 he was elected Governor of Nebraska and was re-elected in the fall of 1875 and served until 1878. His reign as governor was one of the most prosperous experienced in any state. He saw the state a vacant wild, and but a few years later stepped down from the governor's chair to behold a populous and thrifty commonwealth.

He returned to Red Cloud and entered the stock business, but failing health soon compelled him to abandon it. Upon improving his health he became vice president of the Red Cloud National Bank, and in 1887 he organized the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Red Cloud, becoming its president.

Before he served as register of lands he served in the state legislature representing Webster, Nuckolls and Thayer counties.

Governor Garber hauled the first lumber ever brought into Webster county with two ox teams from Grand Island, Nebraska, and there was not a wagon track between here and the Platte river at that time.

When he was governor as when he was register of lands, simple, honest justice was his motto, and no one ever received a favor by getting him to break the law.

Governor Garber was twice married, his first wife, to whom he married in Iowa, passed away during the war, and he was again married while Governor of Nebraska. Governor Garber had one child, a son by his first wife, named William Seward Garber.

The records of the State Historical Society report some very fine things about Governor Garber's four years in office, 1875-1879. It says that when he became a citizen of Nebraska he possessed all the training and experience necessary to adapt him to his surroundings. At that time he was thirty-seven years of age, having been born in Logan county, Ohio, in 1833. His education was principally acquired before reaching his seventeenth year; subsequent to which time he removed to Clayton county, Iowa.

On assuming the duties of governor January 12, 1875 Mr. Garber presented a clear, concise and sufficiently comprehensive inaugural. In this document he called the special attention of the legislature to the subject of economy. He stated: "This commonwealth is in its infancy; but resources as yet undeveloped, and her wealth largely prospective. Her future depends greatly upon the discreet and prudent management of affairs." Depreciating hasty legislation, he said, "The tendency of the age is toward over-legislation, over-taxation and extravagancy. The lessons of history teach us that the greatest reforms consist, not in doing something new, but in undoing something old; and the most valuable laws have been those by which some former laws have been repealed."

He would administer the affairs of the state as a prudent man his individual affairs, and congratulated the people upon the fact that no bonded debt and but a slight floating indebtedness. He advocated a new constitution that should be equal demands of a new people and adapted to the experience of an elastic and progressive community.

The Honorable William A. McKeighan

When the author was but six years of age there came from the state of Illinois a farm family and located some six or eight miles south of our farm. It was not very long until his name was in the headlines. His parents were natives of the Emerald Isle, but they emigrated to the United States in early life, locating in New Jersey in 1842. Not for long, however, for we find them farming in Illinois as early as 1848, and it was here the subject of our sketch received the greater part of his rearing. It was here he received near his father's home a good common school education which he proceeded to put to use.

He became a student of politics, was a great reader and retained what he read. He joined the 11th Regiment of Illinois Cavalry, under Co. Robert Ingersol and served under his command until the close of the war.

In 1866 he was married to a Miss Lois E. Brown from near his father's home. She was a descendant of the noted Isaac Huffman, a well known pillar in the Methodist Episcopal Church at that time. After marriage they moved to another county in Illinois and engaged in farming for some twelve years, giving attention to stock raising and politics. It was not long until we find him one of the leading lights in the Illinois State Farmers' Association, being vice president of the Eighth Congressional District.

He took part in the defeat of Gen. Logan's candidacy for the United States Senate, being a member of the Democratic party. His family consisted of three children, Charles F., Edith L., and Jessy M.

He came to Webster county in the spring of 1880 and in the fall of the same year we find him making telling speeches at Blue Hill and Red Cloud. In the autumn of 1885 he was elected judge of the county court and filled the office for the term of two years. During the fall of 1886 he made a two weeks' campaign, and although he was defeated, he polled the largest vote of any man put up by the Democratic party, running ahead of his ticket in every county.

This was at a time in the history in the development of the western railroads and banking systems. Corporations and national banking systems that were none too ethical and in many cases practiced extortions and graft. A time when there was much ado about our monetary systems, the gold and silver standards and any one who could assume to know and orate these questions was popular.

The protective tariff was also a popular subject during those times. He was a great reader and had a retentive mind, pockets full of newspaper clippings, was a good debater and exercised his voice and vote in popular acclaim. He was very much in the class of W. J. Bryan and they were great friends.

He took an active part in leading civic organizations and the Farmers Alliance. His congressional district contained twenty-five counties, in which he made a canvass, famous for bold aggressive attacks, sledge hammer arguments and a prodigal display of plain Anglo-Saxon language. His Alliance training and Democratic doctrines stood him in good demand and so vigorous did he press the work of political reform that in 1890 the People's party made him their standard bearer, the Democrats confirmed his nomination, which gave him an election and a seat in the 52nd Congress.

Four years from the time the irrepressible and eloquent Laird was elected, as usual, our Webster county citizen, McKeighan, polled a majority of 13,000 votes.

First Speech

The free coinage of silver was the first theme with which he came before the House of Representatives, a long elementary discussion of currency values, economic demands, financial monopolies and the behests of a swindled public.

All through the production says (Ex-Senator Tipton in his Forty Years of Nebraska) is evidenced careful and painstaking research, with a power of comprehensive analysis little anticipated from his meteoric exhibitions on the stump. It was no mosaic of incongruities, no cottonwood piazza in front of a marble palace. He adds "before reading it, the student will need the aids of the history of coins and currency, of banks and banking, and the apocryphal formulas of antiquated financiers.

The writer of this biography in perusal of this speech can but marvel at the hours spent in careful research and study necessary to write and deliver such an oration, on such a complicated subject.

His second speech was delivered to the legislature on Wednesday, April 6, 1892, the question being to place wool on the free list. The time limit was five minutes. The reasons given for supporting the bill were, as passage would lead to a general reduction of duties, because it offers to place wool on the free list, reduce duties on manufactured articles, and because it would reduce the tax on mixed wool and cotton goods, so much worn by Nebraska farmers. So eloquent was his speech that the House extended his time another five minutes and he utilized this five minutes in showing the fallacy of reform that taxed the farmer \$1.50 and promised to return in benefits fifty cents, that assumed to run his business for him, and offered him relief where it would not interfere with some other constituents prerogative to plunder.

His third speech made July 18, 1892 was in opposition to a \$5,000,000 appropriation for the Chicago Columbia Exposition. Since the constitutional question had been argued he proceeded to show the inconsistency of men who would favor a government loan to farmers, with real estate security, but at the same time would grant an Illinois corporation \$5,000,000 without security. Incidentally the Farmers Alliance was eulogized, government issue of greenbacks approved, and refusal to grant free coinage denounced. The conclusion was legitimate, "warp and wool," of the original fabric.

At the extra session of the 52nd Congress he delivered a more elaborate and severely logical discussion. Taking part in the great tariff discussion, in the first regular session of the 53rd Congress January 19, 1894, his speech was a quiver of arrows, each shaft being barbed, and steeped in a solution pressaging monopoly pallbearers at a tariff funeral.

On February 9, 1894 we find our Webster county Congressman for the third time before the House, on the subject of silver as a monetary metal, with a severe logical analysis, repeating nothing of former utterances, but following Mr. Bourke Cochran, the valuable Tammany, step by step, and through the devious ways of prolonged discussion.

The Closing of the Morhart Hardware

Seventy-eight years ago this summer when Red Cloud was a mere infant village of business houses that could be counted on the fingers of two hands, when the State of Nebraska was only seven years old, and the town just learning to walk, two ambitious young men with an eye for a location of a hardware business terminated their search and cast their lot in Red Cloud. They were Robert Mitchell and Adam Morhart. They were young men of high ideals, scrupulously honest and with experience and training that made them a valuable asset to the new and growing village. The pooling of their sagacity, Mr. Mitchell with his business training and Mr. Morhart, a skilled tinsmith and metal worker, soon found their services in demand.

Preceding them, a Mr. McNitt, seeing the need of a hardware stock, had brought in a few kegs of nails and necessary tin utensils and kitchen needs which he gladly turned over to the new hardware and soon they developed a fine, rapidly growing hardware business. They were located in a frame building on the east side of Webster street in the vicinity of the Farmers Union Store. Mr. Mitchell did not possess a rugged body and because of failing health sold his interest to R. R. Fulton whose interest was soon taken over by the ambitious Adam Morhart.

By this time Red Cloud boasted of two new brick buildings, Miner's store still in use on the south side of the west and south intersection of Webster and Third and the bank building on the southeast corner of the block north. Here in connection with this building Mr. Morhart bought a lot and joined with a Mr. Mizer in building what is known as the Opera House, he taking the south store and Mr. Mizer the north store. This was in the year of 1885 and has been the Morhart Hardware ever since until the closing out of this stock during April 1953.

Adam Morhart was born in 1852 and died in 1915. He was married to Mary A. Morhart, who was born in 1853 and died in 1895. To this union were born three boys, George, Stacy and Elbert. George assisted his father for a time but on account of his health moved to Colorado. After Stacy and Bert completed high school they joined their father for their apprenticeship in the hardware business. It is needless to say that this apprenticeship was the best in the country for without question Adam Morhart was the most expert mechanic and practical tinsmith that Red Cloud and the Republican Valley ever had. Transportation in those days was an expensive

item as well as hazardous in shipping of factory-made tin products and by getting sheet tin and metal sheets and making them into needed utensils gave employment and many valuable utensils to the community otherwise prohibited. The author as a boy on his father's homestead used many of these buckets and tubs and measures made by Adam Morhart.

While he died at the age of almost 65, he outlived many of the first timers, his friends and we find the sons, Stace and Bert, gradually taking over at the turn of the century under the name of Morhart Bros., hewing to the traditions of careful business methods, scrupulous honesty in dealings and upright living.

The father was married the second time to Miss Lottie Reigle who was a comfort to him during his last illness. They belonged to the Christian Church in Red Cloud. He was a native of Woodford county, Illinois, came to Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1868 and from there here in 1874.

The Morhart Bros. have conducted and carried on during the last 50 years through periods of drouths and hard times and changing agricultural development never dreamed of during the first 30 years experienced by their father, but he it was who confronted and carved success from a virgin country when if confronted by the sons and business men of today would seem unsurmountable, almost impossible.

Red Cloud will not seem the same to many of us old timers who have found a visit to this store, a place to satisfy our wants and often times just for a little chat. We will miss the shining countenance and smiling face of Stacy (Shorty) as it came up beaming from behind the counter, a range or heating stove, with "what can I do for you?" The quandary of the age has been "how in heck" has he escaped marriage? Here were two boys born of the same parents and had the same food from the same table one a "shorty" the other "Bert" tall and dark. I was going to say handsome but this would not be fair to Stacy for who can say that those beaming eyes and radiant smile are not handsome.

It seems to us in our numerous visits to this store during the 78 years of my life that things will not be natural in and about the OLD OPERA HOUSE where I loved to loaf during my visits to Red Cloud. I love to think of what it would have meant to Adam Morhart if he could have lived to admire Bert and his charming wife, grandson and great grandson, but such is life.

My First Train Ride

Uncle Sim Chambers was a professional cattle buyer.

He specialized in buying and selling cattle in south central Nebraska. He gave a life time to this line of work and was known far and near as a straight shooter but a shrewd buyer driving a hard bargain.

Farmers would hold their cattle for him, if for no other reason than a chance to match wits with him in appraising values and guessing weights. Many times guessing weights led to bets, usually from a cup of coffee to a few bucks.

He usually made his own deliveries and his skill in handling cattle was a subject that attracted cattle men from distant points. Even now, several years after his death, old timers reminiscing on street corners where he was known, can be heard relating their experiences in cattle deals with him and his ability to handle cattle.

Recently an old cattle man told me he could handle the wildest, most dangerous bull with the greatest ease of any man he ever knew. If his experience with cattle could have been recorded it would make a real sized book.

For several years his only assistant in driving and delivering cattle was a little white pony, usually hitched to a one seated topless buggy. To the shoulders of this pony he would fasten any sized bull, no matter how fierce and dangerous. Usually he would put a ring fastened to one end of a strong stick in the bull's nose. This stick, some three or four feet long, with a hole in each end, would also be tied to the harness about the shoulders of the pony and off to market they would go. Before they would get out of the yard the bull would be facing the pony. If room permitted the pony would lunge to the side and bring Mr. Bull along side and then manage so the bull did not have time to turn around. If this procedure failed, Uncle Sim, calmly and serenely, whistling some song, would dismount and with his ever present buggy whip and going to the pony's assistance, would lash the rear end of the bull in a way to get the maximum sting, but this did not always work, so the next procedure was to twist the bull's tail. After a few experiences, varying as to procedure, the bull usually gave up, deciding co-operation was more to its liking. If a long trip, it sometimes took more than the pull of the ring in his nose to induce him to travel in which the buggy whip was brought into play. To deliver the bull to market after a long trip like this was poor business. To offset the shrinkage he had a pen just outside of market town where he would rest up, feed and water. With plenty of inviting food there was an enticing salt barrel. With this sort of treatment an early morning delivery at the slaughter house scales and a high pressure sales talk on the number of sausages in the critter's carcass, there being fried into a tender morning breakfast, would bring the largest size check and pony and man would bid adieu to Mr. Bull and depart for another.

One time they were proceeding to market with a mixed herd and well on their way when a rangy steer made a dive for the home he had left. Without ado the

white pony wheeled the buggy, laid back his ears and took back after Mr. Steer, finally heading him off, but instead of heading back, the steer shot through a gap in an osage hedge fence, the pony in pursuit, left Uncle Sim and the buggy hard wedged in the gap, the pony breaking free from the buggy, was out after Mr. Steer in a farmers' pasture, winding up by returning a sweating, tongue hanging, subdued, fagged-out steer.

Many times there would be a bull, big, rangy, ferocious, strong enough to land pony, buggy and Uncle Sim in the roadside ditch. Many times these roadside ditches, after a rain, were full of water and mud and it resolved into a survival of the fittest, the bull at a disadvantage. A ring in his nose and this at the end of a stick and a pony at the other end. Uncle Sim always came up master of the situation.

While he sold most of his stock to local butchers, he now and then shipped carload lots to Omaha markets. Early one spring he had two carloads of mixed cattle and asked me to accompany one made up of cows and a few calves. He said he could not get a pass for both him and I but that he wanted me to ride with the cows so a pass did not matter as long as the train men did not spot me. It was after dark when the cattle were loaded and on the side track. He got a board and arranged it across a corner of the cattle car, making it fast just above the backs of the cows and advised me this was to be my reservation. If, he said, the trainman should appear, slip down on a cow's back and lie still until danger passed.

There was a light snow on the ground and a cold wind from the northwest was blowing. Not bad, but just cold and damp. So much so I found it much nicer on a cow's back with my feet between their sides as they stood together. Two or three times that long night I had to get down and twist the calf's tail to get it up so it would not get trampled.

I have since taken long train rides to distant points but this night ride in that cattle car from Hastings to Omaha, Nebraska, is still the most outstanding. I thought we would never get to our destination and morning would never come, but at last the eastern skies were getting lighter and we were being side tracked at the Omaha stockyards. While I had a private car all to myself, a combination chair and lounge, "thanks to those old cows and their warm backs."

The toilet facilities were none too good. I was delighted to see Uncle Sim approaching to liberate me and to say good bye to my first train ride, comrades and fellow travelers.

Never was I so glad to get behind a breakfast table and never did warm cakes and coffee taste better. We watched my fellow passengers, the cattle, classified and auctioned off and that day I got a glimpse of their final destination as living entity. We visited the stock exchange and bank where Uncle Sim got his check and left for home.

This was not only my first train ride but my first visit to a metropolitan city.

My First Date

The circus is coming to town.

My boyhood chum, living on a nearby farm, made the announcement. Let us go and take some girls. The show is to take place in Red Cloud, twelve miles away. We cannot walk, we have no buggy or spring wagon, but said I, "I am sure father will let me have old Pet and Dick and the lumber wagon which has but one spring seat. You furnish another seat and we are off. But wait, where are the girls?"

Said my friend Morton: "I met two sisters at a dance the other night living not far from Red Cloud. Let us try them. I had quite a flirtation with one of them and asked to see her some time." Let us drive down next Sunday. I can get dad to let me have old Fannie and the two wheel cart. Sunday came and we were off down the creek some eight miles to see Ida and Nora.

We found them entertaining some kid friends who were easily side tracked. In as much as we were from a distance they did not seem to feel we would be too strong competition. Eight miles was a long distance for a farm team in those days and they were seeing the girls every day in school in two more weeks.

Working together, Morton and I bolstered each other in our awkward, bashful approach. This was a new experience for both. Yes, the girls knew about the circus but were not sure they would go. Pressed for an answer just why, they came out and admitted they had no way. We had won a point and this gave us courage to offer them a way. Sure, they agreed to this at once. Now assured of company we both began to take mental note of the condition of our finances. The circus tickets, side shows and concert to follow would leave us but little for dinner, rather high on show days.

The girls seemed to sense the cause of our meditation and came in with the suggestion we have a picnic dinner. They would furnish a fried chicken and what goes with it if we would furnish the lemonade and appropriate after dinner treats. What could have been more perfect. Morton's mother was a prize winning cake baker and my mother long on pie making.

We were sure they would jump at a chance to show off their abilities on cake and pie on this occasion of our first date, so we gave our promise "knowing our dotting mothers" for this much of our dinner.

The circus day came and we were up bright and early. A clear sky, bright hot sun in August. Morton had brought over their spring seat the evening before. We swept out the wagon box with careful detail and covered its floor with new mown hay, placed twenty well chosen

ears of corn in a sack and this, with two well filled lunch boxes furnished by two proud mothers, in the back of the wagon box, we with the horses, were sure of our circus day dinner.

So now the girls. Our horses, Pet and Dan, did not enthuse to this fourteen mile trip and back at all. I did not care for their poking on the way to the girls' home as we had started early but I did hope they would pep up from there on.

We found the girls almost ready. What worried me most was getting the girls over that front wheel into the box and spring seat. We had upholstered these seats with our newest horse blankets and to keep these in place for the girls' comfort worried me not a little. Morton soon put me at ease by suggesting I stay up in the wagon, take their hand and pull while he boosted from below. It was this boosting from below that bothered me for they were well fed, well built, husky farm girls, weighing almost twice as much as I. Well, I hardly knew where and how to take hold of a small girl, let alone these plump, solid hips and legs while Morton had more experience was not bashful, and did a swell job of pushing and I enjoyed the good hand clasp and pulling.

Again we were on our way. Morton and the girls were hilarious, singing and talking while my face was coloring a deep red every now and then for the flies were disturbing the horses and they were switching their tails over the lines, first one and then the other, and when I would attempt to remove it by pulling they would clamp that old tail down like a mouse trap to my discomfort and bashful awkwardness. Every now and then they would throw in an extra procedure with no thought of my sitting up there on that seat beside a beautiful girl, the first time in my life. Well, the young man of today out on his first date does not have to face the rear end of a horse or horses as he glides down the highway.

We parked on some vacant lots where we unhitched the horses and tied them to the back end of the wagon where they ate out of the box while we ate off the ground. That dinner was sure good. These farm girls knew how to fry chicken, also how to entertain two bashful boys. I found sitting beside her on a reserved seat facing that three ringed circus far better than the tail switching rear end of two farm horses.

After the concert and side shows we loaded up the girls, all of us tired and glad to be on the way home. Even the horses acted better headed toward home.

Unloading the girls was much easier and without waiting to help wash the dirty dishes, we assured them of our gratitude and backed it up by leaving forthwith for home and thus ended my first date.

I Go to School

School districts in early days were formed and numbered according to the need. Whenever a community had enough children of school age a census was taken of the children and application made to the county school authority who issued the proper credentials bounding a district and locating a place for a schoolhouse. Some communities whose settlers were in the older age bracket when they came were blessed with more mature families. It must be remembered that almost 75 per cent of the first settlers were in the second and third decade of life. Nevertheless, as soon as the county was organized their next concern was schools. In studying the early history one cannot help but be impressed by their intense interest in educational matters. My father's homestead at the beginning was located in the corner of three school districts, Nos. 13, 23 and 64. Before I was old enough to go to school we were in District 23 of which father was treasurer. There were two terms of two months each, and the salary paid was \$20 per month. There was a frame schoolhouse a mile or so north of my grandfather's neighborhood that served two purposes, that of a church as well as school. The lumber and equipment was hauled from Juniata, the nearest railroad, by my grandfather and uncles by team and they built the building, donating most of the work. It was 14x18 feet and the foundation was made of posts and there were two small privies.

I can remember that first day, mother had made arrangements with a cousin some eight or ten years older than I who was six. She had togged me out in a new calico waist to which was buttoned some blue denim short pants and a cap made of the same goods found in the pants. As the weather was warm we went barefooted, with a new dinner pail. As this cousin appeared on the little hill between our homes, mother started me out. It was a great day for her as well as me, for her oldest was going to school for the first time.

I shall never forget that first day. I was so green and excited. I had lived most entirely with adults for children of my age lived a considerable distance for a lumber wagon and team. I was red headed, very timid and it took but little to make me cry. I had never been in a quarrel or had a fight, let alone a black eye. Well, there was a boy a little older who proceeded to toughen me up, and I always for years had a desire to give him a black eye but I never realized it for he licked me every time. I was given a seat with my cousin much too large for me and that forenoon the boy in the seat in front lost his pencil and it rolled to the back of his seat when he drew up his leg, inserted it through over his seat and under the back and with his toes retrieved that pencil which made me laugh out loud. Of course, it was an offense and I can to this day

see that teacher whose back was to the school as she was solving a problem at the board. She was a farmer's wife, living some two or three miles and was brought by her husband in a buggy when he hurried back to care for their children. They were both big people, she weighing around 200 pounds with large breasts and a dress that hung from her shoulders for want of another place to hang. I did not know that I had violated the rule and I was surprised when she turned about and said, "Elmer, we do not laugh out loud in school. Don't do it again." It being a surprise saved me from a good cry. Years afterward we had a good laugh about that first term of school when visiting her as a grandmother.

My next term of school was in District 64 in a new sod schoolhouse. The school district as shown by the records spend \$33.05 on this new school building and \$29.95 on equipment. Members of the school district donated their work and the sod was cut on the school grounds. The walls were about three foot thick at the base and less near the roof. It was gabled north and south. The larger bill for the building was for shiplap lumber and two by six joists that had to be spliced in the center supported by a trestle work and center pole set in the ground sustaining the middle part of the roof. Over this there was one layer of buffalo sod making it more secure. The door was in the middle of the south end and there were two windows on the east and west, made up of two twelve-pane sash to each window. The blackboard was made of two plain one by twelve foot boards along the north wall painted black and pinned to the wall by wood pins driven through holes bored in the lumber and into the sod wall. The seats were made from one by twelve inch lumber planed on one side. Seat and desk were made in one and on the uneven dirt floor when the students using the seat in front moved about or returned from class the inkwell had to be well watched. There were no privies but to the east some rods was a deep gully of high grass and weeds and this was the girls' retreat while to the south and west a little farther was a



Where the Author Started to School.

similar retreat used by the boys and woe unto him who trespassed. The heat was furnished by a large pot bellied sheet iron drum above a coal stove.

Outstanding Memories in the Old Schoolhouse of Sod

I remember two bad hail storms that chased us into safe side corners. They came from the west and took out all the glass on that side and some bounced out the windows on the east. It was piled up three feet high in the door. In both cases we were barefooted and we waded through hail on the way home. One cold rainy afternoon after school was taken up after dinner in came a man dressed in the garb of an Indian with a large knife and revolver in his belt and started to chase the teacher but when she fainted he took after one mischievous kid and had him running up and over desks and yelling for dear life but after he had the entire school in panic he disappeared over a hill and down a deep draw. A long time after this we learned that this man was a jilted lover of this teacher playing a prank to even up.

One day a teacher, as punishment, stood one of the boys with his back against the center post but after a time began standing first on one foot and then the other and finally when the teacher's back was to him shimmied up that pole and straddled the cross beam. The teacher went

over and got her switch from back of the black board but she found it too short. It came time to dismiss for the day with him up there and some of us boys hid to see the finish. She got tired in watching him and started to do some work on the blackboard when lo and behold out he came and was running for home the last we saw of him. But the teacher followed him home and reported to us the next day that his dad used a stick. Billie was the only child, coming late in life, but his parents were not the doting type, were stern and unrelenting. The mother was part Indian and smoked a corn cob pipe and tobacco she usually raised.

One winter term when all the big boys were in school we had a large fleshy rather lazy teacher that became very unpopular. She did her best to make herself attractive, in fact she over did it. It was the day of bustles and she no doubt used one of her own stockings well stuffed for her bustle and with her big hips as she waddled up and down the aisle did not help her popularity and boys would make dolls out of their large bandana handkerchiefs and as she passed they would mount one sitting on this bustle and they would do all kinds of monkey shines as she tripped over the dirt floor. This furnished lots of amusement that was not so good for the school. The two months were soon over and that was the last of her teaching.

ARTICLE 39

Stories From the Pioneers

A large and wealthy merchant from one of our distant cities in the east and his daughter came to one of our early community centers to visit and hunt buffalo. It was during the summer of 1863 before there were any counties organized in this territory. These communities were few and far between, rather outpost trading centers. A very stylish and exceedingly well dressed young man, also from the east, was stopping with one of his relatives in the community. He found it a lonesome place until he met the Miss and her father; for him it was love at first sight; he became completely enamored, and paid her marked attention. One day he called at their cabin attired in his best dress suit spick and span, to see the young lady, and on finding she had accompanied the buffalo hunting party, determined to follow. Leaving his coat as the day was warm he started in pursuit, riding a handsome black mare he had learned to fancy and was as proud to ride as he was of his fine clothes he was wearing. He came upon the party consisting of the father, a visiting mail agent, the two brother proprietors with two of their daughters, and the Miss he adored, just as they had prepared to partake of their dinner. They had captured, by lassoing, a fine bull buffalo calf and had it tied to a lasso rope and the wagon. Completely exhausted, it had laid down in the shade of the wagon; the young tenderfoot rode up and fastened his steed; proceeded to pet the young bull in all some six rods from the party. The young captive sprang to his feet for a moment surprised, as the young man stood before him stroking him on the forehead, but doubtless seeking for revenge, and indifferent

upon whom he obtained it, the young buffalo bull lowering his shaggy head, quick as a flash made for the young tenderfoot (who stood facing him) with all his fury thrusting his head between the young man's handsomely attired legs, and carrying him with great speed towards the party, all of whom were breathlessly awaiting the result. The buffalo could not continue long without serious results. Reaching the end of his lariat, the stopping was even more sudden and terrific than his starting but the momentum the dude had, carried him over the bison's head and the sprouting horns catching in the dude's pantaloons retained that necessary part of his attire. The male portion of the party was carried away by hilarious emotions, while the female portion turned away, we may say bewildered, trying to repress their desire to laugh but in vain. One of them laughed and the others were compelled to join in the expression of mirth, his Miss saying "It is too dreadfully comical I must laugh or I'll be sick." In his embarrassed condition the dude fled to the opposite side of the wagon, where he was joined by one of the men of the party, a man over six foot in height and quite portly. He had an extra pair of pantaloons in the wagon the dude for the time being borrowed, but his slim legs (for he was less than half the size of his benefactor) felt outdoors in their temporary habitation, and after lapping them over some five or six inches at the waist, and turning them up at the bottom, his appearance was despairingly contrasted to his well fitting doeskins, that he could not meet the eyes of her who had so touselled his heart and without listening to the entreaties to remain he sprang upon his horse and retreated.

A love match was ended, and the young man re-

turned to his lodging, if not crest fallen and with diminished stock of pride, at least richer in experience.

In 1863, Bierstadt, an artist on his return from his travels in California, stopped at Oak Grove for rest and recreation. He desired to see an enraged buffalo, so that he could better paint the picture of one charging in his gigantic fury. Accompanied by a writer for one of the New York papers and the two brothers (proprietors) proceeded to a grove, several miles northwest where they found a herd of buffalo. They succeeded in getting a large bull separated from the herd, then they shot him, after the artist had seated himself for the purpose of sketching the scene. The bull, not being very ferocious, the artist desired to have him wounded again. One man stood ready to make a fatal shot should it become necessary, while another again wounded the monster. Infuriated with pain and bleeding at the nostrils, he made for the assailant, but seeing the artist, he turned toward him. The artist stopping his work, took to his heels. The bull struck the temporary table at which the artist had been sitting, shattering it and scattering the artist's utensils far and wide, but did not check his speed toward the fleeing artist, who, frightened nearly out of his wits, perhaps was making the "best time" of his life. Seeming to know that the object of his pursuing was the author of his pain, the bison, bellowing terrifically, had so nearly overtaken the artist, that he snorted blood and foam upon him before the fatal shot was fired which brought the bull to the ground and saved the artist a terrible death. The artist was in imminent danger, for if the gun had missed fire or the aim been less accurate, in a moment or more he would have been gored to death. When the artist had gained sufficient breath to speak, he said "This is enough; no more buffalo for me." The account given by the reporter in the New York Evening Post, it was thought for vividness, could not be surpassed, and when Bierstadt's picture of an enraged buffalo bull pursuing a man was completed, it seemed more reality than a picture.

A prominent old pioneer medical man reminiscing, tells of being called to see a very sick patient over in the bluffs south of the Republican River near the Nebraska-Kansas line. There was little or no road and it was a very dark night and he had to trust to the good judgment of his faithful old team to get him there. He had his old open top buggy and at times he was not sure how long he would ride the buggy or the buggy ride him. It was nearing midnight when he drove into the yard and was announced by the barking of the faithful shepherd dog. The kitchen door opened and a boy came out to help him tie his team and direct him to the entrance hole in the shale

rock bank; to designate it from the one up the draw made by the wolves the pioneers named their dugouts. The doctor was ushered into the first of the two rooms. The two rooms were heated by a squatty cast iron, large bellied two lid cook stove with a box of corn cobs and stove wood standing by. A home made kitchen cupboard was over against the wall as well as a small kitchen table. A coffee pot and grinder with some groceries decorated this kitchen furniture. There were two or three old chairs and a folding cot on the other side walls. The doctor warms himself, lays off his top coat and enters the other room where he finds the patient and his wife acting as nurse. He takes from his pocket a little pocket case and from it a fever thermometer and places it in the patient's mouth under the tongue, and bids the patient to close his lips. He removes from his pocket a grandfather's watch at the end of a long miniature gold log chain, opens its lid, places his hand upon the patient's outstretched hand and wrist, counts the pulse beats and notes the time, replaces his watch in his vest pocket, opens his little bag and takes from it some rubber tubes with a little disc at one end and ear plugs on the other; placing the ear plugs in his ears he places the little disc over the patient's heart and with a wise look listens; apparently satisfied he returns the gadget to his handbag and watches his patient in long meditation; he removes from his handbag a small leather case filled with small glass bottles filled with pills and powders; he asks for some warm water and after laying out some different kinds of medicine on little sheets of paper on which he designates the hours to be given, takes a little pill from one pile, put it in the patient's mouth and bids him swallow. He goes into the other room with the wife, shuts the door and in a low voice says, "I am very sorry madam, but hardly think it will be necessary for me to come again, it will only increase your expense, for I am compelled to tell you that your husband is going to die within a few hours." He leaves her, goes to his team and buggy. The back and under the seat is filled with corn, there is a sack of potatoes in front at his feet and on the seat is a large yellow pumpkin. The son explains, "We have no money and mother told me to fill your buggy." "The good doctor smiling" continues. These good people were hard shelled Baptists and the good brother had never been immersed and if he was going to die and get to heaven he surely must be, so they sent for the pastor who agreed and so they brought in the horse trough and placed it along side the bed, warmed up the water and the preacher got him into that horse trough and according to ritual, baptized him. Then with a little chuckle the doctor continued, "Strange as it may seem that bath did the old man good for he recovered and lived for several years after.

ARTICLE 40

Contentment -- A State of Mind

This is the true story of a successful and happy dental career. This dentist had practiced some fifteen or twenty years before I became acquainted with him. He has since passed to his reward.

This is the recording of his state of mind.

I was amazed when I made a visit to find him so wonderfully situated. He was neatly clothed, carrying a cane and wearing a skull cap, reading a newspaper in a large spacious hall decorated with beautiful house plants and good serviceable furniture. He was glad to see me and at once invited me to take a walk with him about his splendid estate.

We wandered about over large wooded lawns which were intersected by beautiful walks. He pointed out to me various kinds and types of shrubs and took me to visit his large greenhouse filled with all sorts of garden and house plants. He showed me a large kitchen and laundry, his heating plants, and water systems. He had four large deep-well irrigating plants where he irrigated his large and bountiful gardens.

He then pointed out to me his large dairy herd of thoroughbred Holstein cows and a spacious dairy barn. Then came his horse barns and fine horses and mules; he was farming 1,200 acres of corn, oats and barley; and his chickens more than 4,000 of them, with hundreds of ducks, geese and turkeys.

We viewed a number of his fine mansions where some 1,500 servants and 200 managers were housed. It was a magnificent sight.

He then called my attention to his clothes. He was wearing, he said, a \$200 suit of splendid cloth and a pair of shoes he said were of the best, costing him some \$20. I asked to see his automobiles but was surprised to learn he owned none, but his managers did so he did not have to be bothered.

"Well," I said, "Doctor, are you contented and happy?"

"Certainly. Why shouldn't I be? I have three splendid meals a day, a fine bed to sleep in, and with all the servants and help to wait on me, why shouldn't I be happy, with property worth \$2,500,000 and nothing in the world to worry about? Why even the Governor of the state takes orders from me and we get along fine."

Can you imagine a dentist in such circumstances? I asked about his health and he assured me it could not be better and he was getting younger every day.

Yes, this is a true story of a distorted mind—a dentist in a State Hospital which he imagined he owned. A grandeur delusion and what a happy state of mind!

After all isn't it the state of mind that brings us success or failure, happiness, contentment and peace with our fellow-men?

ARTICLE 41

First Settlers of Inavale

The First Chapter in Its Advance Towards Civilization

Inavale differs from other townships in the appropriateness and originality of its name. In appropriateness, perhaps, Guide Rock may claim equal credit. These are the only townships in the county which could not exchange names with any other township without any sense of impropriety. Inavale differs from Guide Rock, in that the name does not rise so naturally from the significant features of the township. The bold promontory at Guide Rock had been known as a guide rock before a white man settled in the valley. It was, therefore, but natural for the citizens to give their first settlement a name after the rocky precipice which had been the beacon to direct their footsteps and indicate their arrival within the confines of the promised land. Yet it is strange to relate that this name was given to the first settlement which nestled under the protection of the frowning battlement only after protest. Red Cloud was the first choice for a name, and Red Cloud might as well have been applied to one place as another. There is some propriety in preserving the names of Indian warriors in the names of towns, but not very much; while to apply any other appellation to Guide Rock would be a clear misnomer.

The name of the western township in the county was

not adopted until after considerable time, disappointment and controversy. The first postmaster and mail carrier was Uncle Allen Ayers, who was selected for the position because he was also county commissioner, and therefore, get mail on his trips as county commissioner. Mr. Ayers naturally had the first privilege of christening the embryo town. Mounting the carcass of a buffalo, he gave the name of the slaughtered animal to the new settlement. When this name was reported to the postmaster general, a change was ordered on account of there being one post-office of that name in the state. Then all the settlers became interested in naming the future village. A mass meeting agreed on the name of Hilton, but that was set aside for the same reason Buffalo was discarded. Thereupon Captain Knight came to the front with the suggestion of Rockford, after the ford near his place. But there were several Rockfords in the country. Milton Lester rallied a party in favor of damming the future credit of the place by calling it Cairo. While the minds of the little community were tempest tossed over the contentions which had arisen, W. J. Vance, the first settler, called upon Mrs. Ayers, who asked him to suggest a name different from any suggested, and she would send it in to the department. Thereupon, W. J. Vance put his thinking faculties to work, and taking the preposition "in", the article



The disastrous Republican River flood of 1935, on its visit to Inavale, Webster County had no loss of human life, but many thousands dollars of property and soil.

“a”, and the noun “vale,” he built them together into a new word, a word theretofore unused by English-speaking people—the word Inavale, a name of such peculiar felicity that everybody who has heard or seen it has been charmed with its propriety and euphony. Since that time other towns have been named after the Webster county town, but the Nebraska village led them all in coining and adopting the name. When the railroad was built, with a lack of interest in all that is poetic and harmonious, the railroad company proposed to name their station without reference to the former name. The inhabitants, without dissenting voice, protested, and the company yielded and permitted the pioneer name to stand. It is almost impossible to appreciate the value of a new word and a new name which supplies an urgent want. To Mr. Vance belongs the credit. Can anything good come out of Nazareth? and Nathaniel said, “Lo, look and see ”

As we have said, W. J. Vance was the first settler of Inavale. He came to this county in the middle of September, 1870, in company with James Baldwin. The latter made his homestead entry on the land occupied or owned by Joseph Garber north of Red Cloud. Vance helped Baldwin build the log house on the land which was the first shingled house with factory-made doors and windows in the country. We have heard it suggested that Charles Besse never did any work. To those who traduce Mr. Besse in this manner, we have to say that Charles Besse felled the trees

and hewed the logs which entered into the construction of this house. This house was standing and in fair condition when Mr. Garber became the owner of the land.

Mr. Vance also did the first breaking on this piece of land that was done north of Red Cloud. There being no prospect of Mr. Vance’s early marriage, he was persuaded to move farther up the river and take the land on which he was comfortably situated for many years. Mr. Vance enjoyed, therefore, the distinction of being the only resident of the county west of Red Cloud who settled in 1870. Unless we count Dave Hefflebower. We are inclined to think that Dave was not really old enough to take a claim in 1870, and pending his attainment of his twenty-first birthday, he was simply a squatter on the land. His son George now lives on the land.

The next settler of Inavale was a German by the name of Beck, who came a week after Mr. Vance. Then there came three men who took the lands due west of Vance and failed to return. In the spring of 1871 Uncle Allen Ayers, his son Nate, and a man by the name of Neff appeared on the scene. Nate Ayers took the land owned by Della Walker. In July, Uncle Alexander Walker with his family arrived. Uncle Aleck bought out Nate Ayers’ claim, and homesteaded the land where the Walkers lived until the removal of the old folks to town. Both were deceased a short time later.



Charlie Hunter’s ranch at Inavale.

Invasion of Happy Hunting Grounds

Soon after the purchase of the Louisiana Territory, people began to talk of an Indian reserve; a state set aside for the Indians, and it was believed that the western prairies would be useful for this purpose. Up to that time the white man was interested in these western plains, only as a means of travel. There were four principal classes of these travelers; The soldiers, the Oregon emigrants, the Mormons and the California gold seekers. The remote, unsettled region in the Northwest, known as Oregon, was soon to become the home of civilized people. In 1842, wagon trains of emigrants began to undertake the long and weary journey to that far off country. Others soon followed, and during the next few years many thousands of people settled in the Oregon country.

The Mormon beliefs, not long established, got them into trouble with people around them and with the Government; soon they began the long and perilous journey to the valley of Great Salt Lake, and so the well-known Mormon trail cut its way across these prairies.

In 1848 a man by the names of James Marshall, who was running a saw mill near the site of Sacramento, California, discovered shining particles of gold and it was soon found that there were rich gold fields. News spread, not as fast as of today since there were no railroads or telegraph systems west of the Mississippi, but in a comparatively short time news spread and the whole country and even Europe had heard about the California gold fields. Some went by water but more made the journey overland. Long lines of wagons, or prairie schooners as they were called, wound their way across the plains and over the mountains to California. It is estimated that ninety thousand people passed through the Hub of the Nation in the two years: 1848-1849.

The deep ruts cut in and through the virgin sod leaving marks that can still be seen through grazing grounds not disturbed by the plow.

During these years the white man was traveling back and forth with no thought of making settlement. The country remained in the undisputed possession of the Indians. The white man did not want it as yet. They looked upon these vast prairies, not as resources, but as so much land to be crossed in reaching places further west. But changing conditions in states east of the Mississippi River made people begin to look to these plains in a different light. The country there, was becoming too thickly settled and the people wanted the lands of the eastern Indians and so there began talk of an Indian reserve; of a state set aside for the Indians and it was believed that the western prairies would be useful for that purpose. Nothing definite was done however, until 1825 when the

National Government began the "remodeling policy." Treaties were made wherein the Indians were to receive certain remuneration consisting of annual payments, supplies of cattle, hogs, and farming implements, and taught modern agriculture. It is to be regretted that the Government did not always make good but the poor Indian had little recourse. According to the treaties, the Indians were promised their land "as long as grass should grow or water run", but it soon developed that the white man wanted this land also. So in 1854, we again find tribes being transferred, this time to Indian Territory; now the state of Oklahoma.

Although this territory making up the Hub of the Nation during these early years was easily accessible, only a few hundred people came here. There were three different classes; fur traders, missionaries and soldiers. It is impossible to say when the first hunters and trappers came to these western plains, for they were generally obscure men and little known of their coming and going, but they were real pathfinders of the West.

The fur companies established many trading posts, which served as forts and as places to which hunters and trappers could bring their furs. Many Indians also engaged in this trade and often were given tobacco, whisky and weapons in exchange for their furs. In this way much of the work of the missionaries was undone.

Let us again turn to the topography as we viewed in the year 1870 and again view it in 1950: South and north of the Kansas-Nebraska boundary, running east and west are transcontinental railways and paved highways intersected by numerous north and south highways, connecting many hundreds of villages and small cities, plainly marked by towering grain elevators, mills and municipal water towers as they pierce the sky. These cities and most villages have all the modern conveniences of the metropolitan city.

As one glides along the paved highways lined on either side by farm fences pasturing thousands of thoroughbred cattle, hogs and sheep; the numerous new and modern farm improvements; schools and churches; the ricks and ricks of ear corn and overflowing granaries of wheat, rye and barley; stacks of alfalfa and other feed, one can imagine the astonishment of these early explorers who dubbed this country "The Great American Desert," if they could visit it now.

This country, the Hub of the Continent, is also distinguished in that it is the last of pioneer homesteading, the happy hunting ground of the Indian and the grazing ground of the buffalo.

Who Am I?

From Blue Hill Leader, January 11, 1953
Who Am I?

(Editor's note: Dr. E. A. Thomas, one of the first born in Webster county, and now a resident of Hastings, has written a series of historical stories dealing with the pioneer life of north Webster county which starts this week, with the following. Dr. Thomas is a student of early Nebraska life and writes interestingly. We are proud to have the articles for publication in this newspaper.)

It was in the early spring of 1871 when two young men from the east part of Nebraska staked out homesteads in Elm Creek Township, one in section 33, the other an eighty in sections 19 and 20. After helping build the stockade farther down the creek they built homes on their homesteads. The other one on up the creek, already tired of batching, learned that a family composed of father and mother, four sons and one marriageable daughter, were on their way from Illinois. With competition at a distance, no roads, and transportation provided by horses and lumber wagons, the young bachelor laid his plans for this young lady by courting the good graces of her uncle and aunt, now his neighbors.

He was somewhat of a diplomat and had ready on their arrival a list of the best available homesteads. It was not long until the wedding day was set and they were moving into his 14x14 log hut with its home-made furniture. The big day was the 25th of September, 1873. The next spring found them very busy with a few acres of spring wheat and oats, some sod corn and a nice garden. Everything was coming along fine with summer on the way, when lo, it became so dark one noonday that the kerosene lamp had to be lit and they discovered the clouds were great hordes of grasshoppers. The insects settled down in one great mass over everything and in a few hours all green had disappeared from sight.

This young couple, Lorenzo Dow (Ren) and Mary Ann (Chambers) Thomas, being the nineteenth couple married in the county, were not to be deprived entirely that year, for there came to their humble home a kicking, bawling, red-headed brat of a boy. While his father and mother had come with little more than the clothing they were wearing, this young shaver did not have a stitch to his name and for the next year wore little more than flour sacks held together with one lone safety pin. As soon as he was old enough he learned to farm from the beginning, for his father had given up farming because of poor health. The first step—a gentle mare bought from Congressman McKeighan further down the creek. The next was a horse collar and a pair of hames with chain tugs and rope lines.

We secured some harrow teeth and a pair of shovels. From ash poles we made a small one-row harrow

and a double shovel cultivator. Fifteen acres of corn was listed in by me and was taken care of in creditable manner when, lo, the state of Kansas played another one of her dirty tricks by sending hot winds that withered this waist-high corn in less than no time and we did not get enough to make a single meal for a cow. The next year it was 19 acres, four more than the first, and fortune was with us. We raised a good corn crib of corn and traded it to a Blue Hill feeder for another horse. From that year on it was double harness.

Well, this red-headed boy, with the help of a country school teacher, his father, got a teacher's certificate and taught a country school in District 81, south of Blue Hill, the little tin school building seen today on the left side of the road leading to the town of Cowles. We next find him studying dentistry and graduating with the degree of doctor of dentistry from the Omaha University. He practiced his profession in Red Cloud until 1911 when he, with his wife and two children moved to Hastings where he practiced until he got tired and retired. Now, as a partner of his son in the Farm Service Company, he stands around pretending to work.

Well, dear reader. I intended painting for you a word picture of myself so that you would recognize me on the street, but for the life of me I could not arrange these words into a picture wherein I could recognize myself. Then I arranged into a picture the pet words my wife has used the last 50 years and still worse results. Then I remembered the many, many people in whose decaying teeth I had used the electric drill and the thousands of teeth I had extracted with various degrees of pain. So I came to the conclusion that too good a word picture was not a very good idea after all. It occurred to me, however, I might call the attention of some of you to the fact that an uncle, and a brother, Nicholas Thomas, bought cattle around over this Blue Hill-Bladen country for a number of years in the past, a sort of guessing on weights and price game. Again there is a question of this kind of an introduction.

"Webster County Chronicles" is the caption under which some of the old-time stories have been appearing in the Red Cloud and Guide Rock papers, but why slight the only other county paper? The good editors have suggested remuneration for my work of digging up and writing these bits of history but I have refused to touch a penny, for if I do, the Government will call it a job, and my hobby horse may have another rider.

The Government gave my father, through the Free Homestead Act, 160 acres of good virgin soil. But it tries to take from me a part of all I get and keeps on planning to get even more before I get it.

Good Lord, what hasn't taken place in the last 80 years! If the farmers of this country could only utilize the rotten politics as fertilizer, what crops might be raised!

Oh, Well, I am still trying to make the world a little better, a little brighter, more fragrant, more beautiful by having lived in it. Just call me "Old Doc Thomas".

Webster and Adams Counties

Webster and Adams counties have now been my home for more than seventy-five years. Many sons and daughters have gone out into the world from these counties to make names for both themselves and the place of their birth. Many have remained with no mean record to their credit. To many of them the old axiom "a prophet is without honor in his own country" holds good.

Several times in my life opportunity has come to me to go to large cities with compensation far in excess of what I could make at home. At one time soon after I received national recognition for dental research the dean of one of our largest dental schools spent two days with me in trying to get me to join his faculty and department of research and teaching. I took pride in showing him our small city and had him meet some of our people. The last evening I tricked him into answering his own quest.

Said I, "Now Dean Black, after you have looked over our city and met some of my friends here about south central Nebraska, let us reverse your request that I join you in Chicago. Now honestly if you were in my place would you accept the offer you have made me?"

After meditation and some time for thought he said, "Well Doctor, this is a horse of a different color, here you are your own boss, you can have your evenings with family and friends, while if you join me most all this time will be taken up with class parties, fraternities, faculty meetings and what-not. We want you, we need you, but you will live a lot longer where you are."

This dean was a man about my own age but went to his reward several years ago. One time in Washington, D. C., a friend of mine showed me a telegram which requested him to contact me and see if I would be interested in a research project a short distance out of Boston. The salary was fantastic, but upon investigation I found my research findings were to conform to pre-determined specifications to be used for advertising propaganda. I refused to sell my honor.

I have had neighbors move to distant lands to spend their retiring years. In a short time they returned in a box. When we were young we found pleasure in looking to what the future might have in store for us. But after three-score and ten years, we find looking backward and

viewing the past as we have lived it, and sharing these memories with our childhood friends, brings enjoyment and pleasure not to be found among strangers in a strange land. It is not an easy matter to erase from memory the old swimming hole, the creek where we hunted birds' nests and shot quail, rabbits and ducks, the cow pasture where we played baseball Saturday afternoons, the walk along the country road on our first date, and those school picnics. Yes, there are many strangers but here and there about, we know where there are those old timers that have shared the three score and ten with us.

Yes, you may have rheumatism, neuritis or whatnot and go hunting for a climate to make you well. But just remember you are leaving one of the best health resorts for what ails you. Our altitude is not too high or too low, we have bacteria destroying sunshine, the greatest number of days per year, and our winds dilute and destroy bacteria breeding decaying matter. We have the purest water and air and a diversity of climate not to be surpassed.

One time I went to one of the so-called sanatoriums for a lingering cold. I was placed in a hot bath and sweat to beat the band for a time; taken out and placed on a table for rub-down with every now and then a big chunk of ice chased up and down my spine, they said to stimulate nerve reaction. If this is a good treatment, our high and low quick changes in temperatures helps to account for the splendid health of our people. I am reminded, as I see people running from one place to another in search for happiness, health and a place of retirement, of our cows when I was a boy. Uncle's pasture and ours joined with a good four-wire barbed fence between. Uncle had more cows than pasture. We had more pasture than cows, but on many occasions we found our cows in Uncle Will's pasture and when they saw us coming they would wind their tongues around the old grass roots and roll their eyes up at us as much as to say "the grass is much greener over here."

I may be old fashioned, a stick-in-the mud, but I think I have seen more beautiful sunsets right here at the place I call home than I could have ever seen as a rolling stone. From the soil here I will return, hoping the world is a little better and more fragrant and beautiful in my having lived in it.

Bill Kress---First Trapper and Hunter

Mortimer N. Kress, trapper and hunter, 1864 to 1880; (16 years of trapping and hunting) known by his companions or friends as "Bill" Kress was one of the early hunters and trappers along the Republican River. Although he homesteaded in Adams county on the Blue River, much of his pioneer life was spent up and down the Republican River. Even after he homesteaded, his principal business was trapping and hunting in the Republican valley.

While he later engaged in farming in Adams county, up to this time he was a roving citizen, a part of a group of men of which little is known. They would come and go, dodging here and there in pursuit of game and avoiding the Indians when they were in war paint, but usually on friendly terms with them. They learned the Indian language and his way of life. The hunter and trapper in those days was a law unto himself and his habits of life were a varied mixture of Indian and White Man.

Bill Kress and his buddy, during those transitional years (the passing of the Indian and the coming of the White Man—M. J. Fouts) are deserving of mention in Webster county history.

He was born, when Nebraska was one vast wilderness, in Lycoming county, Pennsylvania. His place of birth being near Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in 1841. He was the youngest of thirteen children. At the age of five he was left an orphan. With very little schooling, and at the age of eleven, he started out to see the world. Thrown on his own resources mostly, and while still a young boy, he saw a great deal of life. He answered the first call for troops in 1861 (Civil War) and was in many battles with the army of Virginia.

He was in all the battles after Bull Run fought by the eastern army. His regiment traveled 4,500 miles while in service and he saw action all the way with Sheridan on his raid. On June 9, 1863, he was wounded at Brandy Station, received a sabre wound, in the shoulder. He remained with his company and during the day was taken prisoner and escaped three times. Even though the sabre wound was serious, he still continued with the company until he received his discharge in 1864.

Returning to the place of his birth for a brief stay, he is soon found in Denver, Colorado, but for a brief time for it is here that his life as plainsman and trapper commenced.

Bill Kress was a young man; few men on the plains were his equal at anything he undertook to do. He had a good strong constitution and a large amount of native pluck. In following his life as a trapper he traveled all over the western country. He not only traveled all over Nebraska, but also through Kansas, Colorado, Indian Territory and Texas. In these various localities, he mingled with the different tribes of Indians, and became familiar with each language, and was engaged in trading with them a great part of the time. Traffic with the Indians proved to be a business that had some profit, for at times he would accumulate a large amount of money that was invested in some adventure. During his wanderings, he

found the Republican River to be a good trapping ground, and located there. While engaged at that business he became acquainted with M. J. Fouts, better known as California Joe. They later hunted and trapped together.

In 1869, while looking for some stray mules he had lost, he wandered into Adams county. He admired the country of southern Adams county along the little Blue River and decided to take a claim there for two reasons: it was not too far from his hunting grounds on the Republican River and he wanted a home rather remote, a place where he could establish a home during his summer months. He returned to the Republican home and informed his fellow trapper and they together returned to Adams county and took homesteads in what proved to be Little Blue township; both located on the same section. At the time of their location there were no settlers in what was later Adams county. In the spring of 1869, he built a log house and turned over fifty acres of sod. In the summer of '70, he remained on the claim and farmed, but returned to his trapping in the Republican Valley during the fall. He found it very profitable as a vocation, as his wolf pelts alone amounted to a good sum. He put a man in charge of his farm, and stock, and as his custom, spent all the wintery months hunting buffalo, deer and antelope; trapping wolves, otter, beaver and mink.

Some of these trappings took him a long way from home. He led the life of a scout and hunter from his first settlement in 1880. Some times he would be gone many months. He was scouting on Big Piney Creek when Fort Kearny was built and assisted with its construction. Mr. Kress scouted for General Miles and General McKenzie in 1874.

In the early spring of 1873, the country was aroused by the report that the Indians were coming to take the life of Wild Bill, who was at his claim in Little Blue, for shooting "Whistler," the chief of the Sioux. So excited were the settlers that some threatened to hang Wild Bill Kress if he could be found. All this time Bill was on friendly terms with the Indians and was in no danger although circumstances did point toward him. The story in effect was as follows: In the spring of 1873, Bill was camped on the Republican River trapping, when he fell in with one named Jack Ralston. The latter was a man with a good education and had been on the successful side of life one time; but became too familiar with the bottle; he had chosen to move to the wild west to reform. Bill took him in and shared his gains with him. One day about the latter part of March, Bill and his companion crossed the river while hunting in the timber. They came upon a dead mule, shortly afterward, two Indian ponies were found, and they took them over the river to camp. A few days later, the weather being cold and wet, the two companions, after finishing their evening meal, saw three Indians coming into their camp. They asked for food and lodging. Bill offered them the remains of the supper, pancakes, cold meat and coffee. But Ralston, being of a somewhat kind nature, wanted to entertain them more royally and give them a hot supper. Bill knew that the supply of coffee, sugar and salt would not last but for only a few days and not wishing to run short, finally dif-

ferred with him. The difficulty ended by Ralston being kicked out of camp. He took one of the ponies and went to some of the small trading places in the upper part of the county, and there traded the pony for a plug of tobacco, a square meal and a half gallon of good old whisky, which was too freely imbibed, with the result that he told a very nice story about Bill and himself killing the three Indians, who had come into their camp. At about this same time, Whistler was killed, and one of the ponies proved to be his. Suspicion was naturally attached to Kress. Ralston could not be found. Kress was not ar-

rested and the Indians did not attempt to kill him. In fact, Snow Flake, who took Whistler's place, thanked him for the favor he supposed Bill had done for him.

Bill Kress was elected or appointed constable in the early days before the county was organized, and served in that capacity when at home.

California Joe, or Jerome Fouts, and Bill Kress, settled in Adams county in 1864 and 1867 respectively, and on March 5th, 1870, located claims in the southeast part of Adams county.

ARTICLE 46

1870---1953

HISTORY VERSUS FICTION

Fiction an account of past facts and events affecting one or more nations or peoples, arranged in due order, usually with comments and explanations.

Fiction the act of feigning or imitating; that which is imagined, feigned or invented.

ACTUALITY VERSUS PRETENTION

Actuality reality, fact that which is in full existence.

Pretension a claim made whether true or false; the state of having some justifiable claim.

The time of this writing, the middle of the twentieth century.

In the midst of plenty and activity in all fields of endeavor, a mechanized world with all modern conveniences in the realm of economics, education, religion. A state and national life, steeped in fads, fancies, theories. Softer, lesser resistance and social decline in national and world politics. We are impregnated with fear of communism, war, and rumors of war. Our comprehension and appreciation has become so thinly spread by adulteration, we only faintly see, feel, and hear. The sphere and scope of our intellect in trying to keep pace with the rapid, expanding and ingenious development leaves us dazed, confused, bewildered. Our forefathers during the last three decades of the century past, had before them in this new country some definite assurances commensurate of a future in keeping with a hope born of experience and tested in a civil war just past. A united nation of states. They could plan their future with a reasonable assurance of accomplishing certain goals without fear of interference of legal restrictions, flying jets, atom bombs, threatening nations with unscrupulous rulers.

My Fathers Day—An early homesteader, reminiscing, about time on his hands. Alone, with far away neighbors and slow modes of transportation, the long nights, stormy days, the Sundays. No churches, picture shows, baseball games, pleasure riding, Sunday paper, telephone, radio. After his chores, his breakfast, and housekeeping, he would adorn himself in his high top boots, best overalls, and clean shirt, red bandana handkerchief as a tie, his ten gallon hat and saunter about the homestead and amuse himself by killing rattle snakes and tallying, by preserving the rattles. By these, he also had a record of their ages, as each rattle represented a calendar year. He generally would wind up by perching himself on the highest promontory and there as he surveyed the landscape he would

imagine himself "Robinson Caruso," and quote, "he was the master of all he surveyed." But no, not all, for at times hundreds of buffalo and antelope could be seen grazing along the banks of the creek which they followed closely on account of water. They were also on the way to the west, giving way to the homesteader.

These memories, he would relate and enact for us children during the long winter nights and Sunday afternoons when he would take us over the scene of the natural stages, acting out the reality on the virgin soil soon to fade away with the Indians' happy hunting ground and the passing buffalo and antelope.

However, these were the days before the rural mail carrier with his daily newspapers, the country telephone, the radio. The days when going from one place to another we walked, rode horseback, or used horse drawn vehicles. The days, when we children were content with the crudest homemade toys. No picture books or daily section of comic strip, no nearby Sunday School or church service.

Those were the days when we had time to think, to meditate, to read our Bible and say our prayers. The day of the family altar, for all were home at night and went to bed at the same hour to arise at the call for breakfast. The day when the family was an entity, a unit of society. The father was police, judge, dictator; and to a great degree, we children of the early pioneers had to rely on our parents for two-thirds of our education. They taught us the letters of the alphabet and how to use them in words and their meanings, and how to write them. The numerals and how to count, to add, subtract, and to multiply.

From them we learned frugality and the strictest economy. We learned to pull the weeds from the corn field and turn them into pork as hog food, to utilize the waste dish water and sour milk, the soft corn and dirty wheat in making slop for the hogs. We learned to get along without a pasture fence by lariatting the cows. That is, using a long rope fastened to their halter at one end and to a stake of either iron or wood at the other, with a swivel somewhere along the line to compensate for twisting as they grazed around the stake. We learned to draw water from a deep well by the use of a cranked windlass and a rope over a six inch pulley hung above on a derrick and from there fastened to a long, cylindrical, iron bucket with a leather hinged valve bottom. This we would let fall down the wood cased well, braked by a

hinged wood lever. Then came the winding up until the bucket was again on top where we dropped it over a pin inserted in a trough which raised the valve and let the bucket empty into the watering trough. In this way we furnished water not only for the house but for several chickens, hogs, cattle, and horses. Through the hours of winding up and letting down, I learned the number of buckets of water each animal would drink during the day, depending on the heat of the day and type of food. We learned to lead the cows and calves to the water and back to the stake. Here was a scene and acting without rehearsal. A reality, with a change of scene and staging as that muscular calf or cow took us whirling through the nearby corn field, or you tripped and were dragged through a nearby hog wallow, coming up with blistered hands from slipping rope. Many towns today entertain the public by putting on what they call a rodeo, while in the olden days there was a rodeo in almost every farm yard with no special time.

And there was the run-a-way team, scared ornery, hitched to a lumber wagon, buggy, corn planter, plow, harrow or whatnot. Usually there was harness to be repaired, new parts for the machinery and an injured horse to doctor. For yourself sometimes you were lucky and sometimes not. At any rate it is a shame these scenes in actuality went to waste because of lack of "canning" facility, technicolor filming, and sound reproduction. That bawling calf, which in its fright is whirling you through space, the mother cow as she, with bulging eyes and nostrils charges. That distressed moaning, bass or tenor, unharmonizing bawl. Well if you have never experienced it, you have never acted.

That Farm Sale

When a boy about the age of ten years, I went with my father to a farm sale. It had progressed to the hog pen where there was a number of large Poland China sows being sold. As there were no cross pens, the large crowd had them cornered and as sold were let out. It was after a big rain and the hog wallows were all full. Billy Watkins, the auctioneer, was a real dynamo of energy. A short legged body, resembling the shape of a thousand horse dynamo. The crowd wanting to see these fine large lop-eared sows, had failed to back up the auctioneer when one old sow became frightened and seeing light shining between his short legs made a dive for it, shoving him up over those ears she became blinded. Rushing forward she entered a large mud hole. Discovering her plight she lowered her head and began backing out leaving the bewildered auctioneer sitting, up to his waist in mud and water. I have yet to see a reproduction of actuality in superb acting equal to this.

Our Emotions

The actuality of living an act calls for certain emotional reactions that are under the control of the vegetative nerve. That is, their action is out of conscious control. We cannot of our own will control our heart beat, yet there are certain emergencies wherein it must receive assistance and this it may get from our ductless glands. Self preservation may necessitate an overact of muscular strength. In this case our adrenal glands come into play. It is composed of two parts: the cortex (outer portion) and the medulla (inner portion) which differ in their embryonic origin and in their functions. The cortex is formed from the same embryonic tissue as the reproductive organs.

The medulla has its origin in common with that of the sympathetic nervous system. The cortex indispensable to life, secretes a hormone or hormones which influence many important functions; including carbohydrate metabolism, muscular efficiency and reproductive functions. The secretion of the medulla (called epinephrine) reinforces the sympathetic nervous system as a means by which the body adapts itself to meet the demands of life's sudden stresses.

Under conditions of violent emotion the heart beats faster, the blood pressure is raised, digestion stops. Epinephrine plays a part in these physiological changes. It releases sugar from the glycogen stored in the liver, thus preventing fatigue of heart and skeletal muscles. It dilates the air passages in the lungs so that more oxygen may be available, and it increases the blood supply to the muscles. Thus the body is made ready for vigorous physical action under fear, anger or other emotions, many times clear thinking.

The Bull

With this prelude I will now introduce the reader to a play a lone bull and I put on up in the Colorado mountains without the benefit of an audience. However I will challenge a better production. It was the summer of 1917 when our party, composed of another dentist, a physician, a banker, a farmer and an undertaker with families, a party of forty people, was transported in six family cars to a point some seventy miles west of Fort Collins, Colorado, near a place called Home on the Cache La Poudre river. This river has its source high in the Rocky Mountains and empties into the south fork of the Platte. It is a swift, treacherous stream with waterfalls and numerous rapids. Just the kind of a place to find the mountain trout. At that time, this particular locality had a distinction in having a large, ferocious red bull owned by the valley caretaker, a Captain Williams. There were many stories of his contacting fishermen and their narrow escapes.

One day I was a little off my feed and did not join the group for a days outing far up the river. But after dinner, it being a beautiful afternoon, I decided to do a little fishing down the river. The women of the camp joined my wife in warning about the bull. I had been raised on the farm and knew a little about bulls and gave them the "Bull" in braggadocio.

The place I had in mind as a good fishing place, which I thought was near, proved three miles down river, but I made it. It was where a high barbed wire fence joined the river at right angles just at the base of a furious, roaring, tumbling, angry torrent of rushing waters chasing around great protruding granite boulders. Here behind these boulders, Captain Williams had told me, he had caught many prize trout.

Now that I was here, I in much glee, prepared for an hour's prize fishing. I had made my first cast when I chanced to look up and saw approaching, was that big red bull; not more than twenty yards away. Head shaking and horns shining and eyes that appeared as large as saucers. My first bet was to beat him to a clump of small trees, which I did. But none of them was large enough and after playing, hide and seek for a time I saw my chance to get back to the river again and gained the first boulder at the edge of the water without avail, for the bull braved it that far. I slid off and made for the next protruding boulder, but in doing so found my feet

being pulled down stream. With a superhuman strength I had never known before I managed to cross. My heart was pounding, my head throbbled and through wide open mouth I was filling my lungs as never before.

I had gained the opposite shore and before I could think I came out of that fright and found myself shaking my fist at that bull on the other side, who was still threatening to come across, but only bluffing, for he was neither scared nor mad enough to excite his sympathetic nervous system enough to benefit from the proper hormone "epinephrine." Failing to take advantage of my challenge, Mr. Bull started off in pursuit of his cows and I was alone and safe. After emptying my leather boots, which were two sizes too small by that time, I began a survey and invoice of my situation. On down the stream some two miles was a foot bridge, across the river lay fishing tackle and nearby my hat which I had not missed until then. I must cross over, but lo and behold, I found after three attempts that I was wholly inadequate for the job. Try as I would those adrenal glands failed me and there was no bull on this side of the river to frighten me. So, sad and dejected, I made my way to that bridge; crossed over with only two blistered heels, but by the time I made the two miles back and recovered my equipment it was dark and I had two toes with blisters. Well after assuring myself that the red bull was not about, I lay down to rest. Then I realized I was hungry, and it was far past supper time and three miles to camp.

Upon arriving there I found the camp in confusion and a committee formed to go out to hunt me. There was much discussion pro and con on what happened to me, but, the bull had most and best of the argument. No! I had not seen the bull; just wandering around viewing the mountains. After some good warm tea and supper, before morning my wife had it out of me and in a day or two the true story was out. Upon our return the dental association, through its publication, heralded the story as evidenced by the reproduced picture here attached. Although a long time ago I still hear about that fishing experience when vacations are mentioned. Never before or since have I called on my faithful adrenal glands for help as I did that afternoon and that is no bull. Two years later I got word from Captain Williams that he had sold that bull and it was safe for a return fishing trip, but somehow I have never adventured back to that territory.

The Moron

In listening to Edgar Bergren on Sunday nights, with his character Mortimer Snerd makes his appearance, I often recall this story which came out of this farm country where they raise hogs. This boy, the son of a well-to-do farmer, had exhibited rare talent in drawing and art during his country school days and at the university he won top honors. He finished courses in the art schools of America and some of the best colleges of Europe. He returned to spend a brief vacation on the farm of his parents and while resting from his strenuous studies decided while there he would finish a barnyard scene as a start to his masterpiece, in as much as he was raised on the farm. After some weeks of work he decided to take it to a nearby city art gallery.

He readily got permission to exhibit it there and after it was arranged in a conspicuous place he remained

where he could see and hear the public approval. All went well and he was most delighted until there appeared on the scene a "Mortimer" fresh from the pig pen. So much so, that he attracted considerable attention and the artist was on the verge of calling the police when all at once he reared back on his heels and began to roar with laughter and after drawing the attention of the crowd around him, he blurted out, "I'll be goldarned! Who ever heard of a lot of pigs drinking out of a trough and not one in the trough." It was true the artist was born on the farm but of late years had seen little of it, much less the pig pen. In recent years his entire time had been devoted to the fixed beauties of the inert and not the physical. Yes, he learned from a moron who spent most of his time in caring for the hogs.

A Literary Critic

I ventured to question the authenticity of certain statements made in a certain book which had received the blessing of this critic which brought a most enlightening letter from the critic, for it revealed the result of acting through enraged anger. From what that letter revealed, I am glad it was the typewriter that was before him and not me, for it was evident he was seeing red. There is no doubt in my mind that his blood had received an extra supply of epinephrine, that his heart was stepped up, his brain stimulated to an unusual vocabulary of stinging words that were jotted down on the paper of that letter in no uncertain manner.

The extreme high and low force applied to those keys, the spacing of letters and words, the lack of neatness, the way he had jabbed that lead pencil into the paper in making corrections of spacing mostly, all gave evidence of an enraged temper but little suspected of a man holding down such an unusual, outstanding position. It was also evident that this presentation of anger was not from any kind of self administered stimulant other than involuntary. This letter is a valuable contribution to my collection, from my many friends in a mental hospital, and I have classified it "anger complex" from "professional ego."



Religious Experiences

In these memoirs it is the life, as lived, that concerns us. Has that life as lived measured up to standards of a life well lived? We consult our conscience. The sum total of all that one perceives, knows, feels, thinks; the entire mental life of a sentient being. We find in the sum total, no serious regrets. We have, since a consecration to God in our youth, been in spiritual contact with him at all times. We await his call without fear. Our living as past, cannot be changed, lived over, recalled, altered; it can be added to, or subtracted from as long as we live and have our being. To do this would alter our concept of right or wrong. The why and wherefore of living was a question that puzzled for a long time. The scriptures could not furnish me a satisfactory answer. My young, unfolding life was one of loneliness. Pioneer farm life on the prairie was a lonely life for women but far more for that boy or girl that did not contact another boy or girl for day in and day out, only his elders. There were no toys or amusement other than child curiosity. This curiosity always led me to the question WHY? I found playthings in the bugs, the worms, the grasshoppers, the toads, the ants and their way of life. Later, it was the birds and their nests, the dog and the cat. The squirrel and the prairie dog I tried to tame. Then came the sow and her pigs, the cow and her calf, the hens and their eggs. We plant the seeds in the garden and in the fields and they germinate and bring forth their kind but nowhere do I find the answer, "what is life?" What is the object of life? Why am I here? I am out in the pasture after the cows; it is in May and a dark starry night. I stop to listen and I am attracted by the stars and wonder at their number; I wonder at the distance of space that separates us. The vastness of the cloudless sky, and I become aware of my presence here; a little speck standing in the midst of all this, and I cry out what am I; why am I here; what

is the answer? Here comes old bossy, I will ask her and then I muse, I will soon take from her a gallon or more of milk and she will not object. From this milk mother will skim cream and churn butter and what we do not use we will send to town and trade for groceries. We feed the skim milk to the hogs. From the sour milk at times mother makes cottage cheese. All for food and our great good, and what does bossy get for it? Food and water and she takes for shelter whatever we give her without complaint. We take her calves and utilize them for meat and their hides for making shoes and see to it that nothing is lost. In feeding her prairie hay I get my hands into dried rose bushes and my fingers full of thorns and I complain; why is this necessary? She does not eat them and they only clutter up her manger.

I wait for an answer and spring comes with the rain and sunshine and the homely, thorny, cluster of sticks array themselves in a beautiful coat of green leaves and out come beautiful rosebuds and soon there is a bunch of beautiful rose blossoms. I pluck them and take them to mother and she places them in a vase on our kitchen table and lo and behold, the room is filled with fragrance. I interpret from the life of old bossy the why of her life, and now I discover the why in the life of the rose bush. Back of the stars, the vast blue sky, the germinating seed, the sun, the moon, and the rain, there is life and out of this life comes great good, and back of all this is God.

And so from all this, I find the answer to the question, why am I here. I am here to be happy, to make others happy. I am here to make the world better, to make the world more beautiful and more fragrant by having lived in it. And is not this the teaching of the Bible, the living Christ revealed in the things of nature? As a boy following the plow in my bare feet, as they contacted the fresh dirt, warmed by the rays of morning sunshine and the vast virgin field I walked and talked with God. It was here I promised to do my best to so live and so serve that the world would be made better by my having lived in it. Out of this has come great contentment, happiness, and joy in living.



The home of grandfather Chambers, a devout Christian family—worship an order of the day, where my father and mother were married. This home was built in the spring of 1873. The windmill and shingle roof came at a later date.

I Teach a Country School

The early homesteaders were confronted with the major task of making a living, as only a very few brought with them more than enough to tide them over until a crop could be planted and harvested. However the records show that a census of school children in the community was watched closely and just as soon as it rose to the number required to organize a school district, the properly signed petition was in the hands of the County School Superintendent, and a district organization was set up, although there was very little tax money to be had. Many districts met this situation by issuing school warrants which were used as money. If the teacher holding one of these warrants needed the money, they cashed them by assigning them to a bank or person with money to loan who charged a very liberal discount, the amount depending on how badly the owner needed money.

A short time after I was of school age a district was organized and a sod school house was built and my father was made one of the school officers. There was something like \$67 in the treasury. \$37 of this was spent for lumber used in the roof and for homemade desks. The house was made of buffalo sod from the school grounds and all the work was donated by the patrons of the district. There was but \$30 left to hire a teacher. It was voted to have a three month school and a teacher was secured for the term at \$20 per month. An old second-hand stove was secured by donation and sufficient warrants issued to complete the term.

One of my greatest ambitions was to secure a teacher's certificate and teach. With a semi-invalid father and being the oldest of the family, with a sister two years younger it was necessary that I contribute most of my time to helping care for the few cows, hogs, and chickens, in this way supplementing the third-of-grain rent we received from our farm land.

My School Problem

It didn't look encouraging, with less than three months per year in our district school, no method of transportation even if time was permitted. After talking it over with father, who had been a country school teacher, it was decided that he consult the County School Superintendent and get permission for me to appear before him every month or so for tests and instruction, with father as my tutor. It was in this way I succeeded in obtaining a third grade certificate for teaching in the county of Webster.

It was a proud day when I hitched old Dick to a two-wheeled cart and went out to hunt a school. It was in the fall of 1895 when I signed a contract to teach a

two months term in school district 81, at a salary of \$25 per month. This school was four and one half miles from home and during these two fall months I drove old Dick and the two-wheel cart, staking him out to graze while I gave attention to my classes. During these two months my pupils numbered less than a dozen pupils and some for their first term and to learn English. It was in a German settlement and many spoke German at home and sent the children to school to learn to speak English.

It seems I was successful during these two months for they signed me for the two winter months with no raise in salary. However, I had to build my own fires and do my own janitor work. There was no shelter for old Dick, so it was up to me to walk the four and one half miles morning and evening to board at home. This was necessary if I wanted anything left of my salary.

During that term I had two fine looking young ladies and a young man all older than myself. These young ladies caused me a great deal of concern; especially on Mondays. They would spend most of their Sunday nights out at some dance and could not keep awake on Mondays. They occupied a seat in the corner of the school room and I agreed to let them sleep, on a provision that they did not snore and disturb the school.

During this term the pupils of the first two months who came to learn English were doing quite well, however, a little confused. To illustrate: Henry holds up his hand. The teacher, "what it it Henry?" Henry, "Can I gets a speak."

Well, teaching was very interesting and I learned a lot those two terms but I found shucking corn by the bushel more remunerative, for I needed money as I had decided to secure a professional education.



District 81—School House

Forty Years in Dental Practice

It was the seventh of June, 1902, in a little hotel room in the town of Cowles. It was vacation time between my junior and senior year in dental college and by arrangement with the State Board of Dental Examiners, I was practicing dentistry. It was a Saturday morning and I had just spent two hours malleting in a large gold foil filling for which I received the sum of ten bucks. The patient was a very fine looking young lady living nearby on a farm with her mother. I well remember that filling and the date because I was to be married the next Monday. The fee would help.

It was forty years later I was doing some dental work in one of our state hospitals for the mentally ill and the patient in my chair had lost all her upper teeth but three, one of them with a large gold filling and it was very loose. I said to her, Mrs. ——— may I take that tooth out? I can pull it with my fingers." She said, "no a man by the name of Elmer Thomas put that in for me forty years ago." I stepped around where she could see me better and asked, "Mrs. ———, do I look like that man? She hesitated a moment and said, "No you are not the man. He had red hair, and your hair is white."

One patient did not keep her appointment. She and her husband came to see me. She had a very bad tooth with a large glandular growth on a first lower molar which I removed. I cautioned her she had better return the next day for treatment which she failed to do and I wondered, not for long. I learned that she and her husband had been murdered and buried in a cow shed.

My office was over a drug store facing the east. One morning I was watching a black cloud in the southeast and saw it let down a large funnel. It traveled north for a few miles it ascended just to the north some four miles east of town. I had just made a large gold crown for a lower molar for a young man who lived over there, and he was to be in that afternoon. He came; their house and barn had been left as the funnel passed between them but it took the windmill and buildings between. He had had a narrow escape as he ran from the barn to the house to warn his mother and sister. While I was fitting this crown he was trying to tell me about his escape, and he swallowed it. I sent him home with a mild cathartic and told him to return with the crown later. He did, and with the proper cleansing, I put it on and he used it for many years.

A fine old Bohemian woman who was the midwife when I was born delighted in visiting my office and if there were patients waiting she would tell them about being the first to see me; then she would describe me as I came into the world—to my embarrassment.

While I was a student working in a friend's laboratory, he brought in a plate to clean. It had a large roll of tartar across the front. He told her she had not been too careful in keeping them clean. She answered, "Doctor, you told me when you put them in that I was not to take them out and I didn't." We looked up her record and it had been almost two years. I never forgot this when instructing my patients in the wearing of dentures.

I was seated in the back pew of a church one time while a friend of mine was preaching. Some of his hearers

were nodding; others were asleep. I later mentioned to the pastor that he had put some to sleep and asked for his prescription at the same time stating I could use it in my work. The next Sunday he mentioned our conversation and it worked—there was not a shut eye.

It is 1951 and a dear old Irish soul has been laid away. I well remember his coming to my office in the early days of my practice to have a tooth treated. It was a lower molar and as was the practice in those days, a tooth with an exposed nerve was treated. After I had placed the rubber dam I proceeded to remove the pulp and with a fine barbed broach I started to remove the nerve from the root canal, a slow tedious operation. While I was doing this I remarked, "this is a little like fishing." I saw a twinkle in his eye. After I had removed the dam from his mouth he remarked, "A good deal like fishing, ha!" said he, "and I felt like the woom on the ouk!"

An old German patient from a long distance visited the office of a friend of mine and offered him his wife's teeth he had made for her some months before and wanted his money back, saying, "she no wear them any more." "Well," said my friend, "bring her in and I will help her wear them." "Nah," said he, "they no more fit and I want my money back." The doctor stood firm and the man had left when in came a neighbor of the old German who said, "I notice John, my neighbor was in." Yes, said the doctor and he wanted money back on his wife's teeth in that she was not wearing them. "Well," said the neighbor, "Old John buried her six months ago."

When the new dental law went into effect in June, 1895, a few weeks before a young man who was doing janitor work and helping about a dental office, disappeared. Later a friend of a dentist from the west part of the state came in with a hand bill which had been thrown into his buggy a few days previous. It read, "Dr. ———, late of London, England, will extract teeth free on streets of Benkleman on next Friday and Saturday and will make teeth and fillings, guaranteed, etc. When old Dr. Spets, the dentist he had worked for as laboratory and office assistant, saw the name on the bill he yelled and rolled in laughter. This was two weeks before the law went into effect and he had made affidavit that he was practicing dentistry before then.

Some years later, when I was a member of the State Dental Board, he had a lady die in his office, but before out attention was called to it he had prepared a defense we felt would stand in law. It cost him some money. Until ripe old age he practiced, if it could be called that. He did not confine himself to dentistry, however. At times he entered the realms of medicine, but was always shrewd enough to evade the law. When extracting teeth on the street and even in his office, he would carry what few forceps he had in his pockets and only wipe them off to keep them from soiling his own pockets. Forceps protruding from his pockets provided his chief advertising asset in the early days. One would wonder why people would continue to go to him, but he drew his practice through cunning advertising and low prices. He was a lover

of horses. While he was on his death bed he sent for me and in a demented state his face lit up as I mentioned his old horses. He was confined for a short time and died in a mental hospital while I was a dentist there.

Dentistry has come a long way since I started my practice at the turn of the century. It has kept pace with medicine, sciences, mechanics, agriculture, and modern living.

ARTICLE 50

Horses Get Homesick

A young man was finishing a term of school in the fall of 1870 near a small town in Eastern Nebraska. He was boarding with a farmer in the neighborhood who raised horses—no particular breed, just common good farm horses.

The young school teacher had taken a liking to a young team of light bays of about equal size. They had never been off the farm and as this story ends, were very much attached to it. By the time the school was out the young man owned the team with a harness and lumber wagon.

He had offers of work on the nearby farms but he and a younger brother had long before decided to take advantage of the Homestead Act and get farms of their own. They had been able to get some first-hand information from a surveyor who had returned from the Republican river valley with glowing reports of many beautiful flowing creeks and native timber, and rich fertile valleys.

This was to be their new home and they set out at once to build the lumber wagon into a first class prairie schooner with oak bent bows and canvas covered top, a feed box on one side and the grub box on the other. They built a sort of storage box on behind in which they stored their cooking utensils and extra food. The lower part of the bottom box in the wagon was filled with oats and corn.

The rough part of their food they expected to kill as they went along. Both were good shots with rifle, shotgun, and two revolvers. They killed plenty of meat for their table.

One day late in January they were on their way. By night-fall they were making camp on some vacant lots near Eleventh and O streets in Lincoln. During the evening they had some casual visitors and among them a man who tried his best to trade a corner lot in the new town for their traveling outfit, but no offer, no matter how good, could have persuaded them to give up their venture.

From Lincoln they followed a wagon trail to the south and west, crossing the Little Blue near Crete, and from there off into Johnson county, farther to the south and west until they camped one Saturday night in the vicinity of Hebron.

When morning came four or five inches of snow covered the ground and it was still falling so heavy that they could see but a short distance. In spite of the snowfall, they started out about ten o'clock, but were guessing as to their direction because the sun was covered. In the afternoon they came upon wagon tracks almost erased by the falling snow which they followed. Soon they were convinced they were their own tracks and that they had been traveling for some time in a circle. Soon the sun

appeared and again regaining their bearings, they proceeded westward.

The next morning the school teacher was feeling very much under the weather and left the driving to his younger brother. They came the same day to the Republican river in the vicinity of Guide Rock, then on up the river to a small village of five or six hastily built homes. The snow had turned to sleet and everywhere was slush which, mixed with the thick growth of buffalo grass, made traveling indeed tiring to men and horses.

Their first concern was to find a doctor. Yes, the new settlement boasted two who had homesteaded the land and lived nearby. Dr. Williams entered the covered wagon to see the sick man and diagnosed the illness as a bad case of the mumps.

"Young man, I don't know what I am going to do with you. You must be where it is dry and warm. In every home here there are children and we do not want an epidemic of mumps here at this time; but there is a bachelor here who has a dug-out on the creek. He is away hunting buffalo today, so I am going to make you his guest." "Well," said the very sick man, "if you will take the responsibility, I will go but with reluctance."

Said the doctor, "I will see him as soon as he returns and will make it right with him, so don't worry."

Along about midnight, old Johnnie Stokes, unsuspecting hustled into his domicile, picked up his old lantern, lit it and turned to the bed. Seeing what he saw, he exploded, "Who in blankety, blank, is in my bed?" He was so mad he would not listen to the young man's explanation. Fortunately, soon the doctor came in and explained to Johnnie that the fact that the stranger was in his bed was necessary procedure. "This man is very sick with the mumps and I must protect the children here. Of course you have had them?" Johnnie, with a momentary look of fear, remarked, "No, I have not!"

The man in the bed was making a move to get his pants on when old Johnnie ordered him to lie down and stay there until the doctor said he could get up. Then, turning to the doctor he opened the cabin door and kicked him out. Johnnie was soon rolled in a buffalo robe on the dug-out floor and sound asleep. He had had a long hard day, with no buffalo to reward his labors.

In a few weeks the young men from the east were located on their homesteads some miles to the north and east when one morning they awoke to find the team had broken loose and had departed for parts unknown. Local inquiries were of no avail so they surmised the horses had gotten homesick and had started for their old home. Using a neighbor's team and wagon, the two started over the same trail they had come. Their search ended one day when they heard men yelling at their horses down in a creek bottom. There in the lead of two teams were the horses they were looking for. The strays had stopped at the man's house for feed and he had taken them in and was making use of them until they could be identified.

Politics and Politicians

James A. Garfield March 4, 1881 - Sept. 19, 1881

My father's political newspaper was the "Toledo Blade," a national weekly at that date. We received it usually a week to ten days late but this did not deteriorate its value, we had no other source of authentic national news. Well do I remember the harrowing picture of our president, being shot down, on the front page of our prized newspaper. Nearly seven years of age that picture has remained, engraven, upon my mind for 70 years. This the first presidential election.

Nomination: Garfield's nomination at the Republican Convention, at Chicago, June 2-3, 1880, has been characterized as one of the greatest political struggles ever known in American history. He was accepted as the compromise candidate between the Grant and Blaine factions on the thirty-sixth ballot.

Opposition: The Democrat National Convention, at Cincinnati, June 22-24, 1880, nominated General Hancock. The National Green Back party, at Chicago, June 9-11, 1880, nominated James B. Weaver. The Prohibition party, at Cleveland, on June 17, 1880, nominated Neal Dow. The electoral vote counted on February 9th, 1881, gave Garfield 214, and Hancock, 155.

The Political Complexion of Congress: The 47th Congress (1881-1883) the senate, of 76 members, was composed of 37 Democrats, 37 Republicans, 1 American, and 1 Readjuster; and the House, of 293 members, was made up of 130 Democrats, 152 Republicans, 9 Nationals and 2 Readjusters. In the 48th Congress (1883-1885) the Senate, of 76 members, was made up of 36 Democrats, and 40 Republicans; and the House of 225 members, was made up of 200 Democrats, 119 Republicans, 4 Independents and 2 Nationals.

President Garfield was shot July 2, 1881 in the Baltimore and Potomic railroad station in Washington and died September 19 following at Elboron, New Jersey.

At this time Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, California, Nevada and Oregon were the only states west of the west boundary from Minnesota to Louisiana.

Chester A. Arthur, September 20, 1881-March 3, 1885, was the fourth vice president up to this time to succeed to the office of president through the death of the incumbent.

Grover Cleveland 1885-89, 1893-97

My family on both sides of the house were Republicans. Especially my father who voted in the first election organizing Webster county and as far as I can recall until his death January 15, 1915.

Cleveland was elected by the Democrat party in 1884 and 1892. The convention met in Chicago, July 8-11, 1884, nominated him on the second ballot, despite the bitter opposition of Tammany.

Opposition: The Republican National Convention at Chicago June 3-6, 1884, nominated James G. Blaine over President Arthur, on the fourth ballot.

The electoral vote, counted on February 11, 1885, gave Cleveland 219 and Blaine 182.

Political Complexion of Congress: First administration, Congress was divided politically as follows: In the 49th Congress (1885-1887) in the Senate, 76 members, was composed of 34 Democrats, 41 Republicans, with one vacancy; and the House, of 325 members, was made up of 182 Democrats, 110 Republicans, 2 Nationals and one vacancy. In the 50th Congress (1887-1889) the Senate of 76 members, was composed of 37 Democrats and 39 Republicans; and the House of 325 members, was made up of 170 Democrats and 151 Republicans.

After this Democratic upset, there was considerable mourning about our house and we children were permitted to wear the tall gray "Blaine stove-pipe" campaign hat. My father, as soon as I was able to accompany him, took me to the township and county conventions. It was at these conventions, he always, because of his active participation, increased my boy "hero worship."

This chaotic, political, executive, scandal and scramble has given me an inspiration to study the political history since my first memories. I have been led to think of the time in two parts: the three decades before the turn of the century and the five since. I do think there was more interest taken and actuated in politics before the turn of the century. It may be, the horse and buggy, days, the turn of events, the calm before the storm, in the shifting from human labor to labor saving devices, the birth of the telegraph, telephone, rural delivery, steam and gas propelled farm power, the unprecedented development of farm machinery and labor saving devices in rapid succession never heard of before.

The wars and rumors of wars, the computation of government financing from the thousands to the billions, the diametrical change in the social, civic, and business methods and procedure, home economics and family life; this revolutionary reaction in the short time space of 50 years, there has been no time or incentive to evaluate our liberties, our freedoms, our franchise. In this race of industry against time, we have out run the finer qualities of life, art, science, music, our educational system, our spiritual welfare, all of these relegated and side tracked in our mad rush for a more glamorous living. But wait! For every stimulant there is a sedative, reaction. Our government is drunk with power, on a spree. This is and has lead to dissipation, scandal and squandering of massive sums gathered through taxation until both individual, and our state and national life is threatened. In our study of history we are led to the belief of all the problems, perhaps none is so acute as taxation, city, state, and federal. Men who have been their own leaders are alive to the fact that it is steadily eating at the heart of our prosperity, from that of the individual to that of all corporate life. Whether you are an employee or an employer, whether you are running a house or a business, would you for a moment tolerate the extravagance, waste and graft that disgrace so much of our government? At their best they represent a failure to live within our means, at their worst, vicious political inefficiency and graft.

The Rileys and Lairds of Oak Creek

There were four Riley brothers, Alexander, John O., Alcatas, and Austin, and five Laird brothers, James, Thomas, William, Robert and Paschel. The Riley family were originally from Pennsylvania and later Iowa, while the Laird family were originally from Ohio and later Illinois. The first Rileys to arrive in Webster County came in May, 1871 and the first Lairds the fall of 1870.

From Jessie Laird Woods, daughter of James, who has in her possession her father's lengthy diary we learn much of the early life as lived by these splendid pioneers and their families located in the extreme northeast corner of Webster.

Jessie writes:

My father, James R. Laird and his brother Thomas C. Laird left their Illinois home on election day, November 8, 1870, for the great unknown west. Their family was afflicted with that unrest which always follows war and has been so effective in the settlement of our country. Their parents had but recently passed away, leaving the five brothers and one sister. They were a clannish family and decided to make the move while they were all free to go. What better place to begin anew than the public domain?

Tommy and Jimmy were the scouts, and were feted to a big turkey dinner on the evening before leaving. Incidentally, it was thirty years before James saw his birthplace again, and the buildings had all been removed, the land put under cultivation and no sign of former habitation remained. The boys bought railroad tickets to Kearny Station, Nebraska, intending to go across country southwest to the Republican river. However they were warned at Fort Kearny that there had been a recent uprising in the area toward which they were headed, and were advised to go to Spring Ranch on the Little Blue river where there was a settlement and much unclaimed land.

Four Brothers on Same Section

Because they had wished to be close together, and because of water, the four brothers, Thomas, Will, Rob and James divided their section of land lengthwise so that each claim was a mile long and one-fourth mile wide, and each claim had its creek bottom and timber. Paschal later homesteaded on section 14.

Will did not stay long this time. He boarded the "cars" at Grand Island and went back to settle up the estate and bring another team, wagon, and load, as well as the cattle and poultry. This trip Paschal shared and it was long and tedious. They started April 6. They had eleven head of cattle, six of them giving milk. The cattle could only go 18 or 20 miles a day and when one old cow got tired she just lay down and stayed until she was ready to get up. Then, too, the chickens would not behave and "flew the coop" at almost every stop, especially if it happened to be a little town. Although Paschal spent a lot of time and energy chasing chickens he had fewer than a dozen when they got through. They also had trouble buying feed on the road through Iowa. Said there was lots of it but the people were un hospitable.

Will, Rob, and John Haines left the Illinois home at

"20 minutes after 10 o'clock, A. M." December 7, 1870. They had intended to make a very early start but had to wait for a man to bring them their money. Their wagon cover was home made and most of the equipment was taken from the home, since it was soon to be dismantled. Margaret Murdaugh and Mary Bell, fiances of Will and Tommy, respectively, helped make the preparations. The exodus was preceded by another big turkey dinner; their commissary was well filled with all the goodies possible and Aunt Mary said, "All in all I think they are fixed up very comfortably and snugly for their long winter trip."

Mary and 17-year-old Paschal were now all the family left at home, and they had some interesting experiences during the long cold winter.

Meanwhile Will, Rob, and John Haines were making good time on their journey, and reached the "dug-out" on Oak Creek January 1, 1871, so in a way the great adventure began with the new year.

Will and Rob brought their fiddles with them and that added a prized entertainment feature. Also they brought two chickens and the rooster called them each morning, which amused them. Will took over the cooking department; he baked gooseberry pies from fruit they had brought from home, which were "delicious", so says the diary.

These five bachelors were the only inhabitants of Oak Creek during that winter of '70-'71. They were occasionally visited by hunters—some of them stayed for a week. One evening during the winter the settlers from Spring Ranch came to spend the evening with them, bringing their wives and children. Great pains were taken to fix up the dugout suitable for lady visitors. The evening passed very pleasantly, in conversation and instrumental and vocal music. The only thing marring the pleasure of the evening was that the bachelors had nothing to serve for refreshments except bread and coffee. Guess Will must have been out of gooseberries.

Items from Diary

Quoting the Diary: "Will and Paschal arrived at Bachelors hall May 12, 1871."

May 14: "The dugout is crowded full of folks hunting land."

May 15: "Tommy and I (James) were hunting claims for some men. There were two more emigrant wagons come in this evening. The two Mr. Dunhams took claims on Liberty Creek."

May 16: "Mr. Dunham moved over to his claim on Liberty Creek today. Tommy was out hunting claims for two more men. Will and Rob were sowing oats on Mr. Thayer's place at Spring Ranch."

May 17: "Mr. Mudge left today." (That's all we ever knew of Mr. Mudge.)

May 18: "Planted potatoes today. Mr. Leetsch left today for Iowa to get his family and live stock." Mr. Leetsch had located a claim on Crooked Creek on section 8. He left his two children Nellie and Eddie, with the Lairds until his return. So Nellie, late Mrs. Rob Laird, was the first female settler on Oak Creek.

May 19: "Mary arrived very unexpectedly today. She came to Grand Island and hired a man to bring her down here (40 miles). We planted sod corn, melons, garden and beans." The settlers raised lots of beans which they harvested by hand and shelled for winter use.

Mary a Good Pioneer

When Will and Paschal left Illinois they thought they had Mary persuaded to wait until late summer to come so that they could have more suitable living quarters for her. They described the rugged life in detail but Mary was not convinced, though she acquiesced for the present. After they were gone she couldn't take it, said she had never been separated from her "dear brothers" and she would prefer being with them whatever the surroundings. There is an endless record of people stopping for meals, stopping for bread, milk and over night. She churned butter, laundered clothes, sewed for neighbors, cared for the sick and still found time to enjoy herself. She loved the life and was a splendid pioneer.

Indians Mostly Beggars

On Oak Creek no Indians bothered except beggars, and some would-be horse thieves. The begging tribes were mostly Dakotas. They were a poor, unsuccessful tribe, and many of them starved. One day an Indian tramp came to Aleck Riley's and asked for food. He said he had not eaten for four "sous," which meant four suns or days. They made a place for him at their dinner table and he piled the plate as full as it would hold when they passed the food; then while the family ate the food from their plates the Indian consumed all the contents of the serving dishes in the middle of the table. He cleaned them up one at a time, but stood up and gathered them all in before he started on them. The Rileys thought his table manners left a lot to be desired. When he had finished everything else, he cleaned up his plate. Next day they found him dead a couple of miles east on the Spring Ranch road. They wondered if it were the starvation or the food which killed him.

The Lairds and Rileys needed houses on their respective claims and June found them very busy at that project. First, of course, came the collection of materials for building. They found "shingle" trees over on Ox Bow creek in Nuckolls county, and all who could be spared from the home maneuvers camped over there and cut trees. These they hauled home and then began the tedious process of hewing the shingles. In all they made 4,469 shingles at this time. Rob was chief carpenter, Will did most of the breaking for the crew. James was the surveyor; he ran the lines for themselves and for the neighboring settlers. Tommy was the locator. Scarcely a day passed that he was not out locating claims for newcomers. Paschal took care of the garden, kept one eye on the livestock and served where most needed, but he was an early victim of the ague, and was often unable to work.

The first house finished was on Rob's place. It was designed as a home for Mary and the unmarried brothers. The two elder brothers planned to be married in the fall and there was a wild scramble to get homes prepared for their brides. These first homes were of logs, with lumber for floors. Alex Riley and Will Laird made frame houses at the outset, but they were a long time getting them finished. There was a sawmill at Liberty Farm, where the different men in the community worked during their spare days. They got out their own saw timber and took it there and sawed it at the mill. There was

also a blacksmith shop where they could sharpen plow lays, shoe horses, and do other repair work.

First Hill of Corn

During June the settlers planted some barley and much corn. On June 13, Father's diary stated: "Hot and dry. Tommy, Rob, and Paschal were shaving shingles. Will breaking and I planted corn all day; at 25 minutes to 4 o'clock this afternoon I planted the first hill of corn on my claim."

June 19: "A warm day. Tommy, Rob, and Paschal shaving shingles, James working for Lew Thayer, and Will breaking. Messrs. Jones, Hughs, with six other men came in the afternoon and in the evening Mr. and Mrs. Alex Riley, John Riley, Jacob Reid, James Dunham, and Samuel Dewhurst called. Tommy went home with them. They were intending to start on a buffalo hunt in the morning." (The hunters returned June 26 with two buffalo.)

June 30: "Quite warm again. Will was breaking and the rest of us working at logs. Alectus Riley here. This has been a very warm month; not quite so dry as May. It has rained several times but not enough at a time to do much good and Oak Creek is nearly dry. It is running some places, but is dry most all along below here. The crops all look well, sod corn is growing nicely and corn on old ground is splendid. Our wheat will be ready to harvest in about three weeks. Goodbye June!"

"We Went to Church"

July 2: "We all went down to Wild Bill's (Kress) to church. Mr. Warwick preached. A good many folks were there. It was the first preaching I had heard of seven months. Rained some today."

July 4, 1871: "Clear, cool and fine. Miss Amanda Dunham, the Rileys, all us Lairds except Tommy, went to a grand celebration at Liberty Farm. We had a four-horse team, two of the Riley's and two of ours. Tommy stayed home and watched cattle and hauled some poles for a cattle guard. We had our supper out doors this evening and Rileys and Miss Dunham supped with us."

After the Fourth the Lairds chopped logs, built a cow yard, and kept the breaking going until July 11, when their wheat harvest began. That required all hands except the one who had to be constantly on the premises to watch those pesky cattle. When the harvest was finished they built a threshing floor and threshed out a grist (7 bushels) of wheat by the flail method. The rest of the wheat they stacked to thresh later when time was more plentiful. On July 17 Cetie Riley started to mill at Beatrice and took the Laird grist with his own. Beatrice was 75 miles distant, which was a long trip to town with a team and loaded wagon, but many items could be gotten no nearer than that at first. Cetie returned with the flour July 23. He found Tommy, James, and Rob working hard at the logs, Will breaking and poor Paschal in bed with the ague.

Riley-Laird Wedding

On July 30 Mr. Warwick preached at the Laird home. His family and the Thayers from Spring Ranch had dinner with them and Cetie Riley supped with them. There are numerous entries in the diary of Cetie Riley's visits. Since he and Aunt Mary Laird were both unmarried, this was but natural. I suppose there were just too many ubiquitous brothers because it took six years for their ro-

mance to culminate in marriage. They were married in 1877.

July saw much immigration. On July they report three emigrant wagons camped at the ford. Aside from their strenuous effort to become really settled, the Lairds were almost continually helping newcomers locate claims. They were glad to do it because they were anxious to get the country filled up with citizens. The emigrants practically all, expressed great delight in getting "HOME" and despite the later struggles, nearly all stayed to win through.

As the children in the different families grew up they helped as much as they were able with the family income. Opportunities for work were far less plentiful than they are today and the girls were limited to being either a seamstress or a school teacher. Not until later was it deemed proper for a girl to become a business employee. Most of the girls and many of the boys turned to the teaching profession and thus it happened that when I became qualified to teach there were two teachers for each school, wages were depressed, and an inexperienced, young girl had trouble finding a position. Luckily for me there was a sort of subsidiary settlement of Oak Creek located in western Nebraska in Frontier county. Mr. and Mrs. Dick Jones and son Henry, Arthur and Millie King, Nate and Bert Jones and their wives, and Milt and Victoria Alt had gone there to take up land and were willing to give "Jimmie and Mary's girl" a chance to get the necessary teaching experience. The salary was the munificent sum of \$22.50 per month but there was no expense since the Alts, with whom I lived, would accept no money for board. They were a childless couple and said: "Well I guess if Jimmie and Mary can take care of eight children, we can keep one." Mrs. Alt was a sister to Kate and Emily Riley. The school house was a sod building and the school consisted of 14 children of assorted ages, the youngest being five years of age and oldest a boy of 21 (I was 18) who liked to "chaw" tobacco. Also there were two hound dogs which had their pet places of one across each of the narrow aisles. I never did get the snakes counted as they mostly crawled around the big timbers which held up the roof. Occasionally one dropped to the floor, causing me to jump two feet into the air while the pupils giggled, but the snakes soon left us. Either they hibernated or else they did not like the teacher. The children were of the brightest variety and learned so well that the whole experience was highly enjoyable.

This is where the Woods' came in the picture. My husband is Thomas Clarkson Woods, who homesteaded in Frontier county. His story quite closely parallels mine except that they had one thrill which we missed—when the horse came through the roof of their dugout.

"Top Buggies"

In those bygone days our methods of transportation were slow but we always got where we started to go. Each family had its lumber wagon and spring wagon as a must, then there were "top buggies". My husband and I have owned a large number of automobiles through the years but never have I felt the thrill I got from the top buggy which I bought when I was teaching school at Sunny Slope, near Blue Hill. It was a "four-bowed" buggy, a fine improvement since up to then buggies had to be content with three bows. The price was \$50.00 and since I had but twenty-five dollars, Mr. Bentz allowed me to sign a note for the balance, which was another thrill,

marred just a little because he asked my father to sign too, me being a minor. Olive, Hugh and I had rented a house in Blue Hill where they attended high school and with the expenses attendant upon our home it took three monthly installments to pay the note with a salary of \$25.00 a month.

Ever Ride in a One-Horse Cart?

When the family was grown we boasted a surrey, which was very elegant to look upon, but pure torture to ride in, unless the road was smooth and level, which few were. The springs were so springy it swung like a gyroscope when hitting a rut and you had to hang on for dear life. Another noteworthy piece of traveling equipment was a cart. Mother's brother bought one for her and Margaret who had contracted to carry the mail three times a week from Lawrence to Negunda post office. Margaret was to use the cart the three days of her work and Mary the balance of the week. Said cart was merely a seat built on a sort of basket made of slats where you keep your feet. It needed but one horse inside the shafts and the horse had to be attached in order for the seat to be on the level. Roads were usually two ruts on each side and in the middle. The problem was where to put the horse; if you got him in the rut and the cart on the ridges, you could manage pretty well until one ridge quit. If you put the horse on the ridge, you could not sit up straight because he was so much higher he tipped the cart over backwards. One night Lewis and Claude Laird and Bertha Simpson and I went to a party at Williams', for Rob's birthday, in the cart. Going home we decided the load was too much for the cart so Claude rode the horse for a time while the rest of us rode the cart, but we finally compromised by all walking, leading the horse with the cart bumping along behind.

Jessie Laird Woods concludes:

I, personally, never heard one of them utter an oath nor speak unkindly to a child. They performed no spectacular nor heroic deeds, yet to me they were heroes because they were able to meet the vicissitudes and hard knocks of life and yet remain interested and interesting and keep their equilibrium without going "sour" as many might have done. Halba Baker tells it better than I can in this little verse:

"I think that any man can face a crisis, or crushing tragedy
With calm exalted courage, but the place that needs
the greatest strength and energy
Is the daily grind; to manage just to laugh at all the
petty hazards of each day.
To smile whilst sifting life's wheat from its chaff,
and strive to see good along the way."

When the long, long journey was to be made, Will was the scout. He died in 1909 at the age of 64. Rob followed him in November, 1914, aged 67; Tommy's death was in December, 1915, aged 75, and James soon followed in April, 1916, at the age of 65. Paschal died in March, 1928, aged 73.

Now the descendants of these men are legion and have, perhaps, picked up some "queer quirks" along the way, but I like to believe that the basic virtues of honesty, integrity and moral ethics are still paramount in their lineage.

Personal and Otherwise

Fifty years, one-half a century, seems a long time and is a long time when one sums up what the world has experienced the last fifty years, compared with other half centuries of the past. There have been wars and rumors of wars in the past but never two world wars and the kind of war we are now experiencing. Never has the world experienced such mechanization in so short a period. In as much as my wife and I have just celebrated our golden wedding and the Commercial Advertiser has just passed through a half century we have been musing the parallel paths, comparing, analyzing. In fact we can find little to compare. Fifty years of married life and fifty years of editing a paper—"ye Gods," pleasing one wife as compared to pleasing a thousand or more. Yes, there is washing the dishes, sweeping the floor, making the beds and getting the meals, discussing politics, the grocery bill, the family gossip; sounds tough, does it? Well, try setting the type for three issues of a country paper per week, tear down the type and reset, change the advertising, spell the proper names and punctuate correctly and please the whole community—well just pleasing one wife for fifty years is a "cinch"—a hug and a kiss, a new dress or a new pair of hose, and all is forgotten, but not for the newspaper editor, with him it is a telephone call down, maybe a tongue lashing, or paying alimony in the withdrawal of advertising, or the cancelling of a subscription.

A man and wife can have a scrap, call each other names and even pull hair and not speak to each other for days and still remain married but not the newspaper editor, and his clientele. A kiss and make up is out of the question.

The pastor of the local church can get up and out if he chooses to chastise his group, he does not own the church or manse and there are many jobs he can do now-a-days. By the use of a single van he is gone. Not so the editor, he has an investment equal to the church and manse not any easier to move. He is no longer a carpet bagger or itinerant printer's devil. He is a community fixture. A man and wife can separate by mutual agreement but an editor—well he must deal with the community, busi-

ness, social, economic, political, family quarrels, a community peace maker and not carry water on both shoulders, straddle the fence, be two faced, wishy-washy.

The worst henpecked husband in the world has nothing on the small town editor. He can withhold the paycheck, mow the lawn or go out to the club, but not the editor for he meets his community everywhere. To be a country editor in one place for fifty years is no mean accomplishment, even for two editors, and to you Walter B. Smith, the city of Red Cloud, community, and Webster county join with me in congratulating you in having served so well and faithfully during the 36 years in editing the Commercial Advertiser.

And now, Mr. Editor, the reader may want to know a little about my wife and me in our fifty years of wedded life.

Fifty years ago while practicing dentistry part time in Red Cloud and Cowles, after two years of courtship it seemed under the circumstances that two could live as cheap as one (there have been times when I have doubted this); let me put it "more happily." At any rate on June the 9th, 1902 I proceeded to a farm near the town of Angus, with a farm team of horses hitched to a single seated buggy without top in which we packed her necessary belongings and were on our way to the county seat, Nelson, Nebraska, and after securing the necessary papers we said "I Do" at the Methodist parsonage and then made our way over 25 miles of rough pasture land almost due west to my father's farm in sections 19 and 20 in Elm Creek township. The sun showing the hour of noon we tied our team to a fence and fed them their dinner and then out there without a house or soul in sight we spread out our table cloth (it was now our table cloth) and there we had our wedding dinner and by four o'clock that afternoon we had finished our wedding trip. Now for fifty years we have been living over and over that wedding trip, over hill and dale, up hill and down hill, together. We have, however, changed vehicles and methods and modes of travel but have kept ever before us a wish and desire to so live that we might leave the world better by our having lived in it.

ARTICLE 54

Pet Crows

In our quest for information for the purpose of evaluating living the past eighty years we turn to the youth then and now. Environment plays a very important role in the life of youth. What he sees in the life around him determines his psychological needs. If the modern child of today could be transplanted in time and place to eighty years ago, what a new world it would be to him. Just so if a child of eighty years ago would awaken and find himself in the toy shop of today. Just so if the farmer of the seventh or eighth decade of the past century would have gone down to his old straw stable and found there a new shiny auto or a modern tractor.

If the housewife of today with her modern gas range and refrigerator and modern built-in kitchen and modern floor covering, a telephone, television set, radio, electric lights and running water, hot and cold, would awaken some morning and find them all gone and in their place a wood and coal cook stove of the 1870 model, a drop leaf kitchen table, a copper banded wooden bucket on a nearby stand and hanging near by a dipper made from a gourd which had been raised in the garden. Under the table, on a shelf, a galvanized wash basin and a near by roller towel, a home made cupboard with a few heavy earthen dishes made in England. A dirt floor, and behind the kitchen

stove a wood box of wood, or cobs, or maybe some buffalo chips. To find in the cupboard a sack of home ground flour or corn meal with a large percent of the shorts and bran, a dark flour, some home rendered lard, home made butter, some dried buffalo meat or home cured side bacon or ham. Out in the well house some cream, in the bottom of the well some good cool water and after several turns of a crank you fill the wooden bucket from the house and from this you fill the old cast iron teakettle and place it over the fire for coffee and dish water. Can you imagine? And yet, this evolution has come about, in reverse, during the last eighty years.

Well does the author remember fashioning a revolver from some crooked stick, a spear from some long, slender weed from the nearby draw; a large knife or sword from the nearby wood pile. With a cloth band about the forehead, with some chicken feathers sticking around in back, a cord or rope tied around the waist with the make believe knife and pistol attached thereto, we pranced up and down the nearby ravine filled with all kinds of weeds and brush, playing Indian.

If I had company, and I seldom did, one would play the enemy while the other would play the part of a law officer. Tired of this we would tramp up and down the creek hunting birds nests. We did not harm them but made note of the kind of bird, the shape and size and color of the egg. We would then make regular trips to see how many eggs were added, when hatching was taking place, and the hatching process. Then came the growing feathers and learning to fly. The feeding was also interesting to watch. Now and then we found an egg of different size and color in a nest. We found that these extra eggs were always alike and that a certain kind of bird took this method of having their eggs hatched by proxy. Now and then we would find the owners of the nest had objected to this and had shoved the stray egg from the nest.

My mother's youngest brother was preparing to be a carpenter and he made me rabbit traps. They were two to three feet long, six or eight inches in size and a glass towards the bait end and a trap door in the back. This trap door was so arranged that it slid up and down in grooves and was fastened to a small hinged horizontal stick which was fastened to another stick extended through the top of the trap into the trap to which bait was attached. To set the trap, the door was raised in the grooves of the entrance and this would let the bait stick which had a notch cut at just the right place to catch on the side of the hole through the top and thus suspend the door. When the rabbit entered to get at the bait and began to nibble on it it loosened the notch letting the trap door shut behind he rabbit. Food was not too plentiful on prairies in those days and a little grain placed just beyond the protruding stick generally brought results. I had a small size steel trap and caught many a skunk and civit cat. Their killing and removal was far from pleasant.

And now to the crows. The character of native birds are not unlike that of the people of the same land and climate. I well remember at least two characters coming with the early settlers who always reminded me of the blue jay. They dressed much like the plumage of the jay; in gay bright coloring and in this presented a very pleasing appearance. But in contrast, there rang out harsh notes in their ordinary conversation and evidence of irritable and quarrelsome temperament. In spring time plowing the robins, and black birds would follow along, busily,

quietly, picking up worms with no fuss and friendly competition, when out of nowhere a blue jay would appear with his siren ringing at full blast and at once the quiet scene would turn to one of battle. As is the case with people of this stripe, more fuss than fight.

Well, belonging to this jay family is the crow. He goes about dressed completely in black but is far from mourning. He does a great cawing about things and when tamed and trained he does his best to modify his tones to conform to those you repeat for him. I have heard of crows that talked and of people who did most of their talking with their hands. Well, with the number of crows we trained when a boy it was sometimes easy to combine their head and body movements, the twisting of their tougue and jumbled sounds to represent what we wanted them to say. This unusual contortion always welcomed us. More especially on fine warm mornings as we emerged from the house to do our chores. They were always perched in some conspicuous place, watching for us to appear and when the door opened it was the signal for their good morning. When we had two they tried to outdo each other in that welcome.

At times their canny capers and activity presented, "believe it or not," almost incredible shrewdness. One evening we were resting in the back yard after a hard day in the field. Supper over, and as usual before clearing off the dishes, mother would gather up the left over food and present it to old pussy in the yard near the garden. We had two young pet crows at that time, they were fully matured and unusual in activity and shrewdness. They wanted a part of old pussy's supper but she resented with a slap of her paw at their approach. It was amusing and they had an interested audience. After getting their heads together a short distance away, they approached pussy from two angles. At a proper time the crow behind jumped up and lit on the cat's long protruding, and wagging tail; with a mieow she turned to chase it. In the meantime the partner was helping himself and with the biggest piece of breaded gravy he retired to the nearby garden where he was joined by the other crow and they proceeded with their supper.

For a long time we were not without one or two pet crows. We lived on a creek lined with native timber and the crows were quite numerous and never a season when there were not nests up and down the creek. One had only to watch progress and when they were learning to fly, take them into captivity, then the taming was quite easy.

Mother objected to them but gave in to us. One illustration will suffice. She had churned three or four pounds of butter and was working to get it free of butter-milk. She had left it setting on the table for a few minutes when one of the children opened the kitchen door and over his head darted a pet crow landing with both feet in that soft butter. Mother turned and gave chase, with its claw's hanging full of butter it landed on the kitchen clock, then on a shelf, a picture and the open cupboard. By the time it was driven out after an extra landing in the soft butter the kitchen was a mess.

Well to her satisfaction that crow met its Waterloo some time later when it visited our uncle's farm not far away. This curious bird was watching him repair a piece of machinery and he had just removed a special nut that seemed to appeal to Mr. Crow and he dived for it, flew away and lost it. This proved to be the last straw as it

was a busy season and fives miles to another nut. When that crow returned, he was blown to smithereens by a blast from my uncle's shotgun.

This however was not the only mean experience with pet crows. I was very fond of darts and loved to make them and a good pen-knife was a necessity. Knowing this my aunt living nearby presented me with a new pearl han-

dled small knife. I was using it for the first time down at the wood pile and for the first time laid it down to tie a string when, like a flash, a crow that had been watching dived on that knife and flew off with it. It was the last I ever saw of it but not the last of the crow. He seemed to know my feelings towards him for he never gave me a chance to get even.

ARTICLE 55

The Red Cloud Daily Chief

The editor of Webster County Chronicles, puzzling over the parenthood of the Red Cloud Daily Chief, its short existence, is reminded that now and then a parent stock of corn has springing from its source a sprout, (some times called a sucker). Well it seems the month of December 1887, there came from the office of the weekly Chief, a daily, with a motto, "runs until she dies." A. C. Hosmer was the editor of both weekly and daily sprout. In as much as daily news was scarce, spicy editorials were resorted to. Brief samples following.

Daily Chief December 20, 1887.

"To Be Taken In"

A look over the list of marriageable able young men of Red Cloud the Daily Chief reporter while making the metropolis in search of news was forcibly reminded that leap year was approaching and that it was only due to the young ladies that a list of the principal marriageable young men be made public. Taking the advice of the lady friend, the reporter straightway hied himself to the den of the Gods where after a few hours consultation the following young men were singled out for special favors. The first on the list is—

P. A. Beachy, who would be a fat catch for some lean lady, would make a jolly partner, and could aid in singing lullabys.

Then the gods named John Yeiser, a tender legal light, who would not feel bad if offered the hand of some fine young lady inclined toward matrimony.

And musing further it was said that Will Houghton simply pants to be a benedict.

Grant Ludlow, the handsome and versatile editor of the Helmet, would make a devil of a good take for someone who would like to improve his form.

Will O'Brien, a knight of the yardsticks, dotes on himself and his ability to inveigle the fair sex into fascinating smiles and winsome ways.

Art Howard, the heavyweight man of Edleman and Company would make a good sailor as he would always be found on the lea side, is a prize for a lady who wishes to take a matrimonial voyage.

Jim Young is a genuine ladies' man and although not rich has the happy faculty of making life's burdens easy by building castles in the air.

We would advise any lady who may wish to wear diamonds and eye glasses to set their cap for L. H. Wallace, for he is liable to be run down at any minute.

Ryland Yeiser, who gained an extensive reputation as an "actor man" could give "blow for blow" if his partner happened to be broomsticky inclined.

Vic Fulton, a lover of the national game and a model young lady, would make a fly catch for some nice young lady.

Homer Sherwood, a dignified young man, is desirous of forming an alliance with some lady matrimonially inclined.

John Ducker could be looked up to by the right lady.

Seward Garber would make some lady a handsome beau, ideal as a hubby if gathered in their fold soon.

Mr. Booth, although a stranger in a strange land, would like to be stranded on the shore of matrimony.

Dave Kaley, a horny fisted tiller of the soil, would jump at the chance to get spliced. Both rich and handsome.

There are several other gentlemen in the city who would not object to getting married but are a little odd and somewhat bashful. Here the gods run out of good material and the reporter was ushered to the big gate his wings unfastened, a breeze furnished and was sent to earth again to mingle with the common herd.

Daily Chief December 1887.

Depart In Peace

Postville, Kansas, Editor Daily Chief. Dear Sir: We received a dozen or fifteen copies of your daily. Enclosed find 25 cents in payment for same, and stop the paper at once. I do not care to support a man who wears a plug hat and fine clothes and drives a fast horse with any of my money. Stop the paper at once. I don't want it to run any longer. F. P. Peters.

The Editor: "Goodbye Mr. Peters. We are sorry to lose your subscription but if you are to be so particular that you will not allow the editor of a great daily to wear fine clothes and drive fast horses, then we will have to part forever, as we have a weakness for fine clothes and a lingering longing for fast horse flesh. But then stop—four long years have we toiled in this city and it's the first time that anyone has ever accused us of having more than one shirt that we could call our own, and for clothes—why fine—we should remark Mr. Peters, the finest kind, that is, they have been worn so fine that it is difficult to tell whether they are clothes or eel skins, to

be accused of wearing fine clothes settles. We thought there was something about us that was high toned, but we have been trying to find out what it was, and couldn't, but that letter explains all—it's our clothes, that makes us feel that way and it is unkind you are Mr. Peters to stop your paper and thus stop the means by which we procure our finery. It's too bad. As we are driving fast horses we admit the corn. Our horse is fast and even at this writing she is fasting for the necessary articles of food to make her fast—fast did you say? We should scramble, she's fast, would you have a fellow ride behind a slow nag and be bored to death by his creditors hounding him for what he owes? Of course not. Now then, that silk hat, why of course we wear a "plug." There is nothing too good for a man that edits a newspaper. Would you have a man "that moves the world to tears" wear a common cap? Ye gods no. It is not rich enough for our blood. However, Brother Peters, the evening Chief will live and flourish notwithstanding your withdrawal from its congregation, and we shall continue to wear our plug and fine clothes and drive the fastest horse that has four legs and still be found at the old stand with our fine togs at all hours, wrestling with the great problems of "how to get something for nothing." Tata Pety, we may meet again.

Again from another source about Mr. Peters:

Daily Chief January 4, 1888.

More generous than Peters, the following letter was received by the managing editor of the Evening Chief, from a friend who has been receiving the daily. Such people are often found who are willing to give a newspaper credit for what he does for city or town, but on the other hand, Peters like don't want to support the man that might be prospering on a small scale. Surely Mr. Johnson's name will be placed along side of those which are to be written in the following letters of gold:

Mr. Johnson's letter, January 3, 1888: Editor Daily Chief: I notice in a recent issue of your sprightly little daily that one Peters stopped his subscription because you wore fine clothes. It seems impossible that a man so small as Mr. Peters could be found in any community. It seems to me that he is so narrowly constructed that he would save the water that he washed his feet in for fear of losing the soil. If any man deserve what he gets, it is an editor of a paper. He works year in and year out for the community in which he lives, and in many cases barely ekes out an existence and receives a very small share of praise that he should have as a public benefactor. Banish the thought of Peters Mr. Editor, and keep right on wearing your fine clothes (?) and don't let that horse get away with you. Enclosed find a dollar for which you had better buy her something to eat or she will get away with you sure enough. Success to you with a little verse for Peters to think over. I close.

"What if you wear the richest vest,
Peacocks and lillies are better dressed,
This flesh with all its glorious forms,
Must drop to earth and feed on worms."
Truly yours a well wisher—Harry Johnson.

Dr. E. A. Thomas: "We heartily concur in Mr. Johnson's tribute to the editors and weekly newspapers of the pioneer days. That like the Evening Daily Chief, did not die, but just faded away.

As a small boy I visited with my parents, the home of my uncle, M. L. Thomas, while he was owner and editor of the Chief and well do I remember the first visit made to the Red Cloud Chief's office after my uncle sold out to Mr. A. C. Hosmer and the hearty greeting we received from then on to his passing. Mr. Hosmer was to me a great and good man. As an editor and newspaperman he was an outstanding citizen.



A. C. Hosmer, Publisher of the Daily Chief, Red Cloud

ARTICLE 56

The Indian Buffalo Hunt

Indians hunt large game in their own peculiar way. When they reach the land where this game is found they make camp and proceed to take it easy. The big chief picks out some of his ambitious young bucks to scout the surrounding territory to spot the game, note the lay of the ground, plan a sneak attack, and the best way to surround them. The Indians have their own codes and beliefs, superstitions and idiosyncrasies. Though game was plenteous of the small and winged type; squirrels, turkeys, prairie chickens, quails, they would not eat them, for the reason it would make them weak-hearted sort of sissies. But not so with the large sinewy, tough rugged buffalo with his large shoulders and rugged neck. To eat this sort of meat made them strong of heart with arms and hands strong for the task of drawing a stiff rugged bow string that would force a flint pointed arrow through the tough hide and meat of the largest and fiercest buffalo on the range or to wield or throw a tomahawk in battle to the mastery of an enemy.

They grooved their arrows or wood parts in such a way it would allow blood to run out along the side and weaken their prey. They also had a sort of trademark which indicated to whom the arrow belonged, and with it the game it had felled. When the scouts had spotted their game, reporting the lay of the land, numbers in the herd, a council is held, leaders appointed, ponies made ready. At a certain command from the leader they would spur their mounts into a wild rush in a fan shaped circle. The buffalo or buffaloes who in their fright each for himself become a target for a single pony and rider. The

rider usually stripped to the waist, moist from activity, scintillating in the sunshine making a picture to rouse the envy of Hollywood producers, but of course this was long before this sort of entertainment was dreamed of.

Finally the hunt is at an end with dead buffalo lying here and there scattered over many acres and we see the victors, young, middled aged and aged, slowly winding their way back to the camp from which they started, their work being done. Now we see another trek across the prairie made up of their squaws and women folk. They are armed with various types of knives and various types and kinds of butchering implements. With them are ponies with a pole on either side with one end made fast about his neck and the other dragging on the ground. Across these are tied cross poles on which these squaws pack their meat, hides, bones, horns, and hair and receptacles containing the blood, for not one whittle is wasted. They cut the meat into long strips which they sun-cure on the grass. The sinews are saved for thread and bow strings; the hides for robes and blankets; the bones for awls and knives and arrow points, spades and garden tools, all for the use of the squaws.

The hunt takes but a few hours then the bucks are back in camp sitting around chatting about the hunt, smoking the tobacco that has been raised by the squaws. After several days the women folk have finished their job on the field and are now busy tanning the hides, sewing up moccasins and clothes for the children, caring for the ponies. "Happy and liking it."

ARTICLE 57

Nebraska-Kansas Inter-Relations

The northeasterly boundary of Kansas is marked by the Missouri River. At the closed end of a hairpin curve where it makes a northeast turn it is entered by the Kansas River. At this juncture southeast and northwest is a large sprawling city, in many ways unequalled. The part located in the state of Kansas named Kansas City, Kansas, and the part in Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri.

One passing from one city and state to the other may never know it. From the junction of the Kansas-Nebraska boundaries on the Missouri River, 163 miles west and six miles north is a town called Red Cloud. Some 20 miles south on Highway 281, and one west, where four Kansas sections corner is a little monument made of native stone, marking the geographical center of our nation.

To the southeast is a fine little village whose name is Lebanon, reminding us of the Bible. The town of Red Cloud gets its name from the old colorful Chief Red Cloud who for years led the warlike Sioux Indians in their massacres of the pioneers who came to homestead their one-time happy hunting ground.

As one stands on this boundary line on Highway 281 and looking to the east and west as far as the eye can see may not recognize this poorly worked section line from others in the locality. And as we look to the south and to the north there is a topography exactly and specifically the same. We visit a farmer living across in Kansas and his neighbor across in Nebraska. They talk the same language, farm the same way, are interested in soil conservation, schools and churches.

Nebraska had a presidential candidate by the name of W. J. Bryan and Kansas its Alf Landon; Nebraska its literary genius Willa Cather, a national writer and author and Kansas its Reverend Charles M. Sheldon who has been called the best-selling novelist of all time.

Kansas and Abilene its Wild Bill Hickok and Nebraska and North Platte its Buffalo Bill Cody.

Nebraska its George Norris and Kenneth Wherry and Kansas its Chas. Curtis and John J. Ingalls.

Publishers and editors: Nebraska, Rosewater, Metcalfe,

Senator Hitchcock and Kansas, William A. White, Edgar Howe, W. R. Nelson.

Nebraska raises corn and Kansas raises wheat.

Nebraska has Sam McKelvie and the "Nebraska Farmer" and Kansas the late Senator Capper and the Capper Publications.

A study of Kansas history shows it one of the most significant, turbulent, and colorful from the passage of the Missouri Compromise. From that time to this it has presented a galaxy of persons and events without ceasing and is now this 1953 represented in the White House in the person of one of its favorite sons, "General Eisenhower." Probably no other family has brought so much pride to Kansas as the Eisenhowers. Of them Quentin Reynolds wrote: "The same forces which have molded and shaped a million successful families shaped and molded the Eisenhowers of Kansas." Kansans like to think, this, like all other outstanding personages and events that it is entirely as it should be.

As to distinguished places in Kansas, Leavenworth, over on the Missouri River, stands first. Most important, Fort Leavenworth, one of the permanent army institutions, was founded before Kansas became a state. Wartime induction center for the central states district, home of the United States Army Command and General Staff College. Here also is one of three federal penitentiaries of the country. Here also is the state prison for men. Not far is located the city of Lawrence, the home of the University of Kansas. Some miles west of Lawrence lies Topeka, the capital city. The air of this city is filled with politics. Here meets a bicameral legislature while across the line into Nebraska, at Lincoln, meets the only unicameral legislature.

While Kansas' early history was one that would make any state blush with shame, it was not of her own choosing. She came into the union during the turbulent times at the beginning of the Civil War and was so located and situated that her eastern border became one of primitive warfare, torture, bloodshed and murder, so ruthless and shameful, even the most savage Indian atrocities were outdone. However, she has long since redeemed herself. And she has seen to it that the world knew about it. One Barton W. Currie once wrote: "Kansas is a steaming hotbed of news. It began it lustily in infancy, sped up its new engine throughout a temptuous adolescence, and now in its youthful prime is still the glorious of Uncle Sam's news-making cosmos." It is strong on education, religion, and sobriety. It has had experience in mass psychology and salesmanship through the radio, pulpit and press. It knows more about itself and what it's got and how it got it and how to keep on getting it than any other state in the Union. Better than any other state in the Union, because it keeps tab on its history, on its many mistakes, ups and downs. Kansans probably work harder at publicizing their state than any other commonwealth in the nation. Citizens are educated to know the facts and figures about their state, that it ranks first in flour milling, that it produces one-fourth of the nation's wheat. And when it comes to highways, well it is "the main street in America"

and they are federal as well as state. It has the largest broom-corn market in the world and produces bumper crops of alfalfa seed, and has the largest wheat storage in the nation. While its history furnishes plenty of facts for publication, it sometimes resorts to fairy-land tales and anthropological claims, such as "Kansas one time had a three and four toed horse no larger than a fox terrier, ferns that grew one hundred feet high, and birds that had teeth." It had on its statute books a prohibition law, the longest ever in the nation, before repealed.

Inasmuch as my subject is Nebraska-Kansas Relations the following reminiscence may illustrate the above prohibition enactment. At this time Red Cloud was also dry and our friends from the south passed our farm to reach Blue Hill and a party of four in a Ford auto was forced on account of rain to remain in Blue Hill overnight and the next morning while crossing the creek near our home, by accident overturned in a ditch. One seemed to be pinned underneath but the three others seemed in no hurry to release him, when admonished to do so, he poked his head from underneath and said, "don't hurry neighbor, I'm holding this damn thing up." And sure enough he was preventing several bottles from being broken.

While Kansas is older than Nebraska this difference in age did not compensate for the extra celebrities Kansas produced over those in Nebraska.

Nebraska never had a Carrie Nation or a Mrs. Lease, "the iron-jawed woman," or a "goat gland doctor." However, Nebraska history does not so conspicuously show on the surface a snow white record and it has had its scandals in state and national affairs, political, social and business. A governor impeached, a mental hospital burned to the ground to obscure fraud in building, a Jim Crow and other scandals even to hanging a mayor that fell through in its finish. Nebraska, however, never had a galaxy of melodrama and buffoonery, a self-righteous blind dedication ferreting self-aggrandizement so outstanding in the political life of the Pomeroy-Lane-Robinson, Ingalls-Simpson-Lease, Brinkley-Woodring-Haucke, which may not differ much from the Nebraska side except in the matter of sheer intensity.



Eckley Consolidated Public School. A center of activity for many years.

Memoirs

I am calling the attention of the readers to my personal advent into life, not that I want to aggrandize, but for the purpose of example during the period of my early life shared by most boys and girls in that period of Webster county from 1874, the next eight or ten years. In order that I might better evaluate and compare that period child life with that of today, I have been reading and studying what some present day authorities say on child development and child mental processing, child psychology. While we have, in this mechanical age, come a long way from the one-horse double shovel cultivator system of farming, the advancement made seems incredible. Just so with the present concept of parental, educational, child development systems of the past seven years over that of the period of seven years following the first settlement in Webster county.

Picture a child growing up among adults, with no playthings or playmates of his age or sex. Now and then there might be a visit on Sunday afternoon or perhaps for a Sunday dinner, by a family with one or two, or three children of his same age. If there were playthings they had been usually invented or constructed by the children themselves. Usually children living under these circumstances are bashful, timid and shy, and when visitors come, it takes some time to get acquainted, and before another visit they are strangers again. The only literature that came into our home was the county newspaper with its two pages of home print and the two of "patent," or in the language of the printer, "boiler type" which was foreign material comprising some advertising, usually patent medicine, "Lady Pinkhem's Tonic" or Fletcher's Castoria for children. Then there was advertised J. T. or Battle Ax chewing tobacco, an assortment of shot guns and revolvers, a new fangled sewing machine, a two-wheeled cart or a two-seated surrey. Then there were possibly some verses of poetry, a continued or a short story, some state news, politics and articles of national interest. Besides the local paper we received a national weekly. In our home it was usually the Toledo Blade. This paper was the national Bible in our home. When company came and national questions were being discussed, there was a scurrying here and there for the back numbers to prove a point.

The question of "protective tariff" was a subject given much discussion. On county affairs it was taxation, the Republican River bridges, county and local politics. As a boy the subjects discussed by the men were of much interest to me, but now and then I would listen in on the women in the kitchen. One of their main topics concerned cooking and the making of pies. Pumpkin pie came first. Fine rich pumpkins, many of them jumbo in size, came from the freshly turned sod to the longer tilled soil, and it was the same with many types of squash. Besides pie, baked squash with plenty of freshly churned butter, rivaled the best of the pie and cake. The topics of conversation among the women were more or less seasonal. In the real early spring it was taking care of the summer meat and spring butchering, salting the hams and shoulders and the pork barrel to brine and pickle; then came the smoking by taking from the brine after which the hams were hung from the rafters. Then came the kindling of

a smouldering fire to create enough smoke to fill the smoke house to proper richness and density. The wood used was usually ash chips to supply the flavor. The procedure was continued until the smoke had penetrated the meat to the bone. It was then usually wrapped in burlap and then let hang for summer use. The sides of bacon were treated similarly but because of the thinness, less treatment was required.

And then there was the rendering of lard, the cooling and packing away. In those days vegetable oils were not known and lard was the universal shortening. There was the accumulation of fat scraps during the winter to be made into soap with the leaching of the wood ashes that had accumulated during the season of winter house heating. This was their source of caustic or lye, then came the boiling which was usually done out-of-doors in iron kettles or wash boilers.

During the spring and summer months it was the gardens that furnished the main topic of conversation, with the caring of the milk from the fresh cows, the churning of the butter and the price received for same. The grocer very seldom entered the conversations as most all the table necessities were produced on the farm.

With the early fall came the drying of corn and caring for the wild fruit—plums and grapes. For this, wood crates or boxes were gathered and along with the wash boiler, tubs and baskets, and other available buckets were put in the lumber wagon and the family would be off to a plum thicket in a nearby creek bottom. The wild plums were in thickets which covered an acre or so of ground in the draws and creek bottoms. Some were tall enough that a step ladder was used; the older folks would shake the trees and we children would feast on the ripe fruit. By the time the plums were dried (cans were not to be had in those days) it was time for the corn, grapes and the late peaches, and apples. The wild grapes were generally found among the taller trees. We could not shake them down, so the taller ladders were used to gain access to them, which was great sport for the boys. The grape clusters were tossed on sheets spread on the grass or leaves on the ground.

Plum butter and jelly, grape jell, and the amount put away, and quality of the products were two topics of conversation by the women folks.

Rarely there was a wild turkey but more often a fat hen or rabbit pie for Thanksgiving.

With no place to go and with but few books and papers to read, the long winter nights presented a problem. A set of home made dominoes could be found in most households. It was the game of the evening. Invited friends were too far away and with father reading and mother knitting—she knitted all our socks and mittens and sometimes a jacket, working long after we had gone to bed—we were left mostly to our own devices. Often mother would sing old songs such as "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," or some sacred hymn to have us join in the words, and father would teach us our letters and numerals and the other secrets of mathematics.

Discovery of Pawnee Village

By Harry Vaughan

Next to the finding of King "Tut's" tomb in far away Egypt, has there ever been a discovery more interesting to students of archaeological lore, than the finding of the lost Pawnee Indian village site six miles southwest of Guide Rock, Nebraska, by Mr. A. T. Hill, a Hastings business man.

In 1903, when the Kansas State Historical Society erected, at Republic, Kansas, at a cost of \$5,000.00, a monument to the memory of Zebulon M. Pike, the discoverer of the village in 1806, neither Mr. Hill nor Mr. A. E. Sheldon, president of the Nebraska State Historical Society, were satisfied that the Kansas folks had found the correct village site.

The Kansas State Historical Society and the Nebraska State Historical Society agree exactly as to the course Pike followed in his expedition in 1806, when as a captain in the United States army, he was sent out by the United States government to visit the Indians in the middle west, especially the Pawnees, until they crossed the White Rock, a turbulent stream about half-way between the Solomon and the Republican. Pike's objective was the head Pawnee village presided over by Chief Characterish, head chief of the Pawnee nation. Both societies claim he crossed the White Rock near where Burr Oak, Kansas, now stands, about 20 miles southeast of the Guide Rock village. In his notes Pike says he traveled in a northwesterly direction from the crossing on the White Rock, which could not take him to Republic, Kansas, that place being almost due east of the White Rock crossing.

About three years ago Mr. Hill possessed himself of an original copy of Pike's notes which described minutely the course Pike traveled from the Missouri river through Kansas to the Saline deposits near where the city of Salina, Kansas, is now located. From Salina, Pike traveled in an almost due northerly direction until he reached the Indian village. It might be said here that for many years students of archaeology have been hunting for this lost Indian village site. Mr. Hill rambled the hills south of Guide Rock until he found it. He first found, by approaching the village from the south, that the lay of the land tallied perfectly with the description of the village in Pike's notes.

Pike approached the village first on September 25, 1806. He was met several miles out by three Pawnee scouts who had been sent out to meet him and ascertain his business, as was the Indian custom. They informed Pike, who was traveling mostly on foot with 21 other men, that they (the Pawnees) were expecting a few visitors from the Osage tribe, who lived east of there, and that they would conduct Pike and his men to the village. Coming to the place where there was a large circular bare place cleared of grass, Pike and his men were asked to sit down. Soon the Osages arrived and were also asked to sit in the circle with the white visitors. In a few minutes several Pawnee Indians rode over the hill from the north and bore down on the visitors as though they were intending to exterminate them. With a whoop and a flourish of arms, the Indians rode up, Chief Characterish dismounted, walked to the circle and offered his hand to the visitors.

After concluding the Indian custom of greeting strangers, the white men were conducted to the top of a "high eminence", where the white men and the visiting Osages, who had come to trade for horses, smoked the pipe of peace with the Pawnees.

Looking down from this high hill Pike saw spread before him the Pawnee Indian village he was looking for. His estimate of the population of the village at that time was about 2500. A quarter of a mile beyond the village he saw the beautiful Republican river running west to east.

Students of Indian history are easily convinced that this is the real village site Pike visited. On the "high eminence" is where are found the graves of chiefs and their families. A quarter of a mile to the west, across a wooded dry run, is where are found the graves of the women and children. Only one male skeleton has been found in this cemetery. On the skull of this male is a mark showing he had been scalped, which explains why the man was buried with the women; the Indians regarding another Indian a coward or a weakling, who would be so unfortunate as to lose his scalp, therefore unfit to be buried with men. Back from the female burying ground is another hill where are found the graves of warriors. It was the custom of the Pawnees to have three burying grounds as described above.

In his notes, Pike also describes the play-ground the Pawnees had for their children and where their ceremonial rites were performed. This was on a side hill across another dry run east of the village. The play-ground slopes to the northwest, every foot of which can be plainly seen from any place in the village. Here the children romped and played, and where they were taught by their elders to shoot arrows and ride ponies.

Across the river to the north of the village site are still today plainly seen the depressions in the earth where Pike dug his rifle pits in which he entrenched his men in order that they might protect themselves against possible attack by the Indians. Some of the younger Indians showing some sign of rebellion after Pike had ordered the Spanish flag hauled down and the United States flag erected in its place.

It is well to remember that in 1806, three years after the Louisiana Purchase, these Pawnee Indians did not yet know that they were not on Spanish soil. Just a few days prior to Pike's visit, a large troop of Spanish soldiers had visited the village, who also evidently did not know they were not on Spanish soil. This is not to be wondered at, as they were many hundreds of miles from their base, with no means of travel or communication except on foot or horseback. It was hard for the Indians to believe the story of Pike and his men, who were ragged and unshaved and soiled, and not presenting a very soldierly appearance. Had it not been for Pike's wonderful personality and influence over the older chiefs, who were inclined to listen to reason, and who were better judges of men than the younger warriors, Pike and his men no doubt would have fared badly among so many hostile young warriors. However, he remained in the village until October 10, 1806, when

he continued his expedition further west, subsequently becoming the noted discoverer of the mountain peak in Colorado, which bears his name.

Getting back to Mr. Hill and his activities, he has been exploring this village, more or less, during the past three years. Being an automobile dealer who makes the territory regularly, it is comparatively easy for him to visit the village often and conduct his explorations. Many valuable medals have been found in Indian graves, some of them described by Pike who saw them adorning the breasts of Indians who had been awarded the medals by the English and Spaniards and Americans in turn. The Pawnees buried their dead in graves dug in the ground, while their neighbors, the Sioux, buried in trees. The Pawnee graves were not arranged with any system as to which way the body lies. Some were with heads extending in one direction, and some in another. The bodies are usually found buried about four feet deep.

Great crowds visit the place every Sunday where Mr. Hill is digging and exploring. Mr. Hill has erected a 12x16 frame building on the west edge of the village site, under a large tree in a wooded nook along the east side of a dry run or canyon, where he has arranged his collection of Indian arrows, bows, clubs, tomahawks, grain or corn meal grinders made from flat stones, peace pipes, articles of

clothing, and many other interesting relics which he has taken from graves in the Guide Rock village and from many other villages in Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and other states.

A year ago Mr. Hill purchased the farm on which this Indian village was located. It was interesting to note that Mr. Hill's tenant, Mr. J. T. DeWitt, has lived on this farm since the early '70's, his father, James DeWitt, having homesteaded the land. Mr. DeWitt has collected many Indian relics during the fifty years he has lived on the place, which he has added to Mr. Hill's collection.

We might add that it was through the aid of Mr. DeWitt and the Shipman boys—Sherman, William and Ott—that Mr. Hill was able to find the village which fronts miles of hills and canyons and wooded streams flowing to the Republican, and although less than a mile from the highway, there is nothing to be seen from there that would indicate there was a lost village so near. Residents of the neighborhood have known for years that there were many graves on the hills, but they had not attached any importance to this knowledge, not being students of Indian lore. Therefore Mr. Hill deserves the credit for accomplishing what many others had been trying to accomplish for years, when he discovered the site of the lost Pawnee Indian Village described by Elliott Coues.

ARTICLE 60

Pike Memorial

From Omaha Sunday News, November 23, 1924

PIKE MEMORIAL ON WRONG SITE, SURVEY SHOWS

Kansas Historical Marker 30 Miles Off, Nebraskan Finds.

Research Bares Error

(Special to The Omaha Daily News)

Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 22—The \$5,000 monument, sixteen feet high, erected by the state of Kansas in 1901 to mark the spot where Lieutenant Pike, on September 29, 1806, hauled down the Spanish flag and raised the Stars and Stripes, merely marks a nondescript spot on the landscape, according to Addison E. Sheldon, secretary of the Nebraska Historical Society.

'Twas all a mistake, Sheldon says.

The monument should be moved thirty miles to mark Pike's position, and it would be in the state of Nebraska, not Kansas.

Credit for the "correction" goes to A. T. Hill, prominent business man of Hastings, Neb., an outstanding student of history and ethnology. He will present the matter before the Nebraska Historical Society at its January meeting.

He Surveys Territory

Though Hill found evidences in his reading two years ago which led him to believe that a mistake had been made, he made no announcement of it until he and Mr. Sheldon made a thorough study. They spent the past month in a

personal survey of the territory down as far as the Arkansas river.

"I was present at the time the Kansas marker was erected, and believed the site correct," said Sheldon.

"I was quite astonished when Mr. Hill called me into conference and said that things he had found in his reading of sources led him to believe that the right spot was in Nebraska, on the south side of the Republican river, between Guide Rock and Red Cloud.

"There, in Webster county, he discovered the Pawnee village visited by Pike. The village site covers 160 acres and must have been inhabited by at least 2,000 people. When we visited it together we found scores of graves, and dug into some.

Found White Traces

"We found some which were there before the advent of the white man, others who were there afterwards, since things used only by white men were mixed in with the Indian relics.

"Examination of the diary of Lieutenant Pike corroborated all our findings. On our recent trip, we took the diary of Pike along, checking at every possible place with his maps and his written account of his journey.

"We decided that the Nebraska site was without doubt, correct.

"Mr. Hill in January will give to the world of history the correction of the Kansas error."

The marker is situated in Republic county, Kansas, three miles from the town of Republic. The nearest Nebraska town is Hardy.

Hill Straightens Record

From Sunday World-Herald, Omaha, September 13, 1925.

HASTINGS BUSINESS MAN STRAIGHTENING OUT RECORD OF ZEBULON PIKE

First Flag In Nebraska

By Leo J. Ryan

Special Dispatch to the World-Herald from a Staff Correspondent.

Red Cloud, Neb., Sept. 12—The unearthing of two large solid silver medals in the graves of two Pawnee chieftains at a village site six miles east of Red Cloud by A. T. Hill of Hastings, auto dealer and archaeologist, forges another link in the chain of evidence which Hill has uncovered during the last six years pointing to the location at this place of the spot where the American flag was first raised over Nebraska territory by Captain Zebulon Pike, famous Indian diplomat and explorer, who on this same trip westward discovered Pike's Peak.

One of the "finds" may even be the identical medal which Pike mentions in his memoirs as having been seen by him, "sporting" upon the breast of a Pawnee chief at his village when Pike arrived there in 1806, nearly 120 years ago. It is made of a Spanish silver dollar, bearing the date of 1797, fused into an elaborately engraved silver plate about five inches in diameter. In his memoirs, Pike describes a Spanish silver medal which one of the chiefs was wearing, and also a Washington medal, bearing the figure of General Washington. Medals were meager things 125 years ago and were given to the Indians in return for the Spanish medals they were wearing and which were marks of their allegiance to Spain. The Indian, it appears, was willing to belong to whomsoever would give him the most flashy medals.

Studied Pike's Report

The location of the site of the Webster county village visited by Pike, and where it is claimed the American flag was first raised on Nebraska territory, is especially interesting in view of the fact that the state of Kansas, in 1902, erected a monument, at a cost of 5 thousand dollars, on a site which, for lack of a more probable location, they supposed might be the Pawnee village mentioned by Pike.

Several years ago, Mr. Hill visited the site of the Kansas monument. He found what he considered several glaring discrepancies in its general topography when compared with the descriptions given by Pike. For instance, Pike wrote that when he came to the top of a "considerable hill" the village lay in the valley just below him. The Kansas village is itself on the top of a hill and is not in a valley.

Not satisfied that the Kansas location was the correct one, Hill set out to find it. Indian historians for nearly a century had tried and failed.

But, after a search which took him over practically every foot of the Republican valley in Kansas and Nebraska within a radius of fifty miles from the supposed site, Hill finally located the spot which he has now succeeded



A. T. Hill

in convincing many archaeologists is the correct one. Even to the lay eye, the Hill village fits the description perfectly.

Details of the Diary

In Pike's diary and in that of his lieutenant, Wilkenson, it is narrated that Pawnee messengers from the village met the American party three miles away from the village, asking them to wait for the chiefs to arrive and perform the customary ceremony of welcome. This spot was identified by Pike as being bare of grass and on a high ridge. After the ceremony, Pike said, they traveled three miles along the ridge until they came to the top of the "considerable hill," mentioned before, when suddenly they saw the village in the valley below them. There were two large flat athletic fields on either side of the village, the memoirs tell, and Lieutenant Wilkenson took the American troops across the river where they camped on a commanding promontory from which they could overlook the whole valley, but which was inconvenient in that they had to carry wood and water a quarter of a mile.

Happy Hunting Ground

On Hill's Red Cloud site the "considerable hill" is the site of the Indian burying ground from which so much evidence has lately been dug with skeletons, and where the two medals were found by him. The village site, still showing the round outlines of the houses as well as the burnt clay of the fireplaces and the ashes from them, lies just at the bottom of this hill in such a way that it cannot be seen, approaching from the south, until the top of the hill is reached. A long ridge extends southward from the top of the hill. Three miles back along this ridge is a

high spot, bare of grass, of a chalky formation, which fits exactly Pike's description of the place where the messengers met him.

On either side of the village site are two flat benches of considerable size, exactly fitting the description of the two athletic fields Pike found. Across the river in full view of the village is a single promontory, about a quarter of a mile from wood and water, exactly fitting the description of the spot where the Americans camped, and, as if to further identify it, Hill found on this promontory a number of rifle pits, such as he is certain Pike, in the midst of hostile Indians, would have dug for the protection of his command while it was encamped there.

Mr. Hill then went back over the rest of Pike's journey as outlined in the diary, measuring distances, and following turns. He found that the itinerary described by Pike led directly to the very spot he had located.

Hill bought the farm on which the village site and the cemetery is located so that he might continue unhampered with his investigations. "I don't play golf," he told the World-Herald, "and my only recreation is this Indian investigation. I come out here Sundays and dig up Indians, seeking further proof of the authenticity of this location and looking for recreation at the same time. This hill is my golf course." There are 320 acres in the farm which Mr. Hill purchased.

Hill has searched for Indian archaeological lore all over Nebraska, and in many parts of the United States for many years. In his investigations at Red Cloud he has usually been assisted by M. A. Brooking, Hastings

grain man, also an archaeologist, and ornithologist, during off hours. Brooking owns one of the greatest private bird collections in the United States, numbering two thousand specimens, many of them extremely rare, some of them altogether extinct. His collection of birds, animals, and Indian relics and skeletons, all of which he has collected and prepared himself during thirty years of this hobby-riding, is housed by Hastings College, where it occupies, even in its crowded state, about three-fourths of the museum space of the college. Mr. Brooking is also curator of the Hastings college museum.

Last Sunday Hill invited, through the newspapers, everybody interested in Indian archaeology to come to his farm and join in the further hunt for "finds." About a hundred people came. Most of them spent the afternoon in digging and in wonderment.

Two graves were located and carefully opened. In one was a staunch-looking warrior, the skeleton perfectly preserved. On his right side was a quiver of arrows with steel points. On the other a collection of rifle balls of the ancient type, as large and round as marbles, numbering fifty-four in all. They had evidently been very cherished possessions of the simple old chief, who, no doubt, signed half his life away to get them from the canny trader who brought them to Nebraska.

No more medals were found, but an arrow-shaper in perfect condition, a combination pipe and tomahawk made of iron and a bag of yellow war paint, as well as plenty of beads and thin sheet copper and silver ornaments were in the graves.

ARTICLE 62

Guide Rock's Foremost Citizen

Guide Rock, Nebraska, Sunday afternoon, March 16, 1952, at 3 o'clock in the Legion Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Vaughan reigned as "King and Queen for a day," crowned in a program that rivaled the radio, "Queen for a day", in color and interest, to the delight of a capacity house. There was rendered one of the most unique, impressive programs with young teen-age to adult actors depicting outstanding highlights in the life of the king as a farm boy, music teacher and merchant, and for 32 years news gatherer, printer's devil, and editor, then topping off with 15 years as the town's postmaster. The occasion, his retirement at the age of 73. "What then?" was asked. A few flowers—watch the trees leaf out—listen to the birds sing, and the squirrels in their play, that is all, I guess, except maybe a short trip." In spite of this full life of activity he found time to participate and lead in community drives; teach a Sunday school class, one for a term of 25 years; lead the church music, and other church activities.

He declares his 32 years with the "Guide Rock Signal" best of all. The "King and Queen" were also recipients of "fan mail," and flowers and gifts. Organizations assisting in the affair were: American Legion and Auxiliary, Commercial Club, Guide Rock Firemen and Auxiliary, R.N.A., Eastern Star, Masons, Riverside Club, W.S.C.S., Rebekah

Lodge, Garden Club, Past President's Parley, A.L.A., Baptist Women's Society, Woman's Club, Maple Grove Aid Society, L. L. Club, Working Girls.

Harry responds, "When one has lived in a town and community more than half a century, he comes to love those about him with a feeling which is more than mere friendship. When we see young faces, some of them the second generation, whose names we may not recall, we know by their mannerisms, personalities and characteristics—they remind us of some one we knew way back when.

"Perhaps we should not dwell too much in the past—that seems to be the main happiness and pleasure of an old person, but a life-long residence in one spot is bound to flood one's thoughts with memories. Happily we are so constructed mentally that most of us forget the unpleasant and remember only the good. Like others of our friends, we have lived in Guide Rock since horse and buggy and cinder path days; we remember the first automobile which was a red car. A beautiful gas buggy owned by the banker. The second was white in color owned by the doctor. We might recall many other incidents of progress.

Sincerely, from the bottom of our hearts, we thank those who made a special day for us—it was wonderful,

a most wonderful gesture of friendship. There is nothing in this world like friends and friendships—they have more value than money which sometimes makes one unhappy while friendship brings only happiness.”

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Vaughan

To appreciate and properly evaluate this distinguished citizen, is to have lived and observed from a nearby community. To know the years of suffering, the years of confinement to a wheel chair, and finally a life dependent upon crutches. He modestly avoids the mention of these handicaps, brushes them aside, as trifling in his career. Few citizens with a strong and healthy body have accomplished more and complained less.

The Republican River rises in the Colorado plains. This river unlike the Platte, increases regularly in breadth and volume all the way from the source to its exit from the state in Nuckolls County. Eleven miles west and three and one half north is a bold promontory on the south bank of the river that had been known as guide rock before the white man settled in the valley. It was therefore natural for the citizens to name this first settlement in Webster County Guide Rock. Just across the river to the northwest, its two first settlers built a stockade in the year 1870. The next building was a school made of logs and its first term of school was taught in 1871. Guide Rock was surveyed and laid out in September 1873, and its only paper “The Guide Rock Signal” was established in 1882. With Red Cloud the county seat

but a few miles to the west and the metropolis Superior but a few miles to the east Guide Rock has remained with a population around six and seven hundred from near its beginning. It is known far and wide for its hospitality and good citizens.

On a Sunday afternoon, March 16, 1952, more than 200 of Harry Vaughan’s friends and neighbors held a reception in Guide Rock to honor the oldtime newspaper man, farm boy, music merchant and teacher, and postmaster; now at the age of 73 years retires, to his home and garden. Born in Washington, Ill., in 1878, he came to South Central Nebraska, as a child, grew up and has served long and faithfully.

His 32 years in the newspaper service to him, is, “best of all,” but we venture he will be remembered best by young and old, the 14 years they saw his smiling face peering through that postoffice window as their postmaster.

From an issue of The Guide Rock Signal published Friday, October 14, 1904, we learn that at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Sheppard occurred the marriage of their daughter, Bertha Valentine Sheppard to Thomas Harry Vaughan at five o’clock, Monday evening, October 10. (Note: This proud couple are now parents and grandparents. They remember when Guide Rock was a prosperous trading center and recall seeing main street lined with wagons while the family ate their lunches under shade trees, the trip generally taking the day.)

Not long after this date Harry passed to his reward.



Harry Vaughan

Guide Rock

Webster county is significant in its relation to the Republican River, it being the last county in which the river courses its full length before leaving the state. Also significant in its topography is the long series of bluffs on the south bank of the river, running from 75 to 100 feet high. Not far from the east boundary of the county as the river starts to angle to the southeast one of the most significant of these bluffs is one whose makeup is of native rock several feet deep and covered on its flat top with dark soil as it protrudes to the northwest into the valley of the river.



Guide Rock

Legend has it that the Indians of long ago had used this as a guide rock and that there was a small stream coursing down from the southwest past this rock and instead of passing it turned and disappeared under the rock. That they believed that under this huge rock was located one of the happy hunting grounds populated by the good Indians and their ponies and that stream furnished them with water. And so it was they made annual pilgrimage to hold their special religious dances and pow wows in its vicinity.

It was at this point an organized band whose purpose it was to colonize a settlement of homesteaders was flustered by a rumor that many Indians were on the warpath in the not far off distance, so they made haste to return to Omaha, their starting point. This was the Rankin Colony to which two of the first settlers of Webster county belonged and refused to return or countenance the scare. They crossed to the north of the river where they dug in and made a dugout. Out of this small beginning there developed the present town of Guide Rock. Guide Rock from the beginning became known as a friendly energetic community of citizens and homes, imbued with Christian spirit and the perpetuation of the best of pioneer sagacity. Earnest and determined that these qualities shall be perpetuated, the generations of descendants have from time to time, presented programs reviving memories of pioneer

days. This year, September 17, 1953, there was staged on its streets, a pageant called the "Round-Up" sponsored by the Guide Rock American Legion and Auxiliary. The theme, "Webster County History."

This was up the writer's "back alley," slangily speaking. For the last four years it has been our devoted hobby, stimulated by an ancestry of two generations of pioneers.

Ever since we wore knee pants we have attended "Old Settlers Picnics and Round-Ups," but none that so thrilled us with satisfaction and pleasure as this one. The parade, in our opinion, could not have done a better job of depicting and presenting all phases of Webster county pioneering.

One remark that we have heard more than another, "the young people of today are not interested in pioneer history." This statement does not bear out my findings after four years of study and research. In the various parades I have witnessed wherein, rural schools and town grade schools as well as high schools, have shown and demonstrated intense interest in the pioneer life of the county and state. They have shown originality and authenticity far beyond my expectation in this parade even to exact detail. Even the elementary seemed enthusiastic in their desire to properly represent dad and mom and grandfather and grandmother of the days gone by, and the organizations displayed talents in their presentation and its appeal to appreciation of the hardships, deprivation and inconvenience experienced by the early settlers. In my exhibits of pioneer history, those most interested in asking questions on various phases of pioneer life come from the rural, grade and high school pupils. In other words I find more of a disinterest among what may be termed the first and second generation.

We were profuse in our notes on this parade expecting in this presentation to give mention of individual floats, but after a two day digestion of notes and memory we find the material presented in its various phases so complete in their coverage and presentation is so near the real experiences, the building of homes, schools and churches, the breaking of the sod, the planting, the sewing bees and other activities, the spelling schools, the country newspaper and its primitive equipment, the country doctor and his slow method in getting to his patient, the old fashioned and make-shift kitchen equipment, the old paper slat sunbonnet, the socialites dressed in their best, bib and tucker, even to bustle and hooped skirts, and the most colorful and beautiful, the teen aged boys and their trum-pets, and the girls in their evening gowns presenting Miss Republican Valley.

ARTICLE 64

Wells-Bladen

The first store in what later became the town of Wells or Pickleville, was in a dugout on the south bank of the Little Blue River on the Silas Wells homestead. It was owned and operated by the late W. H. Hoffman, and was established in the fall of 1875 or spring of 1876.

Being the only store for many miles, the merchandise was hauled from Juniata, that point being the nearest railroad at that time. Mr. Hoffman drove a spring wagon drawn by a blind horse when making the trips to Juniata for his merchandise.

Silas Wells erected a small frame building on the southeast corner of his homestead and purchased a stock of groceries. A few years later 1880-81, Mr. Hoffman purchased 80 acres of land in the Wells townsite and erected a large frame store building and stocked it with a line of general merchandise, and the late James Burden was employed for several years as a clerk in his store and post-office, called Wells P. O. Also on this farm were located a pool hall which was run by Bert Simpson; a harness shop owned and operated by George Roberts whose home was in a sod house a short distance north of his shop. Farther north of these buildings on the bank of the Little Blue, was the home of Dr. McCray, our first resident doctor. On the northeast corner of the Alexander farm was Johnny Storey's drug store. Spence Alexander operated a livery stable. Located just north of the Silas Wells store was the G. A. R. Hall. C. D. Loper ran a small shop.

Silas Wells was the first postmaster. He was appointed in 1880. The town was called Wells in his honor. Its nickname was Pickleville. Mr. Hoffman was appointed postmaster in 1884 and was still postmaster when the town of Bladen was established. The village of Bladen was surveyed and laid out in May, 1886 by A. B. Smith for the Lincoln Land Company on land owned by the company and by L. B. Thorne, the larger part of the town being situated on land owned by Mr. Thorne. The first lines of

business established were two lumber yards, the lumber being transferred to the townsite before the lots were selected for the yards. The proprietors of the lumber yards were Whitten Brothers, and the National Lumber Company.

The following buildings were moved from the town of Wells to the new townsite of Bladen: W. H. Hoffman's general merchandise store; the G. A. R. Hall; a frame building belonging to Spence Alexander; a small frame house later occupied by Dave Brynes with a stock of general merchandise; the home of Mrs. Lydia Lockhart which was moved up to the sidewalk later and Mrs. Lockhart's daughter, Mrs. Jas. Burden stocked and operated a millinery store.

The first new buildings to be erected were the A. P. Johnson general store; Chas. E. Hicks drug store; LeGrand Thorne hardware store; Dr. C. F. Kehler dug store; the Bank of Bladen with W. E. Thorne as president; the Bladen Hotel, erected and operated by Robert Thorpe; two grain elevators operated by Henry Gund and Company, and L. B. Thorne.

The Mount Carmel Baptist Church, organized in April, 1889, was the first church established in Bladen. Much credit was due to the late Mrs. Norman Springer for her untiring efforts in soliciting the necessary funds for the erection of the church and assistance rendered in the organization of the class. The church building was 26 by 50 feet in size and cost \$1,524.00 which included seats and fixtures.

The first train to arrive in Bladen was just two days after Christmas in 1886. The first depot agent in Bladen was named Duffield, and the first child born in the town was Darrel Burden now residing in Red Cloud. Darrel was the son of James and Anna Burden.

Mary Manetta Hoffman, Mrs. W. L. Bennett.

ARTICLE 65

Old Settlers' Day - 1953

SPECIAL INVITATIONS BRING MANY RESPONSES

To our Old Settlers field day, David Heffelbower, grandson of David Heffelbower, Sr., one of the first homesteaders, read a few as time permitted.

Space will not permit recording all so we can only publish those that are of special interest to the greatest number in the county.

From Sara E. Points and Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Points, 509 West Bertora, Seattle, 99. "This morning we received our invitation to the Old Settlers' Picnic and we thank you all so much for asking us. We would like to be there but will have to take a rain check this time. We appreciate

the invitation though and will look forward to seeing the accounts of it in the Commercial Advertiser, which we still feel we cannot do without.

"I am writing you personally, for I have often wanted to write and tell you how much we enjoy your tales of early days.

"My only 'beef' is that you do not say much of Walnut Creek, District 3, which was one of the early settlements. My mother, Maty Holcomb Arneson, came there in April, 1871 and her brother, Joe Holcomb, early in 1870. I remember her saying he met her with an ox team at Grand Island and of the journey across country and how strange it seemed to a girl raised at Elkhart and later in Chicago. To us who grew up in the nineties it is amus-

ing to hear the people talk of hard work and times with all the comforts and conveniences of modern living.

"I wonder how they would enjoy some of the things that all the early folks took as a matter of course, but we had fun, too. Fourth of July picnics in a grove somewhere. I think a nickel comprised my spending money for the Fourth until I was a well grown girl. But what fun to decide whether to have peanuts, gum, or ice cream. Many fine picnics used to be held at L. C. Olmsteads, who had big trees and wonderful big swings. They had spelling schools, "play" parties and when the carpets were up for house cleaning, a dance, with the local fiddlers at the helm. We didn't know we were missing anything, and I don't think we really did.

"You perhaps don't remember me, but I have spent quite a lot of uncomfortable minutes in your dental chair, so remember you well.

"My husband, who joins me in thanking you for remembering us, is in Colorado just now on business. His people who also were early settlers, came to Webster county in 1872 (San Downs) his mother's people and his father in 1874. His aunt, Mrs. Alma D. Fogel, is living in Tacoma at present. She is almost 90 but hasn't forgotten a thing that happened in the early days and is a mine of information of all that went on.

"I see that Mrs. George Heffelbower is your secretary. I shall never forget what a treat it used to be to go to Mr. and Mrs. Heffelbower's. She was the most pleasant hostess and best cook in the world and I shall always remember the elegant watermelons "Dave" grew and how generous he was with them. The pleasant house and big swing, the great trees and the orchard. It is all lovely to remember and I hope they both know how much pleasure they gave many people.

"I hadn't meant to make such a long-winded thing of this and do forgive me, but it started a chain of memories. We love the Northwest. It is a beautiful country, grand climate, fruit and flowers galore and so many lovely things to see, but we always have a warm spot for Webster county.

"If you folks get out our way, do look us up; we have the distinction of being the only Points listed in the Seattle telephone book. Not bad for such a city. We had the pleasure of having the Fred Hedges spending the evening with us this spring and there are a number of Nebraska people here. I regretted so much not having made an effort to see Grace Tait, but as we so often do, put it off till too late. Mrs. Fred Turnure used to come by and chat, but I have never seen her since Mr. Turnure's death." She ends by wishing the best to all and urges us to keep up the stories of the old days.

From Yuma, Arizona, came the following:

"I wish to thank you very much for the kind invitation to attend this fine annual meeting, and you can be certain I would if I were there and not employed.

"I read with great interest all the articles of pioneer days and think the work you are doing is a very worthwhile and fascinating one.

"My mother, Mrs. Charles S. Ludlow, has some interesting pioneer stories about making sorghum and her neighbors and friends, Rev. Hummell and his family. Perhaps she might write it up for someone to read as she is a shut-in and not well herself. My father, the late C. S. Ludlow,

made brick for some of the early day buildings in Red Cloud in his brickyard and was a great lover of birds and could identify all of them by their song and flight.

"We are living on a homestead down here of 40 acres, which has been in alfalfa for the past 5 years, also have 80 more acres 1½ miles from here on which we raised alfalfa seed and onions. The summers are too hot to be very desirable, but the winters are perfect.

"Would love seeing anyone from home if they are ever down this way, we are easy to find.

"Have a nice meeting, I know it will be with Mr. Peirce as host, he is such a fine, Christian man.

"Mrs. Laura J. Ludlow was my aunt, my father's only sister, and one of the early day school teachers there.

"Best wishes to you and your Association in this year's meeting and for future years to come. Perhaps I may be able to attend next year. Red Cloud and Webster county is our home and a good place to live. Statistics prove you live longer in Nebraska, so I want to come there to live before my life span is over." Mrs. Marylouise Ludlow Throne, Cecil, Susan Julie (3 years) and Marlene Leota (1 year), Rt. 3, Box V 20, Yuma, Arizona.

Alva B. Sellars, of Exeter, California, wrote:

"Thank you for thinking of us and would be very happy to be present, but it will be impossible for us to come this year. Hope we may be able to attend some future meeting if you continue to have them each year.

"We spent many years in Red Cloud, so the town and many good friends and acquaintances we had there will always be dear to us.

"My parents moved there from Wisconsin to Buffalo Creek in 1873 and to Red Cloud in 1889 and my wife's parents from Illinois in 1886.

"As most of you know, I married Miss Susie Kenady on May 15, 1900 and Red Cloud was our home until July, 1911, when we came to California.

"After visiting several points in this state we settled in Exeter, Tulare County, which is midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

"The great Sequoia National Park containing the oldest and largest redwood trees in the world are in our county. The General Grant tree measures 43 feet in diameter about 10 feet above the ground.

"Our county is in what they call the Orange Belt of the state but in addition to oranges we grow most every other kind of fruit.

"For the most part our climate is very nice with mild winters, no bad storms and very little wind.

"We like it here very much and will probably remain here for the remainder of our lives.

"We will be thinking of you on the 28th and hope you will have a very nice gathering.

"I hope my boyhood friend, Brother A. B. Peirce, will be with you and live many more years to do good in making the world better in which we live."

From Monrovia, California, Rev. and Mrs. J. Edw. Jarbo wrote:

"We want to thank you for the announcement and invitation to the Old Settlers the 28th. Wish we could be there. As we cannot, we send greetings to all.

"I married my wife just west of town 53 years ago this August. She was Edith Thomas, the oldest daughter

of the late Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Thomas who settled west of Red Cloud in 1891. My parents, Rev. J. Wm. Jarbo and family, who lived at Red Cloud a couple of years in 1896 and 1897. Wife and I still enjoying good health and live here near our only child and his wife. My son is Wm. Jarbo.

"I still do some preaching. Last Sunday I preached what I called my double anniversary sermon, 53 years married and 45 years in the ministry. The only one present that was at our wedding was Harry Studebaker, son of Frank Studebaker. Wife and I were ordained in the ministry in Red Cloud in 1908 and I was pastor there for the following four years. I preached my first sermon in Lincoln in 1912 and the last 40 years later, in 1952 having held three different pastorates in Lincoln. We have held over 250 revivals in U. S. and Canada. Surely God has been good to all of us. God bless you all on this another homecoming day."

My Pioneer Story

By Charles Norris

In the spring of 1873 my father, Perry Norris, my mother and two small children, William and Thurse, also mother's three brothers, William, John and Isaac Skiles, left their farm homes near Des Moines, Iowa, to travel in covered wagons to Webster county, Nebraska, "the Land of Promise" and of homesteads. The trip was uneventful until they had to camp a few days in Otoe county, Nebraska, to await the imminent arrival of another member of my father's family, a baby boy born in the covered wagon. They arrived in Webster county a few days before the big "Easter Blizzard." Father "settled" on a

quarter section eight miles northwest of Guide Rock, land which he later homesteaded and where I was born February 11, 1875. The blizzard struck before they had time to make a "dug out" and they were still living in their covered wagons, with their horses and cows staked out, nearby. The snow blew into the covered wagons, drifted over every thing. Mother and children were put to bed and covered with quilts and blankets. They were warm and comfortable for the time being, but father was fearful of what would happen if the storm lasted long, so he decided to take them to the neighbors home about two miles away. He had never seen the neighbor, but he had seen his dugout. He never knew how he got there without a road to follow, but he couldn't have seen it in that blizzard if there had of been one. It must have been a surprise to the Albert Horn family when they heard horses and a wagon on the roof of their dugout, for that was where father had driven. Mr. and Mrs. Horn and their daughters gave their unknown visitors a hearty welcome, literally receiving them with open arms, as father carried mother and the children into their home, where they stayed until the storm was over, and the sun shining brightly again. That was the beginning of a warm friendship that lasted many years. Mother named her infant son "Albert Otoe" for the county in which he was born and Albert was a token of appreciation to Mr. Horn and the family for their kindness and the help they gave her and her family in the time of desperate need.

Mother's brothers survived the storm, but they often said, in later years, "they thought their time had come." Their horses weren't far from their wagons after the storm was over, but it was several days before they found the cows.

ARTICLE 66

Webster's Industries

One of the first industries in Webster county was that of flour milling, using water for power. Several attempts were made to harness the Republican river but frequent high water destroyed the dams and made the upkeep too expensive. The most successful was the one at Amboy located four miles east of Red Cloud on Elm Creek, also on the B & M railroad from Hastings.

For many years it was operated by the Frisby family. It was here the author loved to come to mill and fished on and below the dam, usually using a crooked pin and string from mother's sewing basket on the end of any old limb from a nearby tree.

Farmers came to mill in all kinds of conveyances as can be seen in the picture.

Steam power came into use and was the power used for years at the Red Cloud flouring mill and elevator. This mill did a thriving business for years, finally giving way to consolidated companies.

Manufacturing of sorghum molasses from cane was quite a flourishing business in the earliest days. One of the foremost was the Hummel factory across the river where cane grew well on the bottom land.

Then some enterprising farmers converted their cream into cheese and supplied the local markets. Butter making was a farm accessory until the coming of creameries who gathered the cream and manufactured on a more extensive scale. One such was the Blue Hill Creamery which did a large business for years, until taken over and moved to a metropolitan city for better marketing facilities.

During the early '80s, a cheese factory was built at Inavale and was made a success under a Mr. Hartwell, who took over in 1885 and operated it until 1903, when it too gave way to consolidated factories.

One outstanding industry was the sand and gravel business, and the most noted was the gravel pit a mile or so south of the town of Cowles, leased for a time by a Hastings firm and later operated by the Reese Thompson family. Trainload after trainload was shipped out of this pit as evidenced by the massive pits at that location.

Today, turkey raising and processing is an outstanding business, owned and operated by the farmers in co-operation.

Dairying for the local consumption has been a going business from the very first.

Milling -- The First Industry

To the first and second generations of pioneers, Amboy is remembered not alone for its mill, race and dam, but as a picnic resort. For here it was that nature had provided, free, a picturesque playground known far and near. A beautiful stream of pure crystal water flowing over a broad sand bottom; ideal for wading, deeper holes

for swimmers, below and above dam for fishing, and abundance of shade. Many religious meetings took place here; here the author was baptized when a boy.



The Steam-powered Red Cloud Mill.

The Blue Hill Creamery



During it's time it was known far and near and it's butter was served on many a metropolitan table. During the decades of the 80's and 90's this creamery was a God-send to hundreds of farmers throughout Adams and Webster counties, as well as furnishing employment to men and teams. Cream collectors making their daily rounds buying by the inch or gallon and doing their own skimming acquired the name of "cream jacks." On certain days they gladdened many homes with the cream checks.

Cream Jacks



A typical one of these "cream jacks" was one Ed Wilson shown in the picture. He with his team has just completed his route and with an 80 gallon load is on his way to the creamery at Blue Hill. Many of the early cream cans were equipped with a glass gauge on the side and from this it could be determined the amount of cream above the milk.

Cheese Factory



Inavale Cheese Factory, at one time a flourishing enterprise. It drew from this community large quantities of cream, sustaining many families during hard times. The rough exterior does not reflect on the tasty product produced within.

Horse Power Industry



The breeding of horses and mules for the farm market was a much advertised business during the early days.

Early Experiences of the Wheats

By Mrs. Mary Wheat

I came to Nebraska, and to this locality, as a young bride more than 68 years ago. That was in the spring of 1874. My husband and I did not take a honeymoon trip to the mountain parks, or to Niagara Falls, or to the seashore, as many brides and grooms do now-a-days. Instead, we came out to the open prairies of Webster County, Nebraska, to begin, at once, the establishment of a home.

Bert Wheat, whom I had known since I was a child, and two of his brothers came here three years previous to my coming. They came by prairie schooner in 1871, and were among the first white settlers in Webster. I was Bert's sweetheart back in northern Illinois, at Rockford, at the time he left for the frontier. He went a hundred miles, to Beatrice, to mail his first letter to me, which I received three months after his departure from our home.

One mile south and three and a half miles west of where Bladen now stands, Bert took his homestead. There, close to the banks of the Little Blue, he built for his bride-to-be a log cabin. To this little log cabin we came, as husband and wife, after Mr. Wheat had returned to Illinois to claim me. I was happy and proud in my new home, which was considered much more elaborate than the dug-outs or soddies, the more common residences of those days.

The nearest railroad town was Juniata, almost thirty miles away. To that point, and to Lowell, we went, occasionally, to get supplies. Neighbors were few, but they were splendid people. Buffalo herds roamed the prairies; we often saw them pass close to our house. Once in a while a herd of antelope came near. My husband would like to have shot antelope for fresh meat, which was rare, but I objected, because they were so pretty.

It was quite common to have the Indians come through the country, and many times they stopped at our home. They did not knock at the door, or ask for admission, they just opened the door and walked in. I re-

member one occasion when a few of them came into the house, and were attracted to a custard pie which I had baked and had placed on the table. They jabbered in their language, which I couldn't understand, about that pie. My husband knew they wanted it, so he suggested that I give the pie to them. So I motioned to them to eat it. Immediately the finger of one dived directly into that custard's middle. Then I gave them a tablespoon and motioned how to use it. They caught on, and passing the spoon from one to the other they soon devoured the pie. All the Indians that came our way were from the Pawnee Tribe and never attempted to harm us. They were always friendly. Their main object in calling was to beg food. They were very fond of sugar and bacon, and watermelons were like to disappear before they moved on.

My husband made our living in the early days by blacksmithing. There was much plow and wagon work then. Every settler had his virgin sod to break, and, of course, wagons were the means of conveyance for people and products. People came from a radius of 25 miles around, bringing work for the blacksmith to do. Many would be without money with which to pay for the work and material. These would hitch their oxen to our breaking plow, and, while Mr. Wheat sharpened their plow shares, or set the tires on their wagons, they would break sod. That is the way most of our homestead was changed from virgin prairie to crop land.

I well remember the first day of the grasshopper infestation in 1874. The pests came in a drove like a cloud. The chickens scrambled eagerly for the first ones that came down to earth in our yard. But within ten minutes the chickens had gone to roost. The hoppers had darkened the sun to that extent.

Recollections of many happenings come to my mind as I think of those days and years. I can say that for the most part, they were happy, contented days and years. But do not think for a moment that there were not times of hardship and days of sadness.

ARTICLE 68

Author's Early Farm Experiences

As soon as my father felt that I was old and strong enough he prepared to teach me farming. As our family budget was very small we had to start in a small way. With one hundred dollars my father had earned in appraising school land we bought Old Pet, a six year old mare, from Congressman McKeigon who lived down the creek from us. For her we rigged up a chain harness with rope lines. We then rebuilt a small harrow and a double shovel cultivator.

We then hired a neighbor to list in 15 acres of corn which I tended but when it was knee high a hot wind came in from the south and we did not get fodder. The next year it was 19 acres and we got a fair corn crop and traded the crib of corn for another horse (Dick was his

name.) We now had a team and how proud I was. I was to do some real farming with a new harness, tongueless cultivator and Eagle lister. I started out with only 27 acres as father contended that was enough. Well I guess it was, for when I had cultivated it the third time another hot wind came up out of Kansas and we failed to get one load of fodder.

That winter father lingered between life and death and was not out of the house for many months. To defray expenses, we borrowed \$400, giving a mortgage and 12 per cent interest. That spring I listed in, with the two horses, 54 acres of corn having the straightest rows in the community. We got a fine crop and paid off the mortgage. After this, most of the farming was carried

on by my younger brothers and I took work with other farmers.

I hired out at 13 dollars per month and paid for my washing. I was up at half past four in the morning and got to bed at ten-thirty and from ten-thirty to five-thirty I fought with some of the biggest bedbugs I have ever seen since or before. It was a three room sod house and I slept in the parlor which was covered by an old worn out rag carpet. The plastered walls were cracked by the settling of the sod walls making bomb shelters for both the fleas and bedbugs, who would gang up on me and leave great welts; well, poison ivy was not in it. The odor from a mashed bedbug can only be equalled by a pole cat. And to turn over in bed was to mash one or more. I can still hear my mother scold when I would come home and a full police force could not do a better job of searching me. Three months was my stay there.

The next place we did not get enough to eat and when the old lady would go to town my partner and I would boil eggs the hens would so obligingly leave in the stable. Two or three of these during the day helped out. One day I stole a hunk of dried beef and hid it in my coat and while I was making my round a dog visited the coat making off with the beef. I never have figured out which was the biggest thief. A few weeks ended my stay there.

I rode a cattle car into Omaha and went to Mills County Iowa where I took a three months job with a fine family on a farm there. He was a real old gentleman almost as big around as tall, very stiff legs and walked with

a cane. One morning not long after I took the job I was sure I was going to lose my job, but didn't. The horse stable was at the foot of a long hill and one morning the man started down to give me my instructions when he stubbed his toe, rolled upon his stomach and came pell-mell. The only thing I could do was to get out of the way, when he came up against a haystack back stop. Well it was more than I could stand. Knowing that he was not hurt, I rolled in laughter. Sitting up he shouted, "you would laugh, wouldn't you." After he had gotten over his dizziness he too began to laugh, and he later assured his friends I was the best hand he had ever had.

I shall never forget another farm experience while there. I was mowing a field of clover and ran over a bumblebee's nest. The first I knew about it was when I felt like a bomb had been planted under my seat but I had to stay put as a horde of reinforcements were on attack. But I got away with only one wound that prevented me from sitting down for a number of days. No he did not go through the iron seat, it had a convenient hole that bee took for granted was made for his approach.

We had a mule that I desire to think of as a Democrat mule. A Missouri mule at that. He was the most stubborn, kickingest disturber I ever put harness on, and he never gave up. He could kick just as hard after a long days work as in the morning. This three months with that mule ended my farming and I never felt kindly towards the Democratic party since that time.

ARTICLE 69

1932 - The Depression

We say there are no two of us alike. In many ways this is true. We have different colored eyes or hair, different shaped faces, noses or ears, some are tall, some short, some light, some heavy and so on. These are physiological differences.

We differ in our ways of thinking. We differ in our likes and dislikes, in our seeing things, in our hearing things, in our tasting things, in our smelling things, and in our feeling of things. In this we arrive at different conclusions, different theories, individual characters. We pursue different callings, have different religious beliefs, political affiliation, personal likes and dislikes, and so on.

But under all this there is a fundamental unity common to the individual, that is common to all normal individuals. To illustrate, all normal people have hands, and on each of these there are four fingers and a thumb. We have a heart, in the same location in our chests, it has the same kind of valves which beat the same way, forcing the same kind of blood through the same kind of arteries and veins. We eat the same kind of food, breathe the same kind of air, however, the success or failure of the individual is determined in a large measure by the individual himself. The success or failure of a group of individuals depends upon the unity of thinking of the group, their unity of energy, their unity of function, unity of purpose.

While differences are essential to a healthy social order, unity is fundamentally essential to continued progress. Without fundamental unity there would be nothing

but chaos. We hear men, now and then, who seem to think that they are so different and have such a personality, that if they would step out, resign or pass out, that it would be just too bad for the world, but not so, this unity of individuals enables others to step in, where others leave off and go on with their work.

There is no disunity in a healthy body.

Disease only, causes disunity in a biological being. Not difference. For difference is essential to a healthy social order. Nature did not want a social order that would present a dull sameness at every turn.

We want individuals to be different. We want them to think differently, to act differently, to dress differently, to aspire differently. For it is out of difference of men, that progress comes.

We not only want individuals to be different, but we want communities to be different. We want states to be different. We want Nations to be different. Such differences are what make individuals, communities, states and nations interesting and stimulating.

We want diversity, but we do not want disunity.

I believe that much of our mental depression is from disunity, for disunity means that energies, designed for creative tasks are dissipated in conflict. Man's inherent instincts are dissipated until he no longer finds a source for their gratification.

Primitive man found solace and satisfaction for his

inherent instincts in his home life. For his home was a large unit, made up of many people of the family, of a number of the same family, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews, and so on. A large unit, all interested in the same thing or purpose, same aspirations and desires. A psychological unit. But as he grew in wisdom, he found that he could not find just satisfaction and gratification for his religious instincts, so out of this came the church—a unity of religious instinct.

The church has gratified a basic and fundamental instinct, and so has come down to us through the ages. Growing and prospering, in all lands and all nations, to endure as long as man endures. Again man found he was not gratifying a secret instinct, and out of this has come the great fraternal organization, that has stood the ravages of time. And great temples have been erected all over the world, where men worship at the shrine, gratifying one of his fundamental instincts. However, history reveals that there have been numerous organizations, that have not endured. For a time they grew to great proportions only to serve a certain time period, and then have passed out of the picture, because they were to serve only a transitory need. This is illustrated by the different psychological periods in man's life, such as childhood, adolescent or adult life. That which satisfied child life failed to satisfy adolescent life. That which satisfied adolescent life failed to satisfy adult life. And such is true in the generations of men.

As man continued to grow in wisdom and made advancements in social life, the home life became dissipated by community life, until the home lost much of its unity. Instead of the old fashioned home life, where the family was at home about the fireside where they read and discussed family interests, they are now out most every night, to various functions returning at all hours, retiring at all hours—the family altar a thing of the past. In an old fashioned life there was a gratification of the gregarious instincts common to the family life. But today all is changed, and man has found himself unable to gratify that inherent gregarious instinct in the home. And so we find him congregated in various groups, under various environment, not always for his best interests. These groups had no definite objective, leader or organization. So out of this disunity of purpose came the various community service clubs. Such as Rotarians, Lions, Kiwanis and numerous others, where men of various occupations, professions, religious and political beliefs could meet around the family table and discuss subjects of common interest, with a common purpose. These various organizations, through unity of purpose in individual groups are banded together in district and national organizations. And thus it would seem, in as much as they gratify a basic fundamental instinct in man, are here to stay; and at an opportune time, to render service in one of the greatest depressions the world has ever known.

Why The Depression?

There are various reasons given. We will not pretend to numerate them, but we do think the major cause has been that in the great whirl of prosperity, we have in the realm of economics, education, religion, and state and national life allowed ourselves to wander away from the course of staid and tried common sense fundamentals into the realm of theory, fads and fancies of softer and lesser resistance, forgetting the fundamentals of nature's laws. This has been expensive for both individual, community,

state and national life. It has led to dissipation, scandal and the squandering of massive sums gathered through taxation, until both individual, community, state, nation and the world are on the verge of bankruptcy.

Quoting from an editorial in *The Saturday Evening Post*, "Of all our problems, perhaps none is so acute as taxation—city, township, state and federal. Men who are their own leaders are alive to the fact that it has been steadily eating at the heart of our prosperity, from that of the individual to that of the larger corporation. When enough men become their own leaders they will get together and do something about taxation that is confiscation."

Everywhere we find men and women, communities, states and nations, have been chasing robins and sparrows, instead of difficult problems.

I had a friend who lived in Chicago. At that time he owned a big bull dog, one of those fierce fellows, bow legged and massive shouldered, with an ugly protruding lower jaw. It was his habit to whip everything that came onto the lawn, and many time my friend was in trouble, settling his fights, pulling him off and saving his victims. One sunny evening after a day in the office, my friend was sitting on his porch, reading his evening paper, when he discovered that a neighbor had gotten a billy goat, and that it was browsing around in his flower garden. Tag, the bull dog, was asleep in a corner of the porch, when my friend called "Tag, come here, see that billy goat down there, get him out of here." Tag got up, stretched and perched himself on the top step, stuck out his massive jaw, gave a growl like a lion, and with one bound he was down in front of billy, but before he could get his breath, he was landed against the foundation of the house. He gave a yelp, stuck his tail between his legs, sneaked back to his place on the porch, and there was a dotted line, between his eye, and my friend's eye, which said—"nothing doing old boss, nothing doing." The next evening the same thing happened. My friend again called Tag, and again he perched himself up on the top step, and while my friend pointed to the billy goat, Tag was looking around for an alibi, finally discovered a sparrow on the other side of billy, took off around billy and after the sparrow. My friend again called his attention to the billy goat, when he discovered a robin on the other side of billy. Making a large circle around billy, he chased the robin.

Just so it has been with us. In all walks of life, during the times of prosperity, we have refused to face the difficulties and have been off chasing sparrows and robins. We have taken a long automobile ride, run the automobile into the ditch, and are now walking back, to the place where we started.

A popular conundrum of a past and simpler generation: Ask the question, "Where was Moses when the lights went out?" The obvious answer being, "in the dark." All during the depression, we have been putting practically the same question and getting the same answer. The world has been groping around in the dark, and the people have been standing around, with their hands in their pockets, waiting for some brilliant leader to emerge with the entire solution, conquering with a fairy wand. From the press and the pulpit, the cry for leaders has been broadcasted, and many have responded, each saying that he had the one perfect plan, but no one with the one perfect plan has yet appeared.

As a matter of fact, the kind of leadership that we need now will not be found among the intelligentsia, who

would perform a major operation on humanity to demonstrate a pet theory; or among the international bankers, whose hearts may be in the right place, but whose hands are across the sea, clutching at their credits and their depreciated bonds; or among the politicians, who would be all things to all voters, let the taxes fall where they will. Real leadership is developing among students, employes, business men and farmers who are concentrating on the individual job, putting everything that they have into it, stripping their problems down to fundamentals, free from any illusion that by some magic formula they can beat economic law and so improve their condition. They plan to pull through by hard work along sound and proven lines.

The greatest leader the world has ever had or produced could not help a soft, get rich quick, crime ridden nation, that is not self reliant in its personal affairs, and whose citizens, fighters for efficiency and honesty in its general governments. We refer to Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt. These men were individualists, and everyone, was first of all his own leader. Yes, there was scandal, graft and dishonesty, but they finally stood forth as leaders and why? Because they were representative of a more inarticulate mass of determined, right thinking men, who too, were first of all their own leaders, and who because of their quality of leadership in their private affairs were not satisfied to have low standards prevail in public life.

We must seek for a unity in each individual by awakening him to a realization that future prosperity cannot come from fads and fancies of politicians, economic doctors, bankers, commissions, congress nor the president.

But will only come when individuals awake to a safe and sane reasoning that will unify upon an individual solution of the individual's own personal problems. To set his own house in order, by living within ones means, observing the golden rule and banishes from his mind, muddy thinking of politicians.

Then we want a unity of the community. It is possible to realize an actual social order seen through communities, whose aspirations and activities are unified, not twisted and torn by the crude competitions of selfish group interests, but when groups are touched by the vision of well organized and well directed common life.

We cannot expect unity of the State or Nation, as long as the life of the State and Nation is racked and rent by jealous, back biting of communities, under the delusion, that the fortunes of the community can be divorced from the fortunes of the State.

A friend of mine passing through one of our great seaports, where great ships are anchored, found a little freckled face boy picking to pieces a great two inch rope, that had once anchored large massive ships. As he pulled out each strand he took it between his little hands and broke it in two, throwing one part to the left and one to the right, until he had broken that great rope.

Our present depression cannot be lifted from our shoulders, until each fiber of this great superstructure (the individual) realizes his significance in it, and starts out to solve his own. And then, in groups, communities and states become united in one great rope, which will pull our nation out of the entanglements and scars of the world and draw the world out of chaos.

ARTICLE 70

Banks and Bankers

There were two names most familiar to the early settlers of Webster County in it's business and financial fields. The names of Miner and Sherwood have from almost the beginning up to the present writing, remained synonymous with Red Cloud and Webster County in business and financial circles.

Not long after the J. L. Miner family came to the county there occurred one of the first social weddings in Red Cloud. His oldest daughter becoming the bride of one of the county's leading business and financially eligible young bachelors, W. A. Sherwood.

During the first thirty years of the county, there was a constant shifting and adjusting of the business and financial affairs of the county. As could be expected, there was in most every line of enterprise a surplus of competition, a contest in the survival of the fittest, in the serving of a new and untried community. In this contest there became, of necessity, many consolidations in various business lines, an amalgamation befitting the needs of the immediate community.

The banking and financial interests was no exception, as evidenced by Red Cloud's only bank in celebrating its Sixtieth Anniversary, October 2, 1953. It will be noted there are three generations of Sherwoods in the life of this banking institution as evidenced in the first and last statements at the close of business 1893 and of June 30, 1953. It will also be noted by the present name that there has been a consolidation of two banks into one

with the original officers of the People Bank of Red Cloud still at the bank's head.

This is one of the oldest banking institutions that has remained in the same families in the Republican Valley, to our knowledge and speaks well of the business ability of the Sherwood family.

Condensed Statement PEOPLES BANK OF RED CLOUD At the Close of Business October 2, 1893

| Resources | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Loans and Discounts | \$ 2,316.87 |
| Bonds and Warrants | 60.66 |
| Expense | 36.98 |
| Cash | 5,395.08 |
| Merchants Loan & Trust Co., Chicago, Ill. | 1,880.65 |
| Inter-State Bank, Kansas City | 10,630.86 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$20,321.10 |
| Liabilities | |
| Capital Account | \$15,000.00 |
| Interest Account | 29.96 |
| Collections and Exchange | .50 |
| Deposits, subject to check | 5,295.64 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$20,321.10 |
| J. L. Miner, President | W. A. Sherwood, Cashier |
| | C. H. Miner, Assistant Cashier |

Condensed Statement
PEOPLES-WEBSTER COUNTY BANK
Red Cloud, Nebraska
At the Close of Business June 30, 1953

| Resources | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Loans and Discounts | \$ 578,042.08 |
| Banking House and Fixtures | 10,238.92 |
| BONDS— | |
| U. S. Government | 1,272,300.00 |
| Municipal | 16,564.00 |
| CASH | 640,247.95 |
| TOTAL | \$2,517,392.95 |

| Liabilities | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Capital | \$ 50,000.00 |
| Surplus | 50,000.00 |
| Undivided Profits | 68,167.60 |
| Reserve | 15,000.00 |
| DEPOSITS | 2,334,225.35 |
| TOTAL | \$2,517,392.95 |

C. M. Sherwood, President P. S. Sherwood, Cashier
J. W. Sherwood, Assistant Cashier
(Members of Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation)

Out of at least three banking institutions at Blue Hill, Nebraska, there has evolved one that has survived with the growing and prospering community for the past forty-eight years. The Commercial Bank. Its progress during the past twenty-five years is shown in the statements under the dates June 30, 1928 and June 30, 1953.

Condensed Statement of the Condition of
THE COMMERCIAL BANK
At Close of Business June 30, 1928

| Resources | |
|---|--------------|
| Loans | \$236,459.31 |
| Bonds and Other Securities | 75,929.94 |
| Banking House, Furniture and Fixtures | 6,700.00 |
| Other Real Estate | 12,086.00 |
| Bankers Conservation Fund | 764.62 |
| Cash and Due from Banks, U. S. Bonds | 74,813.02 |
| | \$406,752.89 |

| Liabilities | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Capital Stock | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Surplus | 15,000.00 |
| Undivided Profits | 21,167.91 |
| Deposits | 355,416.63 |
| Depositors' Guarantee Fund | 168.35 |
| | \$406,752.89 |

Condensed Statement of the Condition of
THE COMMERCIAL BANK
At Close of Business June 30, 1953

| Resources | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Loans | \$1,033,254.96 |
| Federal Reserve Stock | 3,400.00 |
| Banking House | 9,250.00 |
| Furniture and Fixtures | 7,500.00 |
| U. S. Government Securities | 1,052,879.00 |
| Municipal Bonds and Warrants | 66,599.58 |
| Cash and Due from Banks | 537,310.28 |
| | \$2,710,193.82 |

| Liabilities | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Capital Stock | \$ 50,000.00 |
| Surplus | 62,500.00 |
| Undivided Profits | 64,250.28 |
| Deposits | 2,533,443.54 |
| | \$2,710,193.82 |

ARTICLE 71

The Cave Man

The principal occupation of the cave man was hunting and fishing. His life and those depending upon him made it mandatory that he bring home the bacon. This primitive of the cave man has stamped itself upon mankind and has come down from generation to generation. The love for the wild, the ability to match the perils of nature in the wild state, the instinct of self preservation, bringing to activity the daring, cunning and canny maneuvers for escape. The venturesome dare-devil antics come to light and show themselves in the child life who dares to venture and maneuver into the most dangerous hazards. Curiosity, a desire to do the impossible which may have been tried with disastrous results, still challenges. Mountain climbing, going over the Niagara Falls in a barrel and many other spectacular feats, risking maiming or death, with little or no reward. These and many other characteristics are reminiscent of medieval days.

These human characteristics are comparative to the many passing anatomical structures. For example the ton-

sils, veriform appendix. They no longer have a practical value. We can get along without them, they may never cause us harm and yet they cause death. It is these characteristics and instincts that bring out the adventures in the lives of men. That indomitable, impelling spirit that led Columbus to discover America, DeSoto, Cortez, Marquette and Joliet, LaSalle and many others in their conquest of the new world.

The Lure of Gambling

Getting something for nothing, taking chances, running risks, seems to lurk in the innermost of human-kind. Now that there are no more wests and unexplored territories we find the attention of our explorers directed to geology, the lure of the earth strata. The hidden treasures buried within the bowels of the earth. Second, the mysteries of the air. The transmission of light, sound and vision. The "lure of science." Opening of new fields into the realms of, once written off, so considered super-

natural, the atom, and space. Then there is the great and unexplored field in the science of biology and medicine; synthetics and mechanics.

Egoism and Altruism

The basic lure of mankind has been to be happy and to make others happy. A quest for those things that will best contribute to "egoism and altruism." Honesty is the prerequisite to wisdom. Sincerity is essential to understanding. Truth becomes error to a dishonest soul. Prejudice, a child of ignorance, is ever the opponent of progress. Here in the vast unoccupied prairie territory lay the opportunity of inculcating these basic and fundamental principles into a new political and social order. "The science of economics" God has made man creatures of many wants. This west offered many opportunities with a means for satisfying these wants.

The Lure of the Wild

Not unlike the "Cave Man" while the pioneer was waiting for his first crops, he had to depend upon his hunting and fishing for sustenance. With little or no means of transportation for building material, he again must depend upon the natural resources at hand, for shelter he must have forthwith. Fierce and violent storms found no resistance as they coursed across the rolling

prairies with their low clinging buffalo grass. No houses, no barns, no fences as far as the eye could see.

In spite of all, these prairies around the hub of the nation had many and varied lures for the early pioneers. There were hundreds and thousands of buffalo, deer, antelope, wild turkey, prairie chickens, quail, grouse and rabbits, all offering delicious meat, a sustaining food. The tough buffalo sod, the natural timber cut into logs, and in some places native stone furnished the building material. The rich loam and clay dirt furnished substantial walls for dug-outs, stables and sheds for stock shelter. Then there was a gamble on the selection of a quarter section of land where good water was to be had, not too deep and with purity. The possibilities of a nearby railroad, or town nearby wherein a quick sale might be realized if family not satisfied. Many young single men saw his day dreams coming true, the dream of a home, wife and children and well filled barns and pastures of well bred stock.

And so they came from many foreign lands seeking freedom from tyranny, slavery and depression; they came from the states, seeking new opportunities of expression. Most, who responded to the lure of the west were the best, most determined, and energetic, with a will to succeed and they did. However there were some who did not stand the test of drouth, grasshoppers, storms and privations, and went back to the old home to success or failure.

ARTICLE 72

A New Auto

Editor M. L. Thomas once publisher of Red Cloud Chief, clerk of Webster county's first election, writes from Oklahoma.

L. D. Thomas
Cowles, Nebraska
Dear Brother:

I received your letter written in Colorado some time ago but have neglected to answer until now.

Well, it is raining here and has been for a number of days. The ground is thoroughly soaked.

As you have perhaps noticed in the papers, the green bugs have played havoc with the wheat in most parts of Oklahoma. The renter on my farm is talking of plowing up the wheat and planting the ground to corn. Oats are mostly all gone.

Well, I notice that you speak in your letter of buying an automobile. Why not? Shrouds have no pockets. You need not have any fear that you could not crank it. When I was up there a year ago I was only beginning to learn to run the machine. I have learned a whole lot since then and I find that the cranking is easy now as are many other things that I was in the dark about at that time. I would give up a great many things before I would let the auto depart from me. I have had a top put on the machine this spring and find it a great comfort. I have also added a Continental Siren horn and can make the teamster know that I am coming when I am yet a mile off.

Speaking of traveling in an auto and camping out. The way they arrange that now is to rig up a light wagon with a short tongue which is clamped to the hind axle of the auto by means of a clevis and set screw. A cover is put on the wagon and all the baggage and camp outfit is loaded on it. When you stop to camp there are no horses

to be fed and watered and picketed out to get loose in the night and raise h——, wander away I mean and make all kinds of trouble.

The fellows who travel and use a wagon as a trailer to an automobile have to be careful in running and look out for turning corners too rapidly as they sometimes dish the wheels or turn the wagon bottom side up. They make from 75 to 100 miles a day without trouble.

One of the fellows living here went to Colorado last summer in a Rambler, same size and style as mine, and on the return trip he ran from Lamar, Colo., to Ft. Dodge, Kansas in a day, the distance being two hundred and fifty-two miles, but he did not have a wagon trailing behind.

You spoke of coming to Oklahoma to spend next winter. I hope you will do so, and if you come I would like to see Lawler and wife come along. If you get tired of staying in Pond Creek we can hitch up and go to some other town, if too many to all get into the machine some can go by rail, and when we got to a place where we wanted to stop we would have the car to run around in.

Say! Why can't you and Lawler buy an automobile, hitch a wagon behind and come that way. I tell you it is a nice way to travel. If you are afraid you can't run it to start with I will go up on the train and help you to rig up and you fellows can learn to run the machine while we are traveling towards Oklahoma.

Well, I will close for this time trusting that you will think favorably of a trip to Oklahoma this summer and next fall, and hoping that you are all enjoying good health. We are well, but I am having a time with my face and neck, having a case of ivy or oak poisoning.

With best wishes I remain

Very truly yours,

M. L. Thomas

Willa Cather As I Knew Her

In the hills of old Virginia during the seventh decade of the last century there lived a young shepherd and farmer. Not far away there lived in the home of well-to-do parents a typical southern belle, and here there occurred in December, 1872, a marriage union of this shepherd and farmer to the outstanding belle of the community. In December a year later to this union was born a girl they named Willa. Parents on both sides of this partnership were well-to-do and held at various times prominent county and state offices. They were of the aristocracy with servants and some owning slaves.

A year later this writer was born in a little log hut on north Elm Creek in Webster County Nebraska. The first child to arrive in that community. At this time the assessed valuation of this home was \$90.00. There were no schools, and when the writer was six years old the first school house (a soddie) was built and the annual term was but three months.

Willa Cather came to Webster County with her parents when she was nine years old. The Cathers located but a few miles from the home of the author. Transportation was by ox and horse drawn vehicles so it was not until the Charley Cathers had moved to Red Cloud that I first saw Willa. My parents were shopping in Miner Bros. store. Here was a girl dressed much like a boy wearing a boy's hat, who seemed much at home with the boys. My father and I had just visited her father's office on business and, as was the pioneer custom, there was a social family discussion. And so it came about I first met Willa Cather.

Willa's uncle George Cather, the farmer, became a special friend of my father. He serving as township supervisor for Catherton and my father for Elm Creek. During these three or four years together and on special committees, in politics, farming interests, business and political association he had with Willa's father "Charles" I saw and knew much about the Cathers.

During this time I attended now and then a musical, play or literary program in Red Cloud and at various country school houses. Sometimes I would remain over night with relatives for a day or so.

George and Charley Cather, as well as my father, were quite prominent in the county politics of that day and all three served their respective townships as Township Supervisors and many times on special committees. They all three were staunch Republicans and took an active part in both township and county conventions, also agricultural and old settlers organizations, usually taking a prominent part.

During these days, various boy friends and I did much hunting and trapping all over the Red Cloud-Cather country and learned much of the creeks and draws, the natural hide-outs of the wolves, coyotes, badgers, coons, opossums, skunks, and contacted many rattle snakes. Much of this country, the source of the creeks, draws and watershed from the high divide east and west on the north, to the Republican river on the south, form great and deep gullies bordering on canyons, which furnishes rich grazing land where hundreds of cattle have been raised and marketed.

Catherton Township named after the Cather family, across its northern border possesses some of the most beautiful, rolling land found anywhere; while the central and lower possesses some of the roughest.

The Cather family had hardly unpacked before they began taking an active lead in the community and by January 1893 they were furnishing a major part of the community entertainment as attested in the following sample of program, reported from the Catherton community and published in one of the Red Cloud newspapers as follows:

The reading circle held at Mrs. D. H. Larricks on the evening of the 30th was a grand success. The president, Mrs. C. P. Cather, deserves credit in the way and manner which she has conducted it.

Program

- No. 1—Organ Solo.
- No. 2—Essay.
- No. 3—Song, "Tired," Mrs. C. P. Cather.
- No. 4—Essay.
- No. 5—Organ Solo, C. P. Cather.
- No. 6—Essay.
- No. 7—Song.
- No. 8—Essay.
- No. 9—Duet, Organ and Violin, K. C. Clutter and C. H. Cather.
- No. 10—Essay.
- No. 11—"Waltz" by Capetania, C. H. Cather.
- No. 12—Recitation.
- No. 13—Song, "Under the Snow," Mrs. C. P. Cather.
- No. 14—Essay.
- No. 15—Song.
- No. 16—Recitation.
- No. 17—Organ Solo, "Long, Long Ago," C. H. Cather.
- No. 18—Parlor Drama, A. V. Larrick, C. H. Cather, B. C. Cather, A. B. Larrick.
- No. 19—Song.
- No. 20—Reading from Ben Hur, Mrs. C. P. Cather.
- No. 21—Christmas Exercise.
- No. 22—Song, "The Old Year," Mrs. C. P. Cather.

Another: Captioned Catherton and Cathers. On this program of twenty-one numbers, ten were rendered by the Cathers.

From this outline the reader can get some concept of the times, geography, the topography and relatives of Willa Cather. As a historian I evaluate her as I knew her. First, from a casual acquaintance viewpoint; second, from second-hand information from her friends who were my friends; third, newspaper and other published material. Many authorities would claim that a large part of her formative period of childhood was in Virginia before she came to Webster County, Nebraska at the age of nine years, so we must consider her formative period from the age of nine to the age of twenty-two. At that time in our history little was known of child psychology and analytical analysis of child development, so we must proceed in the light of present knowledge and make its applica-

tion to our personal knowledge of the person we are to evaluate.

Ten miles of travel in a lumber wagon drawn by a poky old farm team over little or no roads was a slow method of travel compared to our latest in autos and airplanes, never-the-less during the days we are considering in this article a spring wagon, a surrey, or a single seated buggy drawn by a young and frisky team of fillies were quite satisfactory. While we got a greater share of our groceries in the little town of Cowles we did the major part of our shopping in Red Cloud and most always it was on Saturday, a great day for the school children. It was usually on these days that I remember seeing Willa Cather and more often in and around Miner's store.

Through friends I had met her brother Rosco and in this way learned to recognize her. To me, she was never attractive and I remember her mostly for her boyish make-up and the serious stare with which she met you. It was as if she said, "stay your distance buddy, I have your number." Enough, I did. And that whispering information that the Cather children boasted of their mother being the "only lady in town," in that she had servants to do all her work. This made us curious to see the mother, and sure enough, her toilet and dress along with a haughty air, substantiated in our minds this alleged superiority complex. However, Willa never impressed me as sharing in her mother's haughtiness. Some years later the mother and younger sister visited my dental office, for my dental service, I found the mother, underneath that haughty attitude, was quite human and very likeable.

Many times when in Red Cloud with my father we visited Willa's father's office, a sort of an orderly place rather neatly kept for a real estate and loan office, in those pioneer days.

Dr. Damerell

Along about this time my father was stricken with a long spell of fever and the local doctor from Cowles several times called in consultation a doctor from Red Cloud, Dr. Damerell, who later became a devoted friend and benefactor. He and his devoted wife had no children and being a family man, loved young folks and any one who showed an interest in him and his practice was his special pal. Willa Cather, who wanted to be a doctor, was one of those favored ones and he was delighted to have her companionship on his long drives into the country. Fortunately for me, I too was one of his chosen special friends for whom he did much. When he was made superintendent of the State Hospital at Hastings, it was he who persuaded me to accept a position there with him; for which he was taken to task by the politicians in power, for my people were strong Republicans. But the employee who stirred up the trouble soon found himself without a job and I had his position.

It was there I decided on dentistry as my life vocation. It happened in this way. I was undecided whether it would be medicine or dentistry, when one day soon after I had entered the hospital, a patient in my ward developed a severe tooth ache and then an abscess. The hospital had no dentist so the assistant physician, a little man, assumed and after several kinds of contortion broke the molar off and there it remained for that poor man to suffer for days. That settled it. I was going to be a dentist and get a job as dentist in a mental hospital.

One day the superintendent came in and asked me to relieve in the infirmary for the afternoon. Maybe it

was medicine I wanted, for here after a few weeks I was to take over for an afternoon some thirty bed-ridden patients. That afternoon two of my patients died and that settled my medical career. By the time I was out of dental college there had been a political change in the State Capitol and Dr. Damerell was back in general medical practice in Red Cloud. Owning the building in which his office was located, he had a dental office fixed up next to his upon my arrival after graduating.

About this time Willa Cather was starting on her climb upward and was getting considerable notoriety which was the cause of much talk around town. In slow times and bad weather, Dr. Damerell and I spent much time together and we of course discussed our common hero Willa Cather pro and con. What was at the base of her genius? If inherited where did it come from, what effect environment? Then it settled down to the anatomical and physiological and of course the psychological aspect, as we had spent time together in a mental hospital. It was noted she had as many male tendencies and characteristics as female. If she was possessed of any romantic love entanglement, or sweethearts we failed to see them show themselves, even though we had seen her pass the most romantic years of life.

Willa Cather's first newspaper reporting as evidenced in the Red Cloud Argus in February, 1889.

High School News Items—The very pleasant holidays have fled on the wings of time and school work having been resumed, we have settled down to work in earnest and earnestly hope at the close of 1889 we may realize the pleasing and profitable results of diligent application to our studies as true students. Our high school enrollment has reached one hundred and fifteen, eight new pupils having been enrolled last week. Miss Culbertson, who for a brief time took Miss Hurlbut's place in our high school, is now teaching in room No. 3.

A number of our pupils have formed a skating club which caused an absence of several large boys Friday afternoon. The Friday afternoon exercises passed as usual. Mr. and Mrs. Winters were pleasant visitors at our school last Friday. Messrs. Spanogle and Marsh, members of the school board, were also welcome callers in all the rooms of the high school building. Come again gentlemen as all visitors whether school officers or others are welcome.

Willa Cather, Geo. Newhouse, Editors.

High school news February 7th issue:

Messrs. Spanogle and Marsh, president and secretary, of our school board were pleasant visitors in our school on Wednesday. These gentlemen were also visitors last week. Visitors to our school are far more numerous this year than any former year. School officers and parents seem to take a deeper interest in the welfare of our schools than during the previous years. We are glad to welcome visitors.

Recess has been resumed, as some pupils prefer relaxation from study. Not that their severe application to study necessitates it so much, we presume, as the force of habit calls for it. Today it is a much disputed question, "Is recess necessary in the higher grades of our schools?" Many of our ablest educators advance the most logical arguments in favor of its abolition from the higher grades of public schools. Some even assert that recess is detrimental to the progress of schools. True there are some plausible arguments in its favor.

The philosophy class has been making some pleasing experiments in the reflection of light.

Last Friday afternoon's rhetorical were the best we have had for some time. Friday afternoon the junior Latin class translated from Latin into English "Joseph sold into Egypt." Every Friday the pupils of this class translate a portion of biblical history from Latin into English which we deem pleasant and instructive as well as a change from our ordinary work in Latin grammar.

Prof. Curren has promised in the near future he will organize a class for eleucutionary drill, for which purpose those who wish to participate will remain after 4 p. m. The offer will no doubt be gratefully accepted, as good reading is one of those rare accomplishments that should be cultivated more than it has been in the past.

Willa Cather, Editor.

Again, February 21: Miss Thomas, we are glad to state, has returned to her position as assistant and Miss King is relieved from her duties as assistant during the illness of Miss Thomas. We tender Miss King our hearty thanks for the pleasant and effective manner in which she aided us during our time of need.

Mr. Hunter, principal of the Guide Rock school, was a pleasant caller last Monday. We are always glad to welcome visitors, especially parents and those employed in educating others. The "A" grade having completed Zoology have commenced astronomy—a subject of such grandeur that the most indifferent can scarcely fail to appreciate it.

We are sorry to have to state Elmer Kaley our school mate was so unfortunate as to break his leg. He has the sympathy of all his school mates. We earnestly hope soon to see him again in school. Miss Fowler visited our school last Wednesday.

On the 14th the usual scenes prevailed, when both teachers and pupils were the recipients of comic valentines.

The public teachers meeting last Friday evening was well attended. Prof. Curren conducted a class drill in "etymology of words", a subject of great importance to all lovers of language. After the recitation the professor addressed the visitors on the subject of "moral education" and reminded the parents of the grave responsibility and morality.

The Rev. Mr. Ringland, president of the Hastings College, was a pleasant caller in the high school last Monday. We regretted that the gentleman could not remain longer than an hour as it is seldom we have such a distinguished visitor. (signed) Willa Cather, Editor.

We found no commencement announcement for the year 1889 but in the alumnus records the only graduate that year was William Letson, while in 1890 there were three completing the course, namely John W. Tulleys, Willa Cather, and Alexander Bentley.

The only other high school items edited by the students this year read as follows: Considerable interest is being evidenced by students of the Latin and bookkeeping classes a fact which greatly encourages the teachers who have bestowed much earnest labor to secure this much deserved and qualifying result. Notwithstanding the great efforts made by the teachers of the high school to suppress whispering, there yet remains much to be done to suppress this habit which is detrimental to the great aim of our schools—good scholarship and due preparation for good citizenship.

The ancient history class will soon complete the work.

This study has been a profitable one to all students interested in the deeds and progress of mankind during the early ages of the world.

Friday being the anniversary of the Father of our country, we enjoyed a holiday; doubtless the pupils availed themselves of this opportunity to study the truthful character of our nation's benefactor and patriot.

Monday last we were honored with a visit from Mr. Bovington, Chicago. The gentleman was formerly a teacher, but is now connected with the publishing house of Grimm and Company. He expressed himself well pleased with the discipline and general conduct of the school. He expressed himself especially well pleased with the geometry and Latin classes. We extend a cordial invitation to all co-workers in education.

The regular semi-monthly teachers' meeting will be held next Friday evening in the high school room. An interesting program has been prepared and we hope to have a good attendance as these meetings deserve the patronage of parents and all interested in education of children and good citizens. Several new pupils have lately joined the ranks and vacant seats in our room are negative quality and quantity.

Laura Relmsberg, William Letson, Editors.

We found in one issue of one Webster county paper a very complimentary mention of Willa's acting in a play at one time but outside of this we did not find other mention.

Some might get the impression that the writer is not one of Willa Cather's millions of admirers but the fact remains I am. I admired her for what she was, just an unspoiled human being the same as you and I. Her grandeur was in her achievement, accomplishment in her chosen field in which she was a genius, a literary giant. In this field, maybe one in a million. This does not make her a saint, as some would have her. Shakespeare could hardly be classified as among the saints. Her genius in literature must be evaluated by those trained in that field, and measured by the standards in that field, but as a citizen she must be evaluated by citizen standards. She was a writer of fiction and not a writer of history, to interpret history from fiction, such history becomes conjecture, hypothetical, confusing, and unreliable.

Yes, I admired Willa Cather, as a worthy daughter of worthy pioneer parents, but not as a Webster county citizen. While it is true she got most of her story foundations and characters from Webster County, "guinea pig sorter," I am unable to find where she has given any allegiance to the county, not even an autographed "O Pioneers" or "My Antonia."

Many mothers will tell us that each child is a product of sweat and blood. While motherhood is the normal compensation of married life, literary attainment is the compensation of a childless genius. When we analyze those influences common to all child development; namely, heredity, environment, endocrines, illness, community factors, space perceptions and judgment, memory, imagination, creative activity, thinking and reasoning, personality trends, and compare them (with the knowledge we have) of Willa Cather and those of her playmates, though conjectural or hypothetical they may be, we arrive at the conclusion that she, a girl among girls and boys was no different than the common run.

In making this analytical survey we have tried to rule out prejudice, ego, or bias, of whatever nature, in

our conclusions and rely as far as possible on substantiated facts. Her close associates, friends and chums might differ with us, as they have a closeup-picture that may or may not obscure side lights visible to a casual acquaintance.

We have scanned all newspapers printed in Red Cloud during the time Willa Cather resided in Webster County and its county seat and we are surprised how little this source of information contained. We do find, however, evidence of her first news reporting and reproduce it along with another, at the same time, by her fellow classmates.

As to her complimentary puff in acting, this was in the February issue of the Red Cloud fly-by-night daily, "Evening Chief". It said in reference to the play Willa Cather took the part of "The Merchant" and carried it through with such grace and ease that she called forth the admiration of the entire audience. It was a difficult part and well rendered. In reporting the graduation exercises of 1890, The Red Cloud "Chief", under the date of June 13, says of the part taken by each of the three graduates—The oration of John Tulleys on "Self advertising" shows that John is one of the brightest students and will make his way to fame . . . Alex Bentley followed with an oration on "New Times Demand New Measures and New Men" . . . Alex is making rapid strides in the educational and in years to come will show what close application to study in early childhood will do for those who improve the opportunity . . . Miss Willa Cather treated the audience to a fine oration on "Superstition vs. Investigation," which was a masterpiece of oratory. The young lady handled the subject with that skill that showed at once her knowledge of the finality with both history and classics of ancient and modern times. Her line of thought was carved out and a great surprise to her many friends.

Her Uncle George

George Cather utilized his holdings from the east in buying and improving land and stock raising while Charley moved to Red Cloud and established himself in the real estate and loan business. George was more of a gregarious type while his brother was more retiring. Whether deserved or not money lenders and collectors were accused many times of exorbitant interest, foreclosures and sales

not always on the up and up. Charley Cather was no exception and as a boy I frequently heard it said, "he is a man to be watched." I later learned that such charges were unfounded and merely evaluation merited by a very few loan sharks of the time.

I remember Willa Cather most for her masculine habits and dress. This characteristic in those days was far more noticeable because in was very seldom that women appeared dressed other than in strict feminine attire. Any semblance of masculine activity brought the accusation of "tom boy." Willa seemed impervious to any criticism along this line and even boasted that she preferred the masculine garb. She at one time dubbed herself Dr. Cather, and made it known she preferred the masculine sex in this.

While Willa Cather was studying in the Red Cloud High School my schooling was being supplemented by my father's tutoring, and making monthly trips to Red Cloud where he had made arrangements for me to take the teachers examinations and where I wound up with a teachers certificate and Willa graduated in the first of Red Cloud High School classes, composed of three pupils. While she was in the State University I was working on the farm and trying my hand at country school teaching.

Nuckolls County and Superior have a fine hospital commemorating a one-time girl citizen. Adams County has its House of Yesterday and Red Cloud a fine Library, but nowhere do I find a commemoration of Willa Cather. That she long ago divorced her Webster County citizenship, evidenced from the fact she had her body committed to the dust of a far away community and state. It can well be noted that with this vast output of master pieces in literary art and her economical, frugal natural habits and no one but herself to support, certainly if she had retained any love for the citizens of the pioneer days of which she so freely wrote, and for the county and town of her childhood, she by all means should have made some provision for the perpetuation of the memory, which the people and their posterity had for their one-time literary genius, who they knew and loved. Perhaps, from the lines from Pope:

Justly Caesar scorns the poet's lays:
It is to history he trusts for praise.

ARTICLE 74

Red Cloud Stockade

By Mrs. W. A. Sherwood

The other day we found an old Argus published 24 years ago and we were interested to find in bold type heading "Woman's Club Hear of Pioneer Society." Mrs. W. A. Sherwood describes the Red Cloud stockade. We quote from the Argus. Since this included so much material of general interest, the Argus asked and obtained Mrs. Sherwood's permission to publish the principal part of her address.

We found it so informative and interesting and knowing Mrs. Sherwood as long as we can remember we are taking the liberty of asking its republication without asking her. Her long residence, interest and activity in civic and social affairs adds to its value.

"Of the social life of the first settlers of this community, I know only from hearsay, for the first settlements in Webster county were made in 1870 and my father did not come to Red Cloud until seven years later. The first social function of which I know anything was told to me by my aunt, Mrs. Jackson, who was the first white woman to come to the site of the present city of Red Cloud. (The settlement at Guide Rock was then about six months old.)

"As a background for the social affair, I thought you might like to know first of the building of the Red Cloud stockade, for naturally about this stockade and families living it in developed the first social life of the new settlement. The stockade was built in 1870 by nine men: Silas Garber, Sam Davis, W. E. Jackson, G. M. Taylor,

David Heffelbower, James Calvert, Watson Carver, Sid Hicks and John Penny. Three of these men were married and each had a family of three children. Mrs. Jackson's sister, Miss Mary Miner, was also among the number. There were six unmarried young men. At first they camped. They had brought a big tent 20x24 in which they cooked, ate and lived. For sleeping quarters they had the covers of their wagons.

"The actual building of the stockade commenced the latter part of July and occupied the months of August, September and the first part of October. It was located on a projecting knoll on the north side of the elevation east of Red Cloud which later became the site of the residence of Governor Garber. This location for the stockade was selected because of a spring which was used to furnish water for the camp. The stockade was about one hundred feet square, and was built of logs placed horizontally. Outside of the logs was a wall of sod, four feet thick. Beyond the sod wall was a ditch four feet deep and four feet across. It was believed that the ditch would make it more difficult for an attacking enemy to reach the stockade, while the dirt wall would prevent fire that might be set in the surrounding grass by Indian attackers, from reaching the log walls and destroying the stockade. There was no gate, but on the south the walls overlapped, with a space between the overlapping sides for entrance. The ditch was crossed by means of a log bridge which could be taken in when desired. It was thought that the stockade was practically impervious to the Indians, but it was never attacked, consequently the degree of safety it provided is a matter of conjecture. Inside the stockade were two log houses, each containing two rooms. The three families each had a room, and the fourth room was used for storage.

"During the summer the store of supplies which the pioneers had brought with them dwindled, so, with their dwelling places secure, a train of five wagons left at once for Swan Creek, to lay in the winter's supply of food. At Swan Creek was a grist mill and a small saw mill and a store which had located there during the summer. A few logs were taken to have made into slabs for the construction of shelves, benches, etc., in their new homes. The food purchased consisted of flour, corn meal, potatoes, onions, cabbage, dried apples and peaches, salt, sugar, coffee and syrup, and my aunt who accompanied the party brought back four hens and a rooster. The settlement already had three cows.

"During the absence of the party, those at home had not been idle. One of the men had killed a fine young buffalo out on the flat northeast of the stockade, near where the Mrs. H. Gilham home is now. (Mrs. C. Frisbie stated that she has in her possession one of the horns of that buffalo.) With the help of the women the buffalo had been skinned and cut up. This added very materially to the winter's food supply. On the return of the party from Swan Creek, finding a supply of fresh meat on hand, a council was held and it was decided to return in a measure the hospitality of the settlers living in the stockade at Guide Rock, by inviting them up for Thanksgiving. A few days later the men, who were now engaged in getting in a good supply of wood from the river for the coming winter, killed two wild turkeys, so, without waiting for the regular Thanksgiving day to arrive, fearing bad weather might set in, the feast was prepared and the neighbors to the east invited. There were no fancy fruit cock-

tails or salads, but their menu was not to be sneezed at, for all that. It read something like this:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| | Roast Turkey with Gravy | |
| | Buffalo Steak | |
| Mashed Potatoes | | Stewed Onions |
| | Cabbage Slaw | |
| Mince Pie | | Custard in Goblets |
| | Coffee or Milk | |

"The custard was garnished with some of the precious jelly from the wild fruit the men had gathered during the summer and was quite a delicacy. The mince meat was made from buffalo meat and dried apples. Something like forty, counting the children, sat down to this feast. Big feeds were not so popular in those days. The pioneers found it necessary to eat to live, but they could not afford to live to eat, as many seem to do today. Food was too precious, for it took too long to get it, and money was not any too plentiful.

"There were no social rivalries in those early days, but on every hand genuine hospitality. The pioneers found time to play, for they realized that any life filled with all work must soon grow dark and sullen, so they were always enthusiastic in organizing such social activities as their time and means and modes of conveyance allowed. The most popular social events were dances and prayer meetings. The dances were often on a dirt floor in a dug-out, with music by a jewsharp or a mouth organ, or occasionally an accordion.

"When the school districts were organized and school held (in dug-outs or sod schoolhouses) singing schools, literary and debating societies were organized and people went for miles to attend. I was told the other day by one of our pioneer women that quilting became a means of the women getting together after the stockade days. These were all-day affairs, where each woman took her children and something for the dinner. They had to get the quilt done in those days for in most of the pioneer homes the family either had to go to bed or stay out-of-doors when a quilt was on the frame.

When we came to Red Cloud in the spring of 1878 there were still no church buildings, and the public school consisted of one room large enough to hold perhaps fifty people. It seemed to be the social center, and lectures and spelling schools the popular diversions.

"I very well remember the first big ball, as it was called, that was held in Red Cloud in the fall of '79. Mr. Kenney had built the Argus office (nearly opposite where Mrs. Koontz' house now stands) and lived there for a few months. In '79 he built his home and moved into it, so the Masons rented the upstairs and plastered it and made a fine hall 24x50. Here in the fall, they held the first public installation of officers and a big ball. The music was quite an innovation, the instruments consisting of an organ, a violin and a bass viol.

"The social activities of the pioneer were not marked by the lavish display or total disregard for cost in time and money and energy that is often the case today, but their social life was distinguished for its genuine friendships and generous hospitality."

Newspaper Items of the Past

Seventy Year Ago Items (Taken From Argus Aug. 9, 1883)

The militia returns for Webster county for the year 1883 show up 1,472 in number.

Attorneys Jas. S. Gilham and J. L. Kaley made a trip to the eastern part of the state last week on legal business.

A bloody row occurred at Blue Hill the other day between a saloon keeper and a customer. Both combatants were compelled to visit the doctor's office for repairs.

Mr. Hollenbach, who has been with the Jones & Magee Lumber Co. for several years in other parts of the state, has now taken up his residence in Red Cloud and will hereafter assist Jones & Goble in their extensive lumber trade.

There was an election in Red Cloud last Saturday. It was by far the most exciting contest at the polls experienced since voting the railroad bonds here some six years ago. The contest was over the location of the post office. For some time a movement has been on foot to secure the removal of the post office to the new State Bank building, when that structure should be completed and ready for occupancy. The vote of the patrons was taken Saturday afternoon and resulted as follows: for removal 128; against removal 325. We trust this vote was sufficiently decisive to do away with any further contest over the matter and that the office will be permitted to remain on the main thoroughfare to and from the depot.

Sixty Year Ago Items (Taken From Chief Aug. 11, 1893)

S. Lindsey of Elm Creek has contracted to sell 100 tons of hay to parties in Red Cloud.

The Misses Flossie Fanney and Lois Pope are home from their visit in Blue Hill and Grand Island.

Miss Ella Remsburg is home from New Mexico, where she has been visiting. She will leave in a few days for Lincoln, where she goes to teach school.

W. J. Vance, of Inavale, has been appointed postmaster at Inavale, in place of G. W. Knight, who has held it ever since an office has been in existence there.

Hugh Miner and Frank Cowden took a run up to Cowles Sunday on their wheels.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Sowter returned last evening from their wedding trip through the east.

The city is now lighted with electric lights and it seems like old times to see the city lighted up again and makes one feel as if there was some satisfaction in living. The city should see to it that lights are put on permanently, at least as many as can be afforded.

Fifty Year Ago Items (Taken From Argus Aug. 7, 1903)

The following marriage licenses were issued from the office of the county judge this week: August 4th—Walter J. Oberheide and Lillie Dean, both of Guide Rock; August 5th—James N. Baker, Pauline and Jennie P. Nelson, Rosemont.

Mrs. A. C. Hosmer and Mrs. Dr. Morrison departed

for Missouri the first of the week for a short visit. They were accompanied by Miss Tillie Bayha, niece of Mrs. Hosmer, who has been visiting in this city.

Miss Emma Graves opened a hair dressing emporium in the dental parlors of Dr. Nelle E. Mauer today.

Mrs. G. V. Argabright and daughter returned home from Smith Center, Kansas, the close of the week. They were accompanied by Inez and Don Clark, niece and nephew of Mrs. Argabright.

Forty Year Ago Items (Taken From Argus Aug. 7, 1913)

A modern doorway has been placed in the building in the State Bank block occupied by Turnure Bros. dry goods department and the store presents a more attractive appearance.

Miss Fern Averill was a passenger to Central City on Wednesday, where she is visiting relatives. From there she goes to Des Moines, Iowa, to purchase millinery stock.

A cement walk has been laid in front of the property on South Webster street, occupied by L. Sherman.

Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Fulton left Monday for Crete, where they will spend a month. Mr. Fulton will be engaged in erecting a residence for Rev. A. A. Cressman, who expects to retire from the ministry.

Mrs. E. M. Gard went to Grand Island yesterday to take a position as nurse at the soldiers' home.

At the bond election at Cowles, called to vote fourteen thousand dollars bonds for the purpose of building and furnishing and purchasing site for the new school house, the proposition carried by a vote of 79 to 17.

Thirty Year Ago Items (Taken From Chief Aug. 9, 1923)

The procession for the memorial services for the late President Warren G. Harding will form in front of the Masonic hall at 2:30 o'clock Friday afternoon and march to the Auditorium. The American Legion will lead, followed by the Masons.

The fat men vs. the lean men ball game, played on the Starke diamond Thursday evening, created considerable rivalry, as the former won by a score of 4 to 2. Prof. Betz and Claude Frost were on the mound for the fats, while George Kailey, who receives grain at the elevator, did the receiving end of the ball from these two pitchers. Joe Hewitt, Fred Turnure, Frank Perry and Amos Miksch were the twirlers for the leans and Ed Platt was behind the bat. Dr. Nicholson played a stellar game for his outfit and was the star at the bat. Several players on both teams were injured and Ben Copley, while making a death-defying slide for second base, sprained his ankle and is now hobbling around on crutches.

Isadore Johnson of this city and Miss Verna Hutchins, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Hutchins of Cowles, were united in marriage by Rev. Cope at the Methodist parsonage last Thursday afternoon, Dr. R. S. Martin and Miss Rachel Cowden standing up with them.

C. C. McConkey arrived here on No. 11 Monday evening for a short visit with his daughter, Mrs. W. R. Lippincott.

Twenty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Commercial Advertiser Week of August 7, 1933)

On Saturday, August 5th, Rev. Ralph E. Adams bespoke the words which united the hearts and hands of two popular young people of this section, Miss Helen Rickard and Elmer Stokes.

The Webster County Farmers' Picnic for 1933, held at Malick's Park, south of Cowles, on August 4th has gone down in history as the largest crowd of its kind recorded since the annual event was started several years ago.

A very pretty garden party, honoring Mrs. Edith Moss Huffman, whose marriage occurred at Birchwood, Wisconsin, August 2nd, was given by Mrs. Hazel Powell at her home Monday evening, she being assisted by County Superintendent Zelma R. Wonderly.

At a meeting of business men from over the county, held at the Hotel Royal on Monday evening, a county organization to be in effect for the duration of the NRA movement was effected, with R. P. Weesner being elected chairman and Frank V. Hoyt, secretary.

Miss Helen Schultz, who has been attending summer school at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, returned to her home here last evening. She was accompanied by Miss Patricia Frisbie, who has been her guest there for the past week.

Seventy Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus July 26, 1883)

Another landmark of the pioneer days of Red Cloud was recently moved from Main street to make way for a larger building. We refer to the unpretentious building occupied as a court house for several years. The material in the building was hauled from a distant railroad station by ex-Governor Garber with an ox team and was built and occupied by Mr. Garber as a store room for some time. It served its purpose successively as a store, court house and latterly, occupied by O. D. Roberts as a harness shop, but the building became too small for his large and growing business and it had to give place to larger structure.

A brakeman, John McClary, was killed at Amboy the latter part of the week. He was caught between the bumpers and crushed to death.

A special train of eight coaches passed through here Monday evening loaded with G A R boys enroute to Denver, Colorado.

Charles Cather has a new buggy.

D. M. Platt left Monday evening for a two weeks' vacation in Wisconsin.

The lively demand for brick from Ludlow & Sons yards is springing up even outside of Red Cloud.

The quickest return from a Nebraska farm that we have heard of in a long time came under our observation last week. Last April a gentleman from Illinois purchased the J. M. Metcalf farm a mile west of town. He seeded a few acres to barley and last week marketed the crop at the elevator getting a little over \$300 and all in a period of a little over three and a half months.

Very warm and very dry. Every thing needs rain badly and all signs fail. Prairie fires are again in order, one burning south of the river for two days at least.

Small grain prospects were never better. Wheat, oats, rye and barley a heavy yield, a self binder is heard from nearly every farm.

Fifty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus July 24, 1903)

Miss Florence Lawson goes to Reamsville to teach for \$46.00 per month and C. E. Kersey has been re-employed at Fairview and will receive \$42.50 a month.

The storm of last week caused the ruin of many windmills near Cowles and has made trade in that line quite lively.

John Waller has a thresher in shape for the great work before it this year.

Miss Ethel Garber departed yesterday morning for a sojourn with relatives at Clarinda, Iowa.

C. L. Cotting has a second hand phaeton for sale cheap.

Mrs. L. D. Oatman and son, Roy, returned home from several days sojourn with relatives near Minden. They made the trip overland.

A train comprising 22 cars of livestock left this place Tuesday, billed for Chicago.

Forty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Chief July 24, 1913)

Several representatives of the different parts of the county were in the city this week and agreed upon a plan for building a new court house.

On Sunday evening, July 20th, at 6 o'clock at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Kent, occurred the marriage of their daughter, Miss Irene, to Chester A. Sheeley. The ceremony was performed by Rev. W. F. Cole, in the presence of a few close friends, after which a bountiful wedding supper was served.

Pastures and hay lands are as dry and brown as stubble since the winds struck. Early corn is badly damaged, some fields being too badly burned ever to recover.

Miss Josie Igou, our accomplished music instructor, left Tuesday evening for Pasadena, California.

Attorney Bernard McNeny and family and Alf McCall and family left yesterday for Colorado Springs, Denver and other Colorado points.

Thirty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus July 26, 1923)

Considerable hog cholera is again reported in this county. County Agent Fausch is being called on to do a lot of vaccinating.

Hobart Blackledge returned to his work in Lincoln Wednesday morning after spending the past week here visiting with his father, Judge L. H. Blackledge and wife and at the home of his sister, Mrs. Floyd Turnure.

Sixty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus July 27, 1893)

A well attended picnic was held at the river yesterday, under the auspices of the Methodist Sunday School. All report a pleasant afternoon although the rain cut short the festivities somewhat.

The Red Cloud and Blue Hill ball clubs have made arrangements to play a series of five games during August.

Deputy Sheriff John Tomlinson was attending to legal business in Blue Hill the latter part of the week.

Mrs. M. A. Grice and son, Flave, returned home on Wednesday evening from a visit to their old home in Illinois and a trip to the world's fair.

Jas. Martin, C. D. Robinson and Col. Hoover of Blue Hill were in the city Monday.

Geo. Ducker, of the firm of G. A. Ducker & Co., was down this week.

The county board convened today and received the report of the committee to the county treasurer's accounts. Representatives of the banks of the county were present and offered bond as county depositories, should they be so designated by the board the amounts to be deposited with each depository not to exceed one-half its respective bonds.

B. M. Frees of Chicago was in this city, looking after business interests.

Seventy Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus Aug. 2, 1883)

Although Judge Charles Vaughn was assassinated near Jefferson, in Texas, on the 2nd of July, the government was not in possession of the facts in the case until the 17th. It seems that a war of extermination is being waged by certain Texans against all United States officials in the Mincola district and that the district attorney does not go to Jefferson, where the court house is situated for fear of meeting the fate of Judge Vaughn.

Ed Kellogg has gone to Ohio on a month's visit among relatives and old friends.

Herds of ponies for sale are numerous on the streets of Red Cloud these days.

A grand out door temperance revival is to be held near Red Cloud the present autumn. Prominent men from all parts of the country will be present.

The sorghum crop promises to be as profitable this year as heretofore. A car load of mills lately received by one of our implement dealers indicates the acreage to be unusually large.

We learn by the Guide Rock Signal that R. L. Tinker of that place is soon to open a furniture store at that point.

The location of a post office in Red Cloud is to be decided by a vote of the patrons of the office on Saturday, August 4th.

Sixty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Chief July 28, 1893)

Miss Belle Spanogle returned from Chicago Tuesday morning.

Father Quin, the resident pastor of the Catholic church talks of soon commencing the erection of a new church of that faith up town, also a new parsonage. If the Rev. Father undertakes the enterprise there is no doubt but what it will be accomplished.

C. L. Cotting has a curiosity in the shape of a horned toad.

Miss Ada Skjelver is home from Fargo, South Dakota, where she has been attending school for a year.

Duncan Crary and Miss Elizabeth Badman were married the other day by Rev. J. A. Chapin.

Prof. Castor arrived home from the west Monday and on Wednesday started for the World's Fair at Chicago.

Roy Hutchison took a fit the other day and shaved off his mustache. Barnum ought to see him, for a natural curiosity he takes the whole barber shop.

Robert McBride, who has been on the road with a phonograph, is home on a short visit.

A colored gentleman was entertaining the railroad boys Saturday by eating glass.

Fifty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus July 31, 1903)

Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Thomas and son and daughters of Elm Creek will join Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Smith and son of Hillsdale, Iowa, making a party of eight for a long

overland trip through the southwest. Their outfit will consist of two wagons and two tents. They may spend the winter in Oklahoma if everything goes well. The trip will be in quest of health as well as pleasure and recreation.

Sheriff McArthur received word Wednesday that the person who is supposed to have stolen I. W. Crary's fine driver and buggy and harness from Guide Rock on the night of July 3rd, has been captured in Clark county, Kansas, and was being held there, with the outfit in his possession. Sheriff McArthur and Mr. Crary departed for that place Wednesday night to secure the prisoner.

O. W. Pope has gone to Lincoln to begin work in his new position as salesman for an Omaha wholesale house. His household goods are packed for shipment and his wife will soon join him there.

A pleasant event occurred at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Merrill July 25th, the occasion being their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. About seventy-three people were present and partook of the pleasures of the day.

S. J. Williams, deputy for the Modern Woodman, has moved his family to Lincoln. County Superintendent Marker will occupy the house vacated by him, south of the Advent church.

Forty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Argus July 31, 1913)

Miss Veda Ludlow went to Inavale Tuesday evening for a visit with friends.

Some improvements have been made in the equipment in the Turnure grocery store.

The work on the new depot has been completed with the exception of rebuilding the front windows and this is underway.

Work on the new G. E. Hall building is progressing nicely. Mr. Hall has decided to construct the front of brick, which will add much to the appearance of the building.

Samuel C. Ellis of this city and Gertrude Lemon of University Place were married in the latter city Monday morning. Mr. Ellis is Burlington agent here.

Miss Ruth Johnson returned Monday evening from Peru, where she has been attending summer school.

Miss Cora Weesner has returned from her vacation and is once more guarding the treasury of Miner Bros.

Thirty Year Ago Items

(Taken From Chief Aug. 2, 1923)

Tuesday a deal was completed whereby C. C. Howe disposed of his cafe to Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Prevost, who have taken possession of the same.

J. W. Linn who has conducted a picture show in the Besse Auditorium for the past three years, has sold the same to a former resident of this city, E. C. Preston, who took charge Wednesday.

Last Thursday evening at the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. John Aubushon occurred the wedding of Beulah Fay Pegg to Orvin Harris, Rev. Heintz officiating.

The marriage of Miss Alta Coon to Ernest Bittfield took place Wednesday at 6 o'clock at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Coon. The ceremony took place under a bower of flowers, the Rev. H. W. Cope officiating.

Floy Fearn, who is working in the C B & Q machine shops at Havelock, spent the first of the week here with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Fearn.

Pioneer Picnic Is History

In the absence of the president of the Old Settlers Historical Association, Daniel Garber, Mrs. Ethel Kailey acted as master of ceremonies during the program last Friday afternoon at the City Park. The theme for discussion was "Trails and Crossings."

Community singing was led by the grandson of an old pioneer, Mr. Michael, Eustace Bean. Rev. E. E. Golay of the Methodist Church invoked the blessing of the Ruler of the Universe and E. J. Overing, in the absence of Mayor Howard S. Foe, delivered the address of welcome.

The first talk of the afternoon was given by Mrs. Ed Tennant. Veda very ably recounted many of the things she had heard from the lips of her pioneering parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ludlow. Mrs. Tennant told of the many different modes of crossing the river, of the many different types of bridges and modes of building them.

Charles Copley told of the trails on Farmers Creek in the vicinity of Inavale precinct, where his father homesteaded and where Mr. Copley and his brothers were born and reared to young manhood.

Lawrence Peirce, in the absence of his father, A. B. Peirce, told of the trails through their pasture to the river at the old mill site west of town on the Republican river.

Sylvester Frisbie very agreeably told of the ferry which his father had near their mill. The ferry was operated for the convenience of their patrons south of the river. The fare for crossing on the ferry was fifteen cents one way with a free ride back. The mill ground three grades of flour, the third grade being very poor. A lady from over south, to whom many trite sayings are attributed, came to buy a sack of third grade flour. After some time she came back and the elder Frisbie asked her: "And how did you like the flour?" "It was the devil's own flour," she said, "but I'll take another sack."

A. H. Keeney talked of the Hastings-Spring Ranch trail and gave a very interesting account of his early experiences. Mr. Keeney offered the log house which still stands on his place and which log house was used for a post office in the very early days, to the Historical Society of Webster county if they would provide a place for it to be moved and it is the hope of the society that this may be done in the not too distant future. Webster county is very much in need of a museum and this old log house, which is still in a good state of preservation, would serve well for such a purpose.

George Drake, now over 80 years, told of his early school and buffalo experiences in Garfield township when he attended school taught by Cap. Houchin.

Mrs. Kaley read a very interesting letter from Emanuel Peters, which he had written to Daniel Garber just a few days ago. The letter follows:

Dear Dan: Would it be interesting to the people gathered together August 27, to hear from an eye witness, the story of the naming of your city of Red Cloud?

"I cannot be with you in person, so am sending this

clipping probably taken from the Guide Rock Signal and stored away in one of my daughter's scrap books.

"Although Col. Rankin dedicated the first settlement in Webster county, then consisting of one dug-out, not fully completed and four occupants as Thayer City, yet that name was not considered when a meeting was held five or six months later for the purpose of naming our post office.

"For almost two months after the arrival of the Rankin Colony on the 16th day of May, 1870, no communication from the outside world was received by us four men who had decided to remain in the aforesaid Thayer City after the rest of the colony returned to civilization. Any mail for us was addressed to Meridian, which was not a town, only a postoffice on the prairie bank of the Blue river, 60 miles northwest of here, near where today stands the town of Alexandria.

"In July, someone who had come out to look at the homestead country and was going back, promised us to stop in Meridian and tell the postmaster there to send our mail with the first covered wagon coming this way, which he did. Finally, about the first of September, we hired a boy, the son of Dr. Head, to ride horseback once per week and bring out the mail for the settlers, which then numbered about 20. Everyone "chipped in."

"In October we petitioned the government to allow us a post office of our own, and they sent word to send them a name for it. How joyfully we anticipated regular mail once more. The townsite had not yet been selected, but the stockade was finished and in constant use. People arriving almost every day, staying all night, and many going on farther west; some of us called it home for a long time, while spending the days working on our homesteads.

"Sometimes, there together we talked of a village and its name. Red Cloud, seemed to be the favorite, in honor of the famous chief, but Captain Silas Garber, who preempted several miles west, wanted that name for the visionary town in his direction. Incidentally, Capt. Garber, who later became Governor of Nebraska, took a quarter section of land by pre-emption, for the express purpose of selling it for a town site. By pre-emption, instead of homestead, he paid \$200 for it, entitling him to a deed in six months. His ambition was realized for at a called meeting of the settlers of this county, held in his dug-out the following April, it was voted that the county seat should be there located and that its name should be Red Cloud."

Incidentally, I might add to this bit of history, that I am now living in Lomita, California, just 4 miles from the "jumping off" place. It is not as quiet here as it was in my dug-out. Just now I hear the fog horn booming, so there is fog over the Los Angeles harbor, although it is clear here, Lomita being higher, nearer the Palos Verdi hills. Planes are buzzing over our roof every hour in the day, as their landing field is only a half mile distant. Then a half block from here is the Pacific coast highway—we hear its roar of traffic and see the world go by. I sit with folded hands and marvel at the changes which I have lived

to see. In less than six years I shall be 100 and then I may surprise you by flying across to the Old Settlers picnic.

—E. Peters.

P. S. Did you know Dan, that your mother was the first white woman settler of Webster county? She was a wonderful woman and a brave pioneer.

Mrs. Will Osborne was in charge of the registration of all those who had been in the county over 50 years.

The musical entertainment of the afternoon was furnished by Betty Lou Eshelman, whistling solos; songs by Irene and Marvel Stokes; song by Cora Jean Garber; songs by Charles David and Mary Lou Heffelbower; song by Betty Pegg; saxophone solo by Shirley Whitaker, accompanied by Marilyn Gass; and a song of his own composition, "America Is Ahead of Them All," by George

Marshall, of Riverton, a special friend of the late J. S. Gilham.

Those who were to speak but were unable to be present were Sam Giger, A. B. Peirce, Alex Buschow, W. E. Patterson, Frank Stokes, Mrs. Tom Kralik, Mrs. Ella V. Watt, James Keagle, Percy Grandstaff, Byron Vaughan, Arthur Householder, Charles Myers, Tom Jones and Frank King.

Charles Cowley read the names of deceased pioneers who had died within the past year, more than fifty having passed away during the past year in the county.

Miss Jessie Kellogg was in charge of relics and a very nice display was shown.

Election of officers for the coming year resulted in the election of Daniel Garber, President; Ethel Kailey, Vice-president; Emma Bargman, Secretary.

ARTICLE 77

Webster County Mining Craze

In talking over old times in Nebraska yesterday with a man from Aurora I was asked if there was ever a mining craze in Webster county, such as there has been in most other parts of the state. I can only recall one, and that flashed in the pan in very short order.

North of Inavale about three miles, on the little creek which comes down from up that way and sometimes has water in it all the way to the river, but oftener does not, many years ago, lived a family named Brockman. They were very excellent people but desperately poor. What they lacked in finances they made up in children. There were seven or eight children, besides the parents, and at least three of them were very pretty and bright girls, already big enough to have beaus. The girls and boys mostly "worked out" when they could get jobs, but usually there were several of them at home.

West of Inavale a couple of miles lived the Bently family. They had a big farm and usually employed a "hired girl" and two or three men. One of the Brockman girls worked there quite a long time. While she was there, one day came along a handsome, dark complexioned man, of uncertain age, named Edwards. He was riding a beautiful black horse and carried with him, besides a change of clothing, a guitar. He asked for work at the Bently place and was taken on.

Not only was this man a good worker, but as well a good vocalist, guitar player and conversationalist. Of his past he said little but would admit to having been in many places in the west and claimed to know something about mining.

He and the Brockman beauty got acquainted at the Bently home, but she soon after that went home to stay a while and then Edwards would ride his beautiful animal up that way to see her. Several times he did this and one day when he was there he strolled out to where the men of the family had been digging an out-door cellar. They had thrown up dirt on each side of the hole and, when down about three feet had come to a streak of coarse sand. Edwards seemed at once interested in this and, taking a little microscope from his pocket, began to study it closer. The more he looked at it the more excited

he apparently became. Pretty soon he asked for a frying pan. This was brought to him. He took it and, with some water and sand, scoured it until it shone like polished steel. That was, he said, to get the grease all off of it. Then he "panned" some of the sand he had gotten from a pocket in the side of the wall.

Several times he did this, each time taking from the bottom of the pan a few flakes of pure gold. Then he straightened up and declared that gold was there without doubt. He then staked off a claim and said that he would come back later and begin to work it. He promised the Brockmans that they should have half of the gold he took out.

The news spread like wildfire. A day or so later Edwards came again and panned a little more, finding a few more flakes. When he did his panning he allowed no one to come near him. Great riches floated before the Brockmans like smoke in the air. Mr. Brockman made arrangements to trade his one yoke of oxen to "Doc" Mead for a fine span of bay mares and pay \$100 difference. He and his wife went to Red Cloud and tried to get credit at Miner Bros. store for all kinds of things, but that firm would only let them have what groceries they needed.

Before the week was out hundreds of people came to see the "gold find." Bill Thompson, a great miner of Riverton, came and investigated but Edwards would not let him pan any of the sand. Bill looked at the gold in the bottle Edwards had panned out and declared it the "pure quill." Bill was a real miner, but as well a practical joker himself, and he always was looking out for "salt" in a lode so he said but little.

An old fellow came up from near Smith Center with a caucean wand, which was no less than a willow switch, cut to form a "Y" like water witchers use. He put a silver half dollar at the end of it and witched all over that country. The only place it would turn down was right over the spot where the gold had been found. He declared that his witch was so strong at that point that it would either turn down or peel the bark right off it, and showed where the bark had actually started to slip under his hands. He explained that the switch would locate water

by itself but in order to find gold or silver it had to have a portion of those metals stuck in it.

In the ensuing two weeks I think two or three hundred people came to see that spot. No one was allowed to go closer than ten feet of it. Edwards, however, for some reason did not prosecute his work. He kept offering excuses about not starting to mine there. Soon after that the Brockman girl announced her coming marriage to a man named Arneson and the next day after he heard of that Edwards took his guitar, got on his black horse and went away, never to be heard of again in that coun-

try. It was always thought that he had those flakes of gold concealed in his sleeve and dropped them into the sand as he panned it.

Long ago the Brockmans left that country. Pat Gilroy was the next owner of the land and now, I think, it belongs to Mrs. Harry Cloud.

I have been reading recently that, instead of being in Texas, New Mexico, or Oklahoma, the seven lost cities of Cibola are now supposed to have been located in Nebraska.—(Author Unknown).

ARTICLE 78

A Tribute to the Oldest Citizen

A tribute to Red Cloud's oldest teacher, preacher, temperance worker, agriculturist, poultry expert, song leader, philanthropist, philosopher, and leader for good.

It can be well said of him, "The world has been made better, more fragrant, more beautiful by his long years of having lived in it."

One bright, warm, sunny afternoon of October 1951, A. B. Peirce and the writer made an exploring trip over the old haunts of long ago. We visited the old quarter section he bought for 3 dollars and a quarter an acre, where he lived and farmed during the first years of married life. He pointed out where on this land he had raised his banner crops of corn, wheat, oats, and garden crops. Where he raised his fine chickens, fed his hogs, milked his cows, and curried and harnessed his horses. He pointed out where and who his neighbors, his brother-in-law to the west and above on a high ridge on which was located the first wagon trail from Red Cloud to Hastings that passed through the yard. Then pointing to the north and east he indicated the location of a hole in the bank "or dug-out they were called" where he first taught school in the county.

We drove to the point he indicated and parked on the side of the hill. We had barely stopped when I saw him scampering up a path and over the hill out of sight. In the bottom of the draw was an alfalfa field recently mowed and above a corn field while the steeper bank was covered with tall dead sunflowers, a perfect wilderness. I followed suit but soon found I had lost him. Returning to the car I waited then fearing something might have happened I again started out to hunt, but had not gone far when I both heard and saw him far down the road where he had followed down the draw. I met him with the car and we started down to the south and a little west to where another school house had been built out of buffalo sod to take the place of the discarded dug-out and nearer the center of children population. We viewed it from a distance not being sure of the condition of the road. From what we could see there was not much left of the old walls but piles of dirt. He then explained that a new school house had been made necessary and again there was a shift in student population and to the south and a little west there was erected a new frame school house on a

sectional intersection. We were not long in finding the spot, and sure enough there were the land marks and part of a foundation where there had once been a school house, when he explained it had burned some years back. We parked the car and after climbing a six or eight foot bank made in grading the roads we found ourselves beside a cement covered cave that had been built for the safety of pupils in case of a wind storm. We ascended five or six cement steps and landed on a large cement platform that had been the stoop for the entrance to the school room. Here we stood in great admiration as we looked around, to the south and east, we looked down a broad draw or watershed lined with corn fields, grasses and weeds that had their first freeze and revealed many of the rainbow colors. Further down it flattened out into the valley bounding the northern bank of the Republican lined with a long row of native trees with a background of high rounded bluffs, beyond where rests the remains of an ancient Indian village and beyond a hazy vision of the state of Kansas.

Turning to the west we viewed the outline of a cement block foundation that had supported a school house some 14 by 20 feet. My companion informed me he had named it the Sunny Side school house. From the deep recesses of my mind I could see coming down the north along a trail a man rather small in stature, neatly clad, the teacher who enters the school room and lights a fire in a large pot bellied stove with a sheet metal drum on top where an eight-inch stovepipe takes off towards the ceiling and just before into a brick chimney. By the time the first students arrive the room is warm. They come by ones and in little groups from the various directions and hurriedly deposit their dinner pails, scurrying out to engage in play before school takes up. Nine o'clock comes, the teacher takes up his little school bell, steps out on the porch and rings it loudly and around him, swarming like bees, come the youngest, the oldest, the smallest, the largest depositing their head gear in the proper place and go on to their seats and desks. The teacher steps in and all is quiet. He never fails to greet them with a "good morning pupils" and then from his desk he takes a small worn Bible and reads a few verses explaining their meaning, stepping to the blackboard, he calls their attention to the lines of a verse of a new song they are to learn and sing. He reads it for them, then he sings it, he repeats and has

them sing it with him. He then goes to his desk and bids them stand and then in a few well chosen words he prays for their health, for their homes, fathers and mothers and their general welfare. They are seated and soon scrambling in their desks for the recitation book of the morning and so until recess and noon, then recess and home. The teacher goes to his home where he does his evening chores and after supper returns to the school house to lead the community prayer meeting. It may be to preach at a revival meeting, or lead a religious class meeting, a singing school, debating society, or it may be act as auctioneer at a box social, or pronounce at the spelling bees. He never fails to be the center of the community, leader activity.

My seance is over and I find at my side the teacher now on December the 27th, 1951, 99 years old, well and hearty. He expresses a desire to see where I was born, my first school in a sod school house, but a very few miles to the north within the same watershed.

We again view the old trail to Blue Hill and Hastings along the ridges down past the school house corner

across the bridge over Elm Creek and past the spot where stood the little log hut in which I was born 77 years ago, coming the eleventh of December. We visited the old homesteads of some mutual friends of the past and back again over Crooked Creek to Indian Creek where he again pointed to a school house where he taught, not alone the day school but the Sunday School as well. Again pointing out the old homes where lived the friends we both knew and loved. On the way around we saw the old home of our mutual friend, Ed McCune, who married Fannie Barber, the first teacher in Red Cloud. We returned to the home we had left earlier in the day where he and his oldest son, Lawrence, had lived alone since the death of his beloved wife, Mary E. Hummel Peirce, who died April 30th, 1942, at the age of 89 years. His oldest son who has lived with his father most continuously for the 73 years of his life, fails to remember a day when his father or some member of the family failed to conduct family daily worship or failed to attend Sunday school or church services when it was possible to do so. We join with his many friends in wishing him many happy future years. His is an unusually long productive life.

ARTICLE 79

A Visit to the Nebraska Asylum for Incurable Insane

It was in August 1878, and I was on my way to my father's home in Webster County after spending four months on a farm in western Iowa. I had stopped off in Hastings to visit an uncle, a carpenter who was employed in building the first annex to the hospital some two miles west of Hastings, Nebraska. I had with me my belongings done up in a heavy luggage.

My uncle had secured some lots almost a quarter of a mile out and had built a little cottage which at this time was in a corn field northeast of the business district but it was on a street car line that ran past on its way out to a Catholic Nunnery several blocks further on. It was a horse car railway system and as there were no side walks that far out I made use of one of the paths made by the horses. Carrying my belongings that hot sultry August afternoon proved a trip, I have never forgotten. There was one thing certain, I was in no fear of getting run over for those old horses were as slow as molasses in winter and both driver and horses were only semi-awake the long hot afternoons, and got by as people had not yet learned the speed of the electric cars or the gas propelled auto of today. There were however some wrecks and car derailment when it became necessary to change horses or supply new ones or a mule team went on a strike. If one was in a hurry and did not have too far to walk his legs were his surest bet.

My uncle assured his family of two things, plenty of milk and butter and independent transportation by keeping a cow and horse and buggy. He had a few chickens and equipment, plenty of room and enjoyed a fairly independent life. He put in long hours but not many hard ones as there were no modern electric speed tools to set a pace and the horse and buggy pace was still the standard for human motivity. His name was the old Bible Samuel and

his movement, speech, personality, and character all reminded one of the Samuel in Bible times.

His wife and daughter constituted his family. That night it was agreed that I was to accompany him to his work next day at the Asylum. We were up bright and early next morning and while he milked the cow, I fed and curried the horse. After a fine breakfast of bacon and eggs and pancakes we proceeded to harness and hitch our horse power to the buggy, and after we had provided the horse power with corn, oats and hay, my aunt came out with a well filled dinner pail and we were off on a three mile trip to the west and talking over politics, religion and carpentering. He took occasion to remind me that our Savior was a carpenter and that he rode an ass to his work while we were enjoying the comfort of a buggy.

Reaching our destination we unhitched and tied the horse to the buggy allowing her to refuel on hay while he went about his work and I tried my hand at loafing about the place, but not for long as the boss soon crossed my path and bantered me to take a job with him and in less than an hour I was at it with chisel and hammer getting ready to point up some rock foundation.

While I was engaged at this job the institution superintendent came by and was surprised to see me, for he was our old family physician. He asked me to stop at his office at my earliest convenience, which I did and found myself with a job as a hospital attendant or worse yet in an asylum for incurable insane.

I had many misgivings about this job for I was a lad six foot tall and only weighed one hundred and twenty-seven pounds but my doctor assured me I could do it and he ought to know. I soon found myself confronted with all kinds of wild stories, scorn and ridicule for even

thinking of such a job. They said, "do you realize that these patients are incurable, chronic insane?" "You may be killed, maimed or go crazy yourself if you are not already so."

It must be remembered that the general public at that time had a very distorted concept of insanity, to the extent it was considered a disgrace, a stigma on the family name, to have even a distant relative insane. That it was from a bad social disease inherited, the sins of the parents visited upon the sons and daughters. In fact, it was vague superstition and belief carried down from Witchcraft days. So imbued, so instilled in the minds of people with outstanding knowledge, reasoning and judgment scoffed at a mere suggestion or prophecy of the days of mental hygiene and a specialty of medicine called psychiatry.

ARTICLE 80

Nebraska Develops It's Hospitals

Prior to the location and building of the Hospital for the Insane at Lincoln this class of unfortunates were sent to the Iowa Asylum. The bill locating and appropriating funds for the hospital building was passed by the Legislature in 1863. It was opened in December 22, 1870. In April 1871, five months later it was burned to the ground. Three patients were never found and were thought to have burned. In June 1871, an appropriation was made for the building of a new one.

In 1887 a bill was passed and an appropriation of \$75,000 made to build an Asylum at Hastings with a provision that 160 acres be donated upon which to build the Institution. Forty acres were given by the county and 120 acres by the enterprising citizens of Hastings.

Ironically the first bill to locate the hospital at Hastings was introduced in the Legislature in 1885, by Fred P. Olmstead representative from Adams county. Mr. Matthewson of Norfolk was speaker of the House in that session and favorable to Norfolk. The next result of the legislature was the submitting of the name of Norfolk into the Olmstead bill in place of Hastings. One of the weaknesses of the proposition for Hastings, which Mr. Olmstead was authorized to make, was the offer of 40 acres of land while Norfolk had offered 320 acres.

The corner stone of this first Asylum building was laid July 25, 1888. In 1891 the north and south wings were added to the original building. In 1897 and '98 the south Annex was built. From here on our story, "Insanity a Life Avocation."

However the political aspect as reflected in the records shows the fickleness with which politicians evaluated their sacred trust in the State's care of these unfortunates. Tradition obscured responsibility in sacred lives and souls being unable to rise to their own defense and without friends through ignorance, superstition and lack of sane reasoning on the part of those who would boast of their own sanity.

As I look back at the Nebraska Asylum for Incurable Insane, as it was then called, and remember a medical staff of two country doctors with no special training, no nurses or dental service whatever and no thought of mental treatment. A group of insane patients that had been transferred after a period of treatment in asylums at Lincoln or Norfolk where they were found incurable. Imagine if you can, mentally sick being submitted to a treatment such as this, and this less than sixty years past. I shed many a tear during the three years I served as an attendant there, and prayed for the hastening of the days we now have and the modern hospital for the mentally sick. It is a great satisfaction to know that you have had a small part in this transformation and have lived to see prayers answered and a revolutionary transformation of mental concept of human behavior.

Governor Boyd served from January 15, 1891 to May 5, 1891. On April 20, Governor Boyd appointed Dr. G. W. Johnston superintendent and on May 5, Governor Thayer resumed his seat as governor and on the same date removed Superintendent Dr. Johnston who served only 25 hours. Governor Thayer on May 5, reappointed Dr. F. G. Test, whom he had first appointed May 31, and who had served until his removal by Governor Boyd. On September 15, 1891, Dr. Test was removed and Dr. F. J. Bricker appointed. February 15, 1892, Dr. Bricker was removed and Dr. G. W. Johnston was reappointed and assumed control of the institution February 15, 1892, serving until Dr. Robert Damerell of Red Cloud was appointed by Governor Holcomb March 28, 1895, and assumed charge April 10, 1895. Dr. J. T. Steel was assistant superintendent and succeeded Dr. Damerell by appointment from Governor Pointer.

It was on September 1, 1898, that the author became an attendant under Dr. Robert Damerell, his old family doctor. I had not been there long when Superintendent Damerell called me to his office one evening and informed me that a male employee had made complaint that my politics were not in accord—a fact the superintendent had known all along. I was advised to lay low on the question, when a short time later I was again called in, I was asked if I would take over Ward one, as he, the superintendent, had fired the political trouble maker and I was to have his job. When Dr. J. T. Steele the assistant superintendent took over by appointment of the new governor Pointer, succeeding Dr. Damerell, this political employee was again employed in his old position and I was transferred to another ward. It was not long however until he was fired again and I was again given the old number one ward, and thus politics was the essential requisite for a job and not always efficiently.

We attendants were on twenty-two hour duty by having our room located on our wards. Our patients were put to bed at eight o'clock each evening and we deposited our

keys on a conspicuous hook opposite the name of our ward and the two hours until ten o'clock was ours to roam about the premises as we pleased. We were entitled to two one-half days off each month. For this service I received the sum of \$18 and keep, per month. When I left for college in September three years later I was getting \$22 per month. Out of this we were assessed a liberal portion for campaign expenses. We generally had a fair bed to sleep on compared to that of our patients and the same held good as to food.

Up to this time, no married couples were hired who lived at the institution and there was about an equal

number of male and female employes and it gradually became known as a matrimonial institution. These were the horse and buggy days and there was no place out there to keep a horse, and to keep a buggy just for a place to pet was rather silly. The campus was not seeded to grass as yet and there were no seats there about and two hours was not enough to go far, so stairways, cozy nooks and rooms of outside employees were at a premium. The latter good fortune fell to the author and had to be shared by the room mate which proved to be no great obstacle as he has lived with one of these girls for the last fifty three years.

ARTICLE 81

I Became an Attendant

My Uncle Sam was a contractor and carpenter and was working on the first addition to this asylum. On my return from a trip to Iowa I had stopped in Hastings to visit him. The first morning there we harnessed and hitched his old mare to the buggy and after placing some corn and hay for her in the back under the seat and gotten the dinner pail my aunt had so nicely prepared for us we set out the three miles to the west and his work. While looking about the place I confronted the boss whose first words were "looking for a job young man?" I replied, "I wouldn't mind." He at once escorted me to the tool box and I was set to work.

One day while at work the superintendent of the asylum came by and was surprised to find me, for he was our old family physician and we arranged for a visit. At this visit he learned that I was preparing for a professional life and insisted on helping me by giving me a job as an attendant . . . I was a little leery of such a job, but he assured me it would help me so I embarked on a new line of work.

For a few days I kept my back to the wall and eyed all my patients with apprehension and suspicion but not for long, for I soon found most of them my friends. The violent were in special wards under large and experienced attendants. My politics did not jibe with those in the State House and it was not long until I was called to the superintendent's office and informed that a trouble maker was after me on political grounds and that I was to lay low on politics as he expected to get rid of this man that boasted of his political pull. It was not long until I was called again to see the superintendent and told that he had been fired and I was to have his position. Ward one had 27 patients and most of them worked outside during the day and I had scarcely enough to care for the ward work. I soon however had the best cared for ward according to the officials.

I found that the attendant that got along best was the one who was kind and sympathetic. After we had all been to the dining room in the evening we swept, cleaned and polished the floor of the day hall and usually had a little time left before going to bed. I found I had an entertainer in the ward. A very large Swede who would get down on his hands and knees and insist on my riding him

about the room, then he would try to throw me off like a bucking bronco. One patient, a kind trusty who everybody wanted for odd jobs, was one of the finest men I ever knew. I could see nothing the matter with him and said to him one day, August why can't you go home and stay with your brother Charley? He and his brother were architects and while building a fine building had some serious trouble which had helped in deranging his mind. He answered me thus, "Charley has two little girls of whom I am very fond and I do have bad days when I am off my mind and if at this time I should harm them, when my mind clears I would not want to live." It was not long until when I went to his room to unlock for the morning I understood what he meant. He had never married and they had gotten their training in Germany before coming over. I visited him for several years but his spells got closer and closer together until he died in one of them.

Friday was barber day and the attendants had to be the barber for their ward and I was glad that my customers were confined to the institution. However I found it was good training, not lost when I began dental work over a chair. When the weather was nice we would take them for long walks and how they would eat on those days. I, being alone on my ward, had to go with another ward, with two attendants. One day we had walked them almost to town along the railroad track and were on the way back, when trailing us came a young man and two girls and as we were walking behind we took the blunt of their remarks. "That they could not tell us from the patients." Then we played a trick on them I bet they never forgot. We had a big ducky who enjoyed a good prank, so when we said, "Spuddy, you see that young man? Well pretend you are going to get him." He began by throwing his hands and yelling at the top of his voice. The girls took to their heels down the corn rows yelling for help, but he was after their escort who gave no heed to their calls for help. Well Spudy after a good chase came back smiling, having had a time of his life.

I had not been long on the ward when a large husky patient developed a large abscessed upper molar and the assistant physician, a small man, came in to extract it. There were only two physicians, the superintendent and

assistant superintendent. No dentist, no nurses. The institution had but two forceps, an upper and lower. He attached the upper one to that aching tooth and began to swing first one way and then the other. Up in the patient's lap to one side and then the other until the tooth finally broke off. He had no other instruments and so the patient, after several days, got relief through nature. That determined me I was going to study dentistry, but one day the doctor sent me to relieve on the hospital ward and I swelled up and said "old boy it is medicine for you. Here only a short time, and you are assigned to administer to the bedfast." Then two patients passed out under me so, it was dentistry for me after that.

When the new annex was ready there were two coaches switched into the institution siding, one of women and one of men. They had been pronounced incurable at the institutions at Norfolk and Lincoln. That was a sad afternoon for me, one I shall never forget. Those faces as they crossed the threshold of their new and final home, revealed a combination of dejection, remorse, sorrow, lost hope, no future. It was here I made a solemn pledge to try and correct this sort of thing, and I have lived to see the day when the mentally sick have come unto their own. The public has at last come to recognize them as mentally sick and the incurable asylum is now Nebraska's foremost mental hospital.

ARTICLE 82

The Life of an Attendant

Having spent my entire life up to this time on the farm this new job opened my eyes into a new world of conquest I had never dreamed of. Caring for a class of people I had never contacted before and from the whispered information I had obtained, were confined to cells to protect free peoples from their horror and vengeance. Here we would find human beings infested with the most horrifying of social diseases, deformed and warped bodies, with no semblance of reason or instinct to guide them during night or day. In this, the middle of the twentieth century, it is hard to comprehend the general concept and knowledge of the working of a diseased mind among the average otherwise well informed people.

However, well do I remember hearing people as they gathered around an old potbellied coal stove in the local loafing places, give the forward looking citizen the horse laugh for even daring to venture into what the future might have in store. Well do I remember but sixty years ago how my father was taken to task and held up to ridicule for merely venturing a thought that we might someday be flying like the birds of the air. To merely narrate about gas propelled vehicles over paved highways, home refrigeration, rural telephone, radio or television in those days not too far distant to be remembered by those who have reached the age of three score and ten, would have been considered as of unsound mind if not insane.

Now that the free land and homestead days, pioneering along with the happy hunting grounds of the Indians, the grazing grounds of the buffalo are gone and the eyes of the pioneer are being focused on mechanical, scientific and biological unknowns; to speculate or even dare to dream of what the next fifty years may bring is staggering in contemplation.

Can it be at this time, as I write these lines, the problem of human behavior the psychology of living together, the uniting of souls in peace with God world-wide may be in the making? That many mental diseases will be prevented and cured lessening the need of our mental

hospitals, penal and other institutions of state and government.

It is needless to say, that I a young man six feet in height and weighing a little less than 130 pounds, began my career as a hospital attendant with no little anxiety, fear and apprehension. Those first days on the wards as I moved about I was much like the wild birds, squirrels, rabbits and prairie dogs I had tried to tame in their cages during my boyhood days. But gradually and slowly I found these patients but very little different from my friends outside the asylum, and I soon found they responded to the same sympathy, kindness, gentleness, tenderness, and love.

During the three years I served as an attendant in this Asylum for the Chronic Insane I found many friendships I have cherished in my memory and will continue to do so until death. One was a patient, August, who was an architect educated in the old country who teamed up with a brother in a metropolitan city not far away. He had never married as had his brother who had two fine little girls. In some architectural construction they met with a sad accident that cost them heavily, and finally resulted in a serious rupture in August's mental processing and he was pronounced incurable and was sent to our Asylum for Incurable Insane.

After we had been together for two or three months I said to him, "August since I have been on your ward we have become dear friends and I have never detected one single thing that leads me to think you insane, why not live with Charley and help him as you do here for the good of the institution?" His answer was, "Oh, but I do have spells when my mind is confused and I do violent things and if this should occur and I would do violence to one of Charley's girls I would not wish to live, and so I am better where I can be watched." Sure enough, as I unlocked his room one morning I found a confused bewildered friend but after a few days confinement to his room under sedatives he was again his usual self. I feel reasonably sure with our present knowledge of mental sickness, August could have been made a safe and use-

ful citizen. As it was he lived a long useful life and was a favorite among officials and patients alike. He finally in later life failed to recover and died of a heart attack.

Another friend and favorite, whose services were sought after by all and mostly the womenfolk in cleaning house, was Swanson a big smiling Swede. He was of very large stature, some six foot four and weighing over two hundred pounds with a heart just as big, as kind and as gentle as a small child. Yes he was simple, with a mind of a twelve year old child, quiet and unassuming and always anxious to gain acclaim. After supper when all the patients were sitting around the wall waiting for bedtime he would get down on his hands and knees and banter me to ride him and we would entertain the audience by his riding me about and his becoming a bucking bronco and sometimes he would sprall me out on the slick hard floor to the delight of most of the patients on Ward One, who were all trusties most of them working outside in the kitchen, laundry, garden, dairy, and farm. The supervisor of these, coming for them and returning them and was responsible for them while off the ward.

One day one of my men was working in the kitchen and an assistant cook, a young lady inclined to be a little smart with this large male patient in ordering him about the kitchen, when he felt she had gone far enough—picked up a large knife and ran her out, shut the door and went back to his work. She went to the central office and reported to a new assistant physician who was almost twice as large as I. He came on the ward where I was alone and said, "the assistant cook reports that Mack ran her out of the kitchen, threatening to kill her." Said he, "I will stay on the ward while you go down and get him." It was needless to say he was scared and watched out the window expecting real trouble. When Mack and I emerged from that kitchen door chatting and laughing he stood in astonishment.

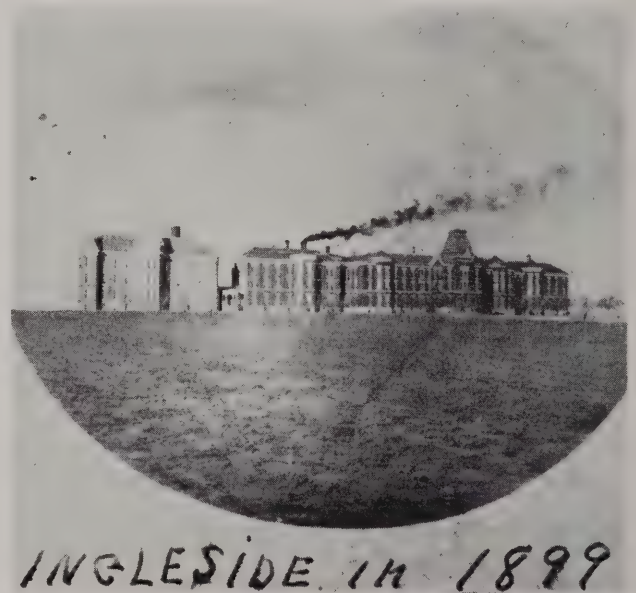
When I walked in on Mack, he was stirring a large kettle of hash with a large ladle with a long handle and as I walked up to him I announced that the Doctor wanted him to return to the ward with me. He said, "O. K., wait, I will get my coat. That girl is crazy." "Well," said I, "I am of the same opinion." To this Mack smiled and laughed loudly as he remembered how fast she got out of the kitchen as he reached for that knife which he did not intend to use. In a few days the regular cook was back from his vacation and Mack was soon back at his old job. A finer fellow I never met.

Every week we had dances for the patients. Square dances where the attendants danced with the patients; the male attendants with the female and female attendants with the male patients. There was not a large number of patients able or cared to attend these dances. It must be remembered that the belief and attitude of most churches of that day were against dancing in any form. There was a clause in all applications that stated that if applicant was accepted it was with the understanding that the employee would dance with the patients. I knew of several who refused employment on account of this clause. There were patients however who really lived from week to week, talk-

ing and planning for this event. It was a sight for sore eyes to see some of these old men dressing and primping and shuffling their feet as they did so. There would be a few round dances in between by the attendants, the patients watching with the closest attention and interest.

There was one little old lady, who when the ladies were to choose the partner, came for me and I was a little flattered and gave her a chew of gum and I soon found out my mistake, as she expected a stick of gum whenever she had a chance to get me for her partner. If I failed to produce one she proceeded to pick my pockets. She was nicknamed "Biddie" and was a great favorite among the female employees.

Many students of psychology and abnormal psychology have asked for an example of mentally deranged patients and for want of a better one I have called their attention to their own emotions. Days when everything is rosy, the sky unusually blue, and all nature seems smiling. Thus we will say we are up in the second story. Then there are days when everything goes wrong. We are down in the mouth, out of sorts with everything. We will say we are down in the cellar. Now if mentally ill, and we are elated we do not stop in the second story but go on to the attic or out on the roof, and if in the dumps we do not stop in the basement but go on to the second basement. When we are happy we cry and when sorry we laugh. I have known of the most religious of people, who would never use slang or profane language, who upon becoming mentally ill would use the most profane language imaginable. On the other hand, the most profane who would turn against profanity and reprimand others for using modest slang.



Insanity -- My Avocation

Our story begins, with the turn of the century. To be exact the middle of August, 1898. However if our readers get a clear concept of the status of what was known about insanity during this period we must turn the clock back and briefly review the history of what is now known as the mentally sick and start with early term "maniac". Disease and sickness is as old as the human race and much mystery and superstition surrounded every form of sickness. All ancient peoples believed it to be a form of punishment, which was inflicted for sins and wrongs committed, and an indication of displeasure on the part of the deities they worshipped.

What today is known to be mental disease was very generally believed to be a form of demoniacal possession, and, therefore, no medical measures were applied to relieve the symptoms, but various forms of exorcism and conjuration were practiced. As far back in history at 860 B. C. there were temples for applied measures for seeking relief from mental symptoms. These temples were situated for the most part on mountains and health places as near as possible to medical springs. The pilgrimages were made in much the same spirit that sick folks in more modern times have sought alleviation of their sufferings by journeying to sacred shrines and springs. The treatment at these temples was made by priests who made a study of mental illness and strange to say their treatment, or remedial features were very much as the treatment of this day, that is suggestion, kindness, occupation, music and recreation.

In the centuries which followed, these humane measures of treatment were completely lost sight of, for the treatment in general of the mentally ill was barbaric. Little or no attention was given to them, or remedial measures provided. Only a small part of those symptoms, were mild, could be received into the monasteries, while those whose symptoms were more severe were incarcerated in dungeons where they were brutally treated, chained, flogged, scourged, and starved, in the belief the evil spirit which possessed them would by these measures be driven out. Many were treated as criminals and executed, and others were burned to death, a popular punishment for witches.

That old Greek physician who lived 460 B. C. (Hippocrates) appears to have been the first to understand these disorders, for he declared his belief that mental disease was a disturbance of the function of the brain.

Back in England as early at 1537, Henry the VIII granted to the corporation of London a house that was operated for the reception of fifty "lunatics". This was called Bethlehem Asylum, corrupted later to Bedlam Asylum. The patients from this asylum were allowed to go about the streets begging for charity, and were popularly called "Bedlam Beggars."

As late as 1814 the hospital in St. Georges Field was erected, and was called the New Bethlehem, or New Bedlam. In 1820 Bedlam was one of the great sights of London, for the keepers were allowed to exhibit the noisiest and most violent of the patients, charging a fee of one

penny or two pence per head, which they retained for their personal use.

Two hundred years ago (1750) other detention houses were established in other places, not because of any feeling of pity or compassion for these unfortunate patients, but only to meet the demand for public safety and comfort, and many more of these miserable sick folk were confined in these mad-house, misnamed asylums, where not much supervision was given and that by persons who had little interest or understanding of their conditions and less sympathy for them. They were, for the most part naked, or in rags, they had no beds to sleep on, only a bit of straw was strewn about the floor, and the sanitary conditions were deplorable. Their condition was not as good as most of our livestock enjoy today and worse yet, the most incredible and ingenious forms of torture were devised and approved by the physicians. Machines to revolve at a high rate of speed to whirl the patients through space, horrible noises and smells, baths of surprise in which the patients, taken to bathe in the usual way, were plunged through the bottom of the bath, which gave way under them, into deep, cold water in utter darkness. Slimy dungeons without light or ventilation and too often infested with vermin, and starvation, were some of the horrors these sick people had to endure. Many of them wore heavy iron collars, belts and anklets by which they were chained to the walls of cells or caves. In this day of our present knowledge of mental sickness and mental progress, psychiatrists and mental hygiene, scarcely does it seem possible that this inhuman treatment could have gone on until the middle of the last century.

To France is due the first reform in mental treatment. As early as 1792 Philippe Pinel was appointed physician to a notorious hospital for male patients in Paris. Conditions there were much the same as those prevailing in England and other parts of Europe, and he a physician with a heart and advanced knowledge for his day, set about to change and improve conditions. He abolished all forms of restraint, eliminated many abusive practices, and substituted for them humane measures of treatment.

About this time in the city of York, England, the Society of Friends through a leader by the name of William Tuke, investigated and became aroused by conditions in the York County Asylum, and became active in raising funds to establish a retreat for members of the Friends Society who were or should become mentally afflicted. York Retreat was opened for the reception, care and treatment of mental patients. All restraint was abandoned, and sympathetic care in quiet, pleasant surroundings with some forms of industrial occupation were provided. Two outstanding names in the early reform and knowledge of the mentally sick and humane treatment of the insane of their day were Doctor Piel and William Tuke, to them humanity owes a debt of gratitude. It was they who demonstrated conclusively that when restraint and brutal authority were abolished and treatment by kindness was substituted, the management of these patients became far less difficult.

In America it remained for the Society of Friends in Philadelphia, as early as 1709, to put forth some efforts towards establishing a hospital, but no definite results were realized for more than forty years. History shows that during the eighteenth century little consideration was given in America to the mentally ill, and when custodial care became necessary it was provided with the minimum attention, labor and expense. Where possible the relatives were left to furnish the care for their sick but many were permitted to roam about the country and streets, where they were subjected to all manner of taunts and treatment and exposed to all sorts of hardships and dangers. Some who were mildly ill and many senile and fairly manageable were cared for in almshouses and county poor farms, with other destitute and helpless poor folk, or in homes which too often were barren of comfort and sympathy by people who were willing to harbor them in return for the meager income they received; while the more unruly and disturbed were placed in cages or pens in jails with other disorderly persons and criminals subject to their taunts and abuse.

The vicissitude of the eighteenth century, the many problems confronting a new and expanding country, the slave question and civil war, with numerous maladjustments, new territories and states being organized and admitted to the Union. The California gold rush, the Oregon northwest, the Indians, the Mormons, so many major problems, and the unsettled, disorganized and confused medical profession, the ungoverned, unstandardized methods of treating disease, lack of pathological knowledge and laboratories and hospital facilities there was little time to give to the lesser needy and newer problems.

There were, however, physicians and benevolent citizens who appreciated that the mentally deranged should be classed among the sick and diseased, and made efforts to adequately provide for their care and treatment. A leading spirit in this movement was a physician by the name of Dr. Thomas Bond, a man of great benevolence whose profession brought him in daily contact with the insane poor, the sick and injured. He made many appeals for contributions, but seemed to meet with little success, but finally he enlisted the interest and assistance of Benjamin Franklin. By his influence in the colony they made some progress.

They drafted a petition and secured thirty signers of influence in the colony and presented it to the Provincial Assembly on January 23, 1751. This petition throws much light upon the political and educational status of the period. It was as follows: "To the Honorable House of Representatives of The Province of Pennsylvania, The Petition of Sundry Inhabitants of the said Province, humbly sheweth, "That with the number of people, the number of lunatics or persons distempered in mind and deprived of their rational faculties, hath greatly increased in this Province . . . That some of them going at large are a terror to their neighbors, who are daily apprehensive of the violences they may commit; and others are continually wasting their substance, to the great injury of themselves and families. Ill disposed persons wickedly taking advantage of their unhappy condition, and drawing them into unreasonable bargains, etc.

"That few or none of them are so sensible of their condition as to submit voluntarily to the treatment their respective cases require, and therefore continue in the

same deplorable state during their lives; whereas it has been found, by the experience of many years, that above two thirds of the mad people received into Bethlehem Hospital, and their treatment properly, have been perfectly cured.

"Your Petitioners beg leave further to represent, that though the good Laws of this Province have made many compassionate and charitable Provisions for the relief of the poor, yet something further seems wanting in favor of such, whose poverty is made more miserable by the additional weight of a grievous disease, from which they might easily be relieved, if they were not situated at so great a distance from regular advice and assistance; whereby they languish out their lives tortured perhaps with the Stone, devoured by the Cancer, deprived of sight by Cataracts, or gradually decaying by loathsome distempers; who, if the expense in the present manner of nursing and attending them separately when they come to Town Physic and Surgery, be enabled to taste the blessings of health, and be made in a few weeks, useful members of the Community, able to provide for themselves and families.

"The kind care our Assemblies have heretofore taken care of the relief of sick and distempered strangers, by providing a place for their reception and accommodation leaves us no room to doubt their showing an equal tender concern for the inhabitants. And we hope they will be of opinion with us, that a small Provincial Hospital, erected and put under proper regulations, in the care of persons to be appointed by the House or otherwise, as they think meet, with power to receive and apply the charitable benefactions of good people towards enlarging and supporting the same, and some other provisions in a law for the purposes above mentioned, will be a good work, acceptable to God and to all the good people they represent.

"We therefore humbly recommend the Premises to their serious consideration."

In the light of the present day knowledge of mental disease and remedies as now applied and that the idea of disease and cure was the dominant motive, a conception which anticipated in those early days, the most advanced thought of the present time. It does seem to the writer that from a study of the history of general medicine and that of mental diseases and the concept of the foremost thought in medical science and applied remedies for disease, the reasoning relative to mental sickness was far in advance, to that of the knowledge of the pathology and treatment of diseases of the body. It may be that in the alleviation and treatment of the diseases the body is heir too, the vast and varied diversity of medical knowledge of the physiological results of administered drugs and other remedies and the lack of laboratory facilities and knowledge took the foreground of professional thought. The variations in respiration, circulation, elimination, the heart beat, the pulse, pain and discomforts, were factors quite understandable. With mental disease, diagnosis was far more complicated and patterns of behavior were only obtained over a period of time by those with a wide and varied study of human behavior under a complication of circumstances and was more or less assigned to the study of psychology. This chaos of medical thought prevailed (the allopath, homeopath and eclectic schools) through many years of confusion and did not contribute to the best

interests of public thought, and retarded the public concept of insanity. Ignorance, superstition, stigma and many of the beliefs of witchcraft. A broader and more intelligent understanding of the laws of nature, the modern laboratory and applied research that has helped to eliminate many of the guesses in diagnosis and a general levelling off in the field of medical knowledge has brought to the fore the speciality of the psychiatrist, the mental specialist.

Now, let us get back to Dr. Thomas Bond and Benjamin Franklin and their petition to the Honorable House of Representatives, of the Province of Pennsylvania. The great merit of their case, aided by the clever tactics of Ben Franklin, procured the charter of the Pennsylvania Hospital which received the approval of the Governor on the 11th day of May, 1751, (200 years ago) and represents the pioneer attempt in America to create a hospital for the care and treatment of the insane. So earnest and sincere were these members of the Society of Friends, so impatient over delay in securing ground and building, they set up a temporary hospital and maintained it in the Judge Kinsey mansion on Market Street, in which the first patient was received February 11, 1752. The new Pine Street Hospital was opened December 17, 1756, and provided for both the insane and the sick and injured, up to the occupation of the Department of the Insane in West Philadelphia on January 1, 1841. During nearly thirty years of this period the celebrated Dr. Benjamin Rush, the father of psychological medicine in America, was the skilled physician and faithful friend of all his patients particularly the insane. (Much of our information relative to the history of insanity has been gleaned from "Institutional care of Insane," many historical articles in medical and allied journals and books.)

The writer became interested in Institutional and medical care of the insane in August, 1898, when he became an employee of the then designated, Asylum for The Incurable Insane, one of three insane hospitals in Nebraska. One of his very first experiences was the receiving of a large consignment of patients from the hospitals at Norfolk and Lincoln where they had been under care and treatment and found incurable. The emotions of both patients and writer will be discussed in another chapter.

We now turn the clock back just one hundred years "1798" to Dr. Rush that far sighted and common sense reasoner in advanced medicine, and note he advocated manual and industrial occupations as a valuable means of therapy. During this one hundred years the care of the insane in state institutional management; patronage in "political plums" as then known, took precedence over the patients' welfare and while the patients worked in occupations about the institution, no thought, or little at least, was given to the work as a therapeutic value but only as a means to an end in decreasing the per capita cost in institutional maintenance. Many patients were forced against their will to do work that was distasteful, unpleasant and even nauseous.

In Virginia "The Public Hospital for Persons of Insane and Disordered Mind" was opened at Williamsburg, in 1773, for the reception of "idiots, lunatics, and persons of unsound mind." This was the first hospital in America to be used exclusively for the care of mentally sick.

The New York Hospital in the City of New York

was built and received its first patients in 1791. In Maryland, construction was begun in 1798 in Baltimore, and a hospital was opened that year. The portion used for the mentally sick bore slight resemblance to a hospital is to be inferred from a part of a report submitted to the Senate in 1829, it said "few of the lunatics have either beds or bedsteads, and this you have been told is necessary for their comfort, as straw is substituted from the facility with which it can be changed; but your committee is sorry to add from the report of its steward and also from the strong smell of the straw in the cells, it does not appear that the change of this article is as frequent as it should be for the comfort and benefit of the lunatics."

The nineteenth century saw the movement further carried on in other states. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York all advanced the care for the mentally sick. It is obvious that the great moves in the science of medicine, applied, has come through the profession proper. However the general gap between the physician and public has come about by the public, through an interested member, inspired, through the recognition of a serious need and a will and determination to do something about it. Such it was in the year 1841, when a school teacher in Massachusetts, Miss Dorothea Lynde Dix, hearing of the deplorable and pitiable conditions of a few lunatics who were confined in the East Somerville jail, and made an investigation and found them, in the dead of winter, confined in dark poorly ventilated and unheated cells, where frost was white on the walls, and scantily clothed. Because of their frenzy they had torn away their clothing. That human beings who were not responsible for their behavior could be thus cruelly treated so aroused her indignation and pity that she visited other jails and almshouses where such patients were confined, and found conditions elsewhere much the same. She embodied the results of her inspections and investigations in a long report or "Memorial" which was presented to the Legislature of Massachusetts, with a demand that proper housing and care for these unfortunate and neglected patients be provided. So incredible did the contents of that memorial paper appear to the members of the Legislature that a committee of their own number was appointed to verify her statements. Every charge was later substantiated and immediate reforms were initiated.

This frail, unpretentious little school teacher aroused to almost superhuman activity became the leader of a most notable service for suffering humanity, may we say "of all time", for Miss Dix went from state to state, the country over, and pursuing the same methods of investigation. Report and personal appeal to public-spirited women and men who had the authority to remedy conditions. She so aroused the public conscience that money by the millions was given to erect hospitals in those states where there were none, and to enlarge and remodel asylums which already existed so they more adequately met the demands of care and treatment. Laws which governed the treatment of the mentally sick were radically changed for the better. Although handicapped by lack of physical strength, for Miss Dix had always been frail, she extended her work to Canada and Europe. For twenty years she labored arduously and accomplished what might well be looked upon as a life work, but at the beginning of the Civil War, although almost sixty years of age, she was among the first to answer the call of her country and volunteered her services. She was given the task of or-

ganizing the women nurses and supervising their work in the field. For four years she labored without furlough, and for eighteen months after the close of the war she remained in Washington carrying out as fully as possible the promises she had made to dying soldiers. When this task was finished she again took up the work in behalf of the mentally afflicted, and continued it until at last illness compelled her to relinquish active work. Having spent her fortune in efforts to make others more comfortable and happy, she was given a home in the hospital at Trenton, New Jersey, the first to be erected as a direct result of her efforts. There she lived in comfort until body strength left her, her mind remaining unclouded.

So outstanding were her services, Congress provided a memorial to her birthplace in Hampden, Maine. The report of the committee to which it was referred was presented to the House of Representatives March 1, 1901, and said in part: "Miss Dorothea Lynde Dix occupies a conspicuous place in history as a philanthropist. Certainly no other woman of modern times has done more to earn the gratitude of the people of this country than this self-sacrificing, devoted woman. Her services as chief of the hospital nurses of the United States during the Civil War, and her extraordinary success in establishing institutions for the insane—over thirty in number, places her among the noblest examples of humanity in all history.

ARTICLE 84

Retrospect

When I entered the asylum in 1898 I received the sum of eighteen dollars, with maintenance per month and was on duty twenty-two hours per day. Our living room was on the ward and we got our meals in the male employees dining room. The male and female dining rooms were separate and were presided over by separate dining room girls who were assisted by female patients. There was a separate cook for the officials, for the employees and for the patients. There were two general dining rooms for the patients. They were located in the basement on the male wards side of what was known as center and the female on the opposite side.

Three times a day all patients from each ward were lined up and marched down stairs to a ward table where their food had been arranged thereon, with drinks as well. The ward attendants were to see that each patient got a sufficient extra helping and maintained table manners. This was some job on the wards of those whose minds were beyond caring for themselves.

Some of these patients had to be clothed, fed and cared for on the same basis as babies. A very small per cent was in this group and the better patients were assigned to care for them, and seemed to consider the job a part of their contribution to the cause of humanity. They were never forced to do such work and many times asked for the task. It must be remembered these patients were all considered incurable and most of the partially disturbed welcomed something to help pass the time and to feel that they were not a total loss to humanity. Among them were people from most all walks of life. Professional, teachers, business men, bankers and those not able to read, to college degrees of various kinds. I at one time had a patient, a State Superintendent of Public Instruction, an artist of no mean ability and a man of the cloth. Men from all ages from twelve years to three score and ten. It is April, 1951, and while visiting a friend in the hospital engine room in came a spry old Frenchman who I well remembered as being in a coach load of patients shipped by train from Norfolk and Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1899.

At the time of my employment there were but twelve wards, six of male and six of female. Six of these were of 28 or 30 patient capacity and six, 45 to 50 patient capacity. From five to ten single rooms with only a bed for

sick or violent and all the other beds were in the ward dormitory. The mattresses were all home made out of straw raised on the hospital farm and the ticks were cut and sewed in the sewing room, taken to the straw stack on nice fall days and there manufactured into single mattresses by patients trained for this work. This was a job I was assigned to more than once.

Patients were trained to make beds, sweep floors, wax and polish, dust furniture and to care for his clothes. At eight o'clock each night, winter or summer, the head attendant would call out "all to bed" and they would disrobe at their seats in the day hall leaving their clothes, retiring in orderly fashion each to the bed assigned to him. Chamber pots made of pressed paper were earlier distributed to each bed. After all were in bed there was a rush on the part of attendants to hang their keys out in center on a large key board marked with the ward numbers and two hooks to each ward for the keys. In this way the authorities kept perfect tab. These two hours from 8 p. m. to 10 o'clock we were all free to circulate about the institution as we pleased, but not to leave the grounds without permission.

At 8 p. m. each night, three night watches went on duty carrying oil lanterns. One man over the grounds, a male made regular trips through the men's wards and a lady on the female wards did the same task. At ten o'clock it was their duty to see that all employees were in their rooms and to report to the night supervisor. There were four supervisors, two male and two female, two each on duty during the day and two each on night duty. There were no graduate nurses, no technicians, and no physicians other than the superintendent and his assistant. There was an official steward and bookkeeper, a farmer and a gardener, an engineer and assistant.

Each first attendant was the barber for his ward and the assistant was the official bather and clean clothes dispenser and Friday was the official bath and shaving day. There was usually a mad scramble on Fridays to get the dirty laundry into the institution laundry to be sorted on Saturday and ready for the Monday wash and then came the ironing. We had a head laundryman and a lady assistant for the ironing. This furnished work for several men and women patients.

A Fight For Dental Service

Elsewhere we have related the dedication of our avocation to the interests of the mentally sick. Early in our ward experience we learned that next to medical service, came dental service and this was not to be had. The nearest to it was two pairs of extracting forceps, an upper and a lower, in the hands of untrained and unwilling physicians who admitted they would rather do most anything than pull a tooth. So the first on our agenda was to get dental service in our State Institutions.

We proceeded as soon as we could after graduating from a dental college and setting up in dental practice to get a general survey of what was being done in dentistry relative to State Wards. To get this we wrote to the authorities of every state in the union and to several foreign countries. We also consulted the United States census compiled December 31, 1904. (For a summation of this research see article Dentistry Relative to State Wards, 1908).

With the help of a prominent attorney we prepared a bill creating a State Dentist whose duty was to go from one institution to the other rendering dental service in our three asylums. I had this introduced to the 1909 legislature by a physician legislator from my own district. Think of this, some of our outstanding newspapers at that time poking fun at such a bill. The idea of wanting a dentist to care for the teeth of our insane; "perfectly ridiculous." "A waste of the State's money." It is needless to say the bill was lost in the sifting committee but it was a start and had introduced the idea.

In 1911 I moved my family from Red Cloud to Hastings where I could be nearer to the state institution and give more time to my avocation. As soon as well settled I contacted the institution and arranged to do some research by having certain types of patients with dental disease brought to my office where I treated them free of charge to see what, if any, general results might be obtained. This practice was received with much favor by the new superintendent, Dr. W. S. Fast who assumed office June 31, 1916. This physician had a broad concept of possible new and better curative treatments and his entire concern was the welfare of the patients as wards of the state and making the best of the state's care of them. He entered whole-heartedly into the research I was doing and called me to consult when a patient was admitted with poor teeth and offered hopes of recovery from our treatments. He cooperated with the patients family and dentists down town in getting dental work done and looked forward to the day when we could have a resident dentist.

One day he informed me that he had the sum of \$25 he could use for dental work where it would do the most good. We decided we had better use it to extract teeth for the violent patients who could not be taken down town. I agreed to do, with my assistant, a full day's work for these unfortunates. The work was well planned and we were to use two barber chairs in the back room of the drug store for the work. Anaesthetics were ruled out as they were definitely too disturbed for this.

Two male attendants were assigned to help me and two female assistants to help me with the instruments. We

brought a large supply from my office and we began. First, a group of male and then a group of female, with two chairs and plenty of help I was a busy man, washing my hands and going from one chair to the other. I consigned the extracted teeth to the most convenient place on the floor, and the patients were not too tidy in finding the cuspidor. When we had finished a casual visitor to that room would, no doubt, have branded me a cruel butcher, but the real good we did that morning could hardly be estimated, for many had been suffering with their teeth for months and too disturbed to take down town even if a dentist would have accepted them.

Among the amusing maneuvers was a large, one-time prize fighter, who had an aching upper molar that he wanted out the worst kind, but when I got hold of it he began to puff for all the world like an old steam engine and without warning the man on his knees was sent sprawling over a table and the back was broken from the barber chair, behind which knelt an attendant who was holding his arms, his hands being in leather cuffs. When the patient slid onto the floor still kicking and puffing like a stalled steam engine I was still holding to those forceps and it to his upper first molar. We landed in a corner of the room, where I emerged triumphantly with those forceps which held one of the largest molars I ever pulled. All of those who witnessed this act were agreed it was worth a fifty cent admission. That prize-fighter patient wanted to, and did, shake my hand and thanked me. His gratefulness, with others, made that \$25 much more worth while.

In 1920 I completed another survey covering the questions and same source of information as I did in 1906 and 1907. From this survey I got somewhat of a surprise, in that the small number of states that had provided dental service was now reversed. Only a very few had not dental service and our state was among these. Something had aroused interest in the need of dental service for our mentally sick, possibly the general awakening of dentistry's part in preventative medicine.

By this time my research at Ingleside had awakened considerable attention among the dentists of the state and I was called to meet with a committee from the State Dental Association in Omaha to see if something could be done about getting a dental office at the institution to help in this research work we were conducting, to show that dentistry was of value in the care of insane patients. A state election had just been held and a new governor elected. So it was decided that I was to stop in Lincoln on my way home and present the matter of a serious need for a dental office in the Hastings hospital. I found the new governor, Charles W. Bryan in his editorial office in Lincoln, as he would not take office until January, and this visit was in early December. I had to wait as a number of politicians came first, and I, the last in line was alone with him at last. After introducing myself, I told him I had just come from a meeting in Omaha, and that it was decided there that I should stop on my way home and acquaint him, the new governor, with our new problem. I told him what had been done and Nebraska was

one of less than five states that had not made some provision for dental service for the insane and assured him that our interest was only from a humanitarian standpoint. He said, "what is your business?" I said, "I am a dentist." He said, "humanitarian? Hell you fellows are like the veterinarians, you want to get on the payroll."

I was my train time so I said, "If that is the way you feel, I will not take any more of your time. Goodbye governor."

I went home that night with a heavy heart, but not licked, and after sleeping over it I decided on my course. The next morning I made an appointment with the superintendent and went out to the hospital and made him this proposition. If he would furnish me two rooms and provide the silver alloy and cement, I would equip a dental office and furnish the operating instruments, and give free not less than fifteen hours per week of my time. So it was arranged that two rooms on a female ward, number 37, was to be the first dental office in any state institution in Nebraska.

I at once made a trip to Omaha to see my friends The

Billings Dental Supply Co., and there bought a second-hand dental chair, a dental engine and cuspidor and gave them my note for the 795 dollars. They were very much in sympathy with the work and did not charge me interest. The engineering department helped me install the equipment and the institutional carpenter made us a cabinet.

So by the last of February, 1923, the first dental office in a state institution was in operation; the only initial cost to the state was five ounces of dental alloy and five one ounce bottles of dental cement. The institution operated on an early morning schedule so that by being there early I was able to contribute from one to three hours each morning and by hurrying, meet my appointments at the downtown office. In nine months my note came due. The work I had contributed, if paid at my prices, amounted to over \$1,800 and the report of the superintendent was that in his opinion my work had contributed to sending home two patients as being cured. He made a report to the Board of Control in person and came back with a check in the amount of my promisory note with the dental supply house at Omaha.

ARTICLE 86

Ignorance

As to the concept of insanity in the near past, the general definition of ignorance would hardly apply. One could hardly say that all the education of the past is of naught because one is ignorant of insanity. That he was uneducated, uninformed or unacquainted, or had a want of knowledge in general.

The sad commentary on education in the past is that its concept of things of most value has been so diffused, leaving out some of the most humanitarian and essential information. One is ignorant who lacks knowledge. If he lacks that common knowledge which anyone might be reasonably expected to possess he is ignorant in the general sense; if he is merely uninformed of a certain thing, he is ignorant in the particular sense. Ignorance is, therefore, far from the absolute term, for the best informed man in the world is necessarily ignorant of many things and the savage, deemed ignorant by civilized man.

The imbecile in most cases cannot be entirely ignorant. For example an artist who had just completed outstanding studies in art but had lived his entire life in the prominent cities of the land was to enter one of his paintings of rural life in a contest, and after he had painted a barn-yard scene of a litter of pigs feeding from a trough, was greatly pleased with his work for had he not given the greatest detail to anatomy and decorum. But to see just how the rural population would respond to his handiwork he took it to the local gallery and arranged it on an easel in a conspicuous place and stood by to hear comment. Many of the elite and educated people were loud in their praise, when in came an idiot from the farm with the mud of the hog pen still upon his shoes and he spied this picture and in astonishment began to giggle and giggle then rearing back on his heels bawled, "who ever heard of a lot of pigs drinking out of a trough without one up in the

trough, and their tails all crooked the same way," Hearing and seeing this, the would-be great artist whisked the picture away; got in his car and drove out to the home of the imbecile to study the habits of the hog.

Gradually from anatomy to the physiology and pathology developed through research and medical science, came the psychological aspect in the consideration of man as a whole. Man not only acted and functioned through the animal instinct but did so through thinking and reasoning, therefore it soon became apparent that this part of man's functioning must have an anatomical and physiological entity within the body, and it developed that this was the brain and that certain parts of this organ had to do with certain organ's activities. Furthermore it was the seat of the mind. While its anatomical and physiological was comparative to other organs of the body, it possessed far greater aspect and functions of its own, subject to pathology or sickness of its own. Therefore it must be subject to a treatment and cure, as are those of the anatomical and physiological on a basis of normal and abnormal functioning.

Many a sainted soul with a sick mind found themselves cast into prison scorned and neglected because of the ignorance of the past. A beggar along the roadside received a coin for a meal, while a demented soul who rambled on with incoherent talk was considered a ward of the authorities and not a charity charge, when only a kind word, a smile and pat on the back with a word of encouragement and not a coin was the crying need of this poor soul and all because of the ignorance of the times.

It is in the year 1921 and I am doing research in regard to psychopathology in connection with our State Hospital and I have been called to this hospital to see a new patient who has just been received. A young lady,

age 28, from a distant small town. She was a school teacher and later a housewife. She had had a prominent part in the affairs of that small town; in social, church, and civic affairs. Three years previous to her commitment she had married a young farmer nearby who with two maiden sisters was living in a large farm house that had recently been left them by the death of their parents. These spinsters had resented this love affair for a selfish reason. They did not wish a third person to share in this estate but the brother divided the house and moved his new bride in to share the farm.

Spring came and the sisters took over the garden, the chickens, the yard. Our patient found herself being snubbed and quarreled with, but made the best of it for a time and finally found there was to be a child and with a confused mind she first consulted a physician, and finally a Christian Science healer. Then her trouble did begin for many of her church friends shunned her and she found herself being avoided by even her best friends. Finally the baby came. She found she could not gain the normal strength and the care of the baby was taken over by the spinsters who helped her worry over her apparent melancholy and loneliness. Finally she did not resist being committed to our hospital for she said she welcomed a chance to get away from this environment that was driving her mad. There seemed to be no other retreat.

She had some bad teeth; an impaction and four or five infected ones to which she attributed much of her mental depression. After a time of building up she regained her normal weight and cheerfulness and kept expressing a desire to see her baby. So long in May it was decided she was her normal self. Her husband was notified to meet her at the train, but outside of him, there

was no one else to meet her and he seemed cold and indifferent. The baby had forgotten her, but she plunged into her apartment work and the care of the baby and tried to forget. They went to church where she met curious eyes and felt a coldness over which she shed many tears and wakeful hours. Some good old soul did invite her to an aid society sewing bee at her home and she went. Here she heard whispered behind her back, "she doesn't look right to me." "No," said another, "she seems do distant and has such a queer look and just to think they trust her with that baby." The pastor and one or two of her old friends called a time or two, but left her feeling so uncomfortable she did not want to see anyone and did not, other than the spinster sister-in-laws who seemed bent on making her miserable. Finally she could stand it no longer and asked to be returned to the hospital.

As she related her experiences, she added, "I noted how the community welcomed others who returned from other hospitals with a committee and flowers, but not me." "I suppose," said she, "they do not consider this insane asylum as a hospital, but I have found it so much so that I prefer it to my home as it now is."

The records of the hospital show that in less than a year she was dead and that she died of tuberculosis but we who know, know that she died of a broken heart. It is hard for me, as I view the literature being passed out and read in our newspapers about the work of National Health Service Mental Health Division, etc., that the case I relate actually took place in the year 1921. Ignorance personified, and at the time of writing this, 1951, I am told there are still communities who practice this sort of ignorance and will still contend they and their community rank high in intelligence and education.

ARTICLE 87

Cowles, The Town That Was

A Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Nebraska published in Chicago by The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890, has this to say about Cowles:

The town of Cowles is located on the Hastings branch of the Burlington and Missouri River railroad in Elm Creek Valley, ten miles by rail from Red Cloud and eleven from Blue Hill, on the north. It also lies two and one half miles east of the geographical center of the county. It was surveyed and platted by A. B. Smith, the town surveyor of the Burlington and Missouri River and the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroads in September, 1878, and was named after Mr. W. D. Cowles, who for years, and up to the time of his death in Omaha, in 1876, was general freight agent for the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad in Nebraska. The town lies in the south half of the northeast quarter of section 4, township 2 north, range 10 west. It is divided into 22 blocks, 300 feet square;; business lots are 25 feet front and 140 feet deep. The residence lots are 50 feet front and 140 feet deep. The town site is situated on the high bottom land of Elm Creek, and is a beautiful and pleasant site for a town. The creek is well timbered, for this state, and the surrounding country is a first-class agricultural and stock-raising district. Some of the best farms in the coun-

try may be found on the bottoms of Elm Creek at this point. Good water is here obtained at a depth of from 10 to 35 feet, and while the farms on the higher, or table lands, have to go some deeper for water, their lands for agricultural purposes are equally good as the bottom lands.

(Editor's note—In spite of the above facts set forth, and the pictures of later date, showing this interesting town at its peak, it too, during the last fifty years has gone the way of the horse and buggy, and is little more than a country post office.)

But, let us continue the story of 1878. The town site of Cowles was owned by John A. Poyer and wife. Mr. Poyer gave away several lots to those erecting good buildings thereon. Business lots sold from \$20 to \$50 each. The Burlington and Missouri River Railroad Company erected a substantial depot, which was opened for business December, 1878; also a good section house, which was occupied by the section boss. Mr. Crabtree erected the first building in the town—a small frame residence. The next residence was erected by L. D. Thomas in December, 1878.

(The author's father during the month he was four years.) Thomas and Ward opened the first general store

in the place, February, 1879. T. J. Ward erected a two-story frame building, and fitted the lower floor for a store and the upper for a town hall. D. T. Thomas opened the first grocery and farm implement store. T. E. Moon opened the second general store. J. H. Hill opened the first machine and blacksmith shop; John Clark the first boot and shoe shop; R. W. Ringer the first restaurant and boarding house. The growth of the village has not been rapid. It has now a population of 200 and consists of one bank, by L. C. Gilbert; a general store, by Fuller and Good; a drug store, by John Story; a livery stable, by J. D. Post; two grain elevators—one by Cutter

and Best and the other by Waller and Gifford; a general store by Harris and Hanawa; a lumberyard by John Blaine; one hotel; one blacksmith shop; two churches—Methodist and Congregational; a two story frame school house, and a railroad depot. The Cowles Herald, a seven-column weekly newspaper, is now in its fourth volume, and is published by A. Hurd. Its motto is: "Independent in all things, neutral in nothing." Moor and Gilbert's cattle ranch is located one mile south of town on Elm Creek, and consists of three sections of land. They raise hogs also, and feed to their animals 100,000 to 150,000 bushels of grain per year.

Cowles at the Turn of the Century



North Side of Main Street



South Side of Main Street

The Corners of Webster County

Webster county is twenty-four miles square and therefore has four corners. But within the confines of the four corners, back in 1884, there came to the county a George Corner, Sr., from the state of Michigan. He purchased 80 acres of land in Section 6, Elm Creek Township. He then returned to Michigan where he convinced six people of the advantages of living in Nebraska. They were his wife, Frances, a son and wife, Martin and Mary, a niece of eleven years, Blanche Adams, and a Mr. Zimmerman. A freight car was loaded with household goods besides the cattle and their food for travel and the young man, Zimmerman, who had been smuggled into the car.

During the winter the father, George, Sr., suffered a stroke and when it came time for the journey he was unable to speak and as helpless as a baby. The aged wife and mother was also very feeble. The train trip required three days and two nights. There were no pullmans, modern day coaches, or even diners, and it was necessary for the party to carry bedding, food, a large coffee pot of prepared coffee, and other necessities. Thus the young wife and eleven-year-old niece made their way to the new home in Webster county. So from this trip, the 80 acres of farm land, the courage and faith of young Martin and Mary Corner there developed a chain of achievement rivaling the county's foremost.

From notes furnished by a daughter, DeEtte Corner Rhine, it is known that the trip in the freight car was without incident. Three fresh cows in the cargo had to be milked daily, which made milk for drink plentiful even for the orphan children and accompanying nurse and man who were on the train as far as Omaha. Blue Hill was six years old at the time of their arrival. A crowd at the depot welcomed the passenger train and willing hands assisted the family to the hotel. The emigrant car arrived on Saturday around midnight with "Skipper" Martin ill from long confinement in not too pleasant surroundings. As the car had to be emptied by Sunday night, Martin and young Zimmerman were early at it on Sunday unloading the livestock and machinery. With welcoming and working hands about they were soon on their way across the trackless prairie to six miles south and three miles west, which was to be their home.

Energetically responding to the pioneer country's need, it was not long until Martin was taking the place of an undertaker and operating a blacksmith shop. Mary also used her talents as a musician and organist. The family owned a small portable organ and she became busy giving music lessons.

The elder George and Frances Corner did not live long after arriving here and are at rest in the earliest cemetery not far from their Nebraska home.

In 1888 a son was born to Martin and Mary and they called him George, after his grandfather. Sixteen years had gone by—busy years of long hours and the most strenuous of labor. The heart strings pulled hard as they contemplated their earlier Michigan home. In May, 1901, the family disposed of their personal property, rented their farm and rigged up a prairie schooner to be drawn by two Indian ponies and departed eastward. Young George, a lad of 12 summers, was alert and interested in the new life

and the trip was a memorable one as the family traveled in easy stages, planning to make it to another county seat town each night. It was indeed a pleasure trip when food and accommodations were the lowest in price in all history.

One of the pleasures of life they had missed in their Nebraska home was fruit which grew plentifully in Michigan, so they started fruit farming. This sort of enterprise, so in contrast with the "home on the range" in Nebraska, overcame the lure of their childhood, so in April 1904 the family was back on their Nebraska farm. A daughter whom they called Naomi had been born to return with them to Nebraska.

It was a genuine welcome that "Mark" and "Loie" received when they arrived again at their prairie home. Mark had taught school in Michigan and had an eye on a business career. He purchased a home in Red Cloud and entered the merchandising business, more particularly as it pertained to farm products. He was also interested in acquiring more land to be stocked with Hereford cattle, at which occupation he demonstrated his genius.

While the family resided in Red Cloud, a third child, DeEtte, was born.

George Corner of the third generation was born on the farm that had been purchased by his grandfather. After the family returned to Webster county he was married to Miss Della Morrison, an accomplished young lady of Red Cloud. They immediately settled on the farm where he had been born. Farming by use of horse power proved entirely too slow for his ambition and in 1915, after he took a course in auto mechanics, George became associated with W. C. Frahm in the automobile business in Blue Hill. This firm also handled farm machinery.

After a time a division of dealership was arranged, both partners entering business for themselves, with George branching out in the wholesale and retail petroleum business. He became the head of Corner's Service with branch agencies in other towns in south central Nebraska.

All this time he was a pioneering agriculturist giving attention to soil conservation and improvement, together with the raising of livestock. He not only took up and successfully continued to develop the work his father had started, but cultured and nourished all parts into one of Webster Country's foremost institutions.

For years he served his community on the school and village boards, was a director in the Commercial Bank of Blue Hill, and affiliated with the Methodist Church and fraternal organizations.

The writer will not forget a scene in the Homecoming parade of 1952 where George of the third generation was driving a large farm tractor with a large sign bearing the legend, "Big George" while trailing behind on the end of a tow-line came a miniature of the larger machine on which was riding the three-year-old son of the fifth generation on whose sign was scrolled the title, "Little George."

"Big" George Corner departed this life September 20, 1952 and the community mourns. Surviving him are his wife, Della, his son James, and a daughter, Mrs. Ellen Jones, two sisters and six grandchildren.

Doctors and Doctoring

Many a day while following the plow, as a boy on my father's farm, I had day dreams of the day when I, as a physician, could go driving about, visiting the sick and administering drugs to relieve their suffering and hastening their recovery. The two great obstacles in the way, my lack of an elementary education, and the financial backing for such a course. There was a conflict in my mind whether it should be medicine or dentistry. Having spent the first seven years of my life almost entirely with adults, I was almost constantly being reminded of my mature ways and habits, more especially my thinking. I had not been in school but a few days when I acquired the nickname of "grand-pa," and grandpa it was for years.

The thing that puzzled me most was the why of things, and so from the very beginning I found myself with a bent towards research. One of my first problems was the "why of life." Many a time while out after cows in the late evening I would stop and gaze into the heavens with its myriad stars just appearing, and wonder about their distance, the great expanse of the heavens, and the earth on which I stood, and try to comprehend this magnitude, and my own significance in comparison, and cry out, "why all this and why am I here, a mere speck?"

I had no library nor were there books to search, so I had to turn to nature for my answer. It happened there were many wild roses in the wild pasture where we kept our cows. I noticed the homely appearances of these rose bushes during the winter months, and then when the warmth of spring came, they took on a beautiful coat of green and therefrom came beautiful buds and roses. Here I found the why of life. A bouquet of these wild roses on our dining table helped to make us more tolerant towards each other; they made the table look more beautiful, the food more tempting, and their fragrance mellowed our bad dispositions. Here I found the answer of "why am I here?" The flowers say to us, "you are here to make the world better, more beautiful and fragrant by living in it."

This philosophy of life led me to the healing arts, dentistry and medicine. In 1900 I found myself matriculated in both in Lincoln, Nebraska. Both schools, the medical and dental, were housed in an old mansion that had been remodeled to accommodate the medical classes on the north side of the hall, and the dental on the south. As luck would have it the two conflicting subjects, dental and medicine, were held at the same hour with just a small hall separating and the dental instructors calling the roll at the beginning of the hour and the medics at the end of the period. I was able to get a seat near the door on the

dent side and end up in the medic side to answer roll call. I have my grades from both schools to this day.

At this time there were three kinds of medical practice and schools. There was the allopathic believing in large doses, a method of treating disease in inducing an action opposite the disease treated. Homeopathic, the medical system introduced by Hahnemann (1755-1843) which seeks to cure disease by giving in minute quantities, medicines which would produce in a well person results similar to those produced by the disease treated. Eclectic (this was the type of the Lincoln school) they believed in selecting, choosing from various sources or systems; made up of choice, selected material.

While I had an uncle, physician, who was an allopath, and a good friend and old time Webster County homesteader, Dr. I. W. Tulleys who was a Homeopath, I had a leaning towards the eclectic. As to the obtaining of cures, the results one over the other, it appeared to me were on a par.

The question with me in which profession am I best fitted, dentistry or medicine. With three year's experience in mental hospitals where no dental service was rendered, which condition prevailed throughout the country; dentistry became my choice. It furnished me the best opening to carry out my philosophy of life. And it has so proved.

My old friend and benefactor, superintendent of the then Asylum for the Nebraska Incurable Insane at Hastings, used to say, "the main difference in physicians is that some are better guessers than others."

In summing up a half century of thought along this line, it is my conclusion that the most successful doctor in whatever line this name may apply, is the user of good "common sense." Not alone in the treatment of the sick, but the treatment of the home, the community, in education, religion, state and national affairs. It does seem that this, the fifth decade, of this century, through the world there is dereliction of good common sense.



ARTICLE 90
Republican River



A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE REPUBLICAN LOOKING DOWN THE RIVER

The Republican River passes through Webster county from west to east, averaging four to five miles north of its southern boundary. Prof. Samuel Anghy back in 1890, in his sketches of physical geography of Nebraska, described this great river thus: The Republican River rises in the Colorado plains, near range 49 west of the sixth principal meridian. Here, anciently, there was a lake whose basin was about four miles across. The outlet of the river draining it, however, long since cut down the narrow rim and drained the lake. Its head here in the old lake is 4,050 feet above sea level. A few small springs now rise below the surface of this lake, and produce a tiny streamlet a foot across. Other streams, about or nearly as large, soon join it, but at the state line I could still—when there in the spring of 1877, with D. N.

Smith—jump across it. Along this part of its course there are a few beautiful lakelets, into which and from which it flows. Here the water is cool and clear as crystal. When it receives the waters of the Arickaree, about seven miles east of the state line, it assumes its characteristic character. It now becomes shallow and sandy, and in places rapid. An immense number of small creeks flow, every few miles, into the Republican, especially from the north. This river, unlike the Platte, increases regularly in breadth and volume all the way from its source to its exit in Nuckolls county. It will be seen in the list of elevations that the general level of the Republican is three hundred and fifty feet below that of the Platte.

The south side of the river as it passes through Webster county, is bordered with bluffs that rise abruptly to a height of seventy-five or more feet and the river usually runs next to the bluffs.



The first bridges were made of wood. Following came the suspended steel bridge. These bridges were the cause of much feeling for years. People of the level plains of the north part of the county, who rarely had need of crossing the river, objected to these costs. Time and new methods of building and adjudicating costs have erased the bad feelings of the past.

W. C. Frahm, Exemplary Citizen



W. C. Frahm, dean of the business men of Webster county, a pioneer of the second generation and still a sturdy, wide-awake business man who, from the point of business service, quality and quantity, and knowing many years of continuous service both as a business man and outstanding citizen, in our opinion outranks all others in the county. As one enters the town of Blue Hill from Highway 281, the first place of business on the right is the Blue Hill Auto, dealers in Chevrolet sales and service, Case tractors and implements, and for many years its proprietor and owner was one W. C. Frahm, whose welcome smile was an outstanding asset to the Blue Hill-Bladen Country since the 20th day of October, 1886, when at the age of fourteen he came from the "show-me-state" with his father and mother, Christian Frahm and family, and located on a farm two miles northwest of Blue Hill.

Farming as a vocation did not appeal to the young Mr. Frahm, so in the early nineties we find him employed in the general merchandising store of Sol Mandelbaum, one of the first of its kind in the country. In 1894 he and a partner, A. H. Kreigsman opened a new general store. This partnership was dissolved in 1900. In keeping with the growth of the city and possible new competition, it was decided that two separate stores would be more in keeping with the times. However Will, as he was familiarly known, did take unto himself a partner that same year. In June it was, that he said, "I do" in signing up

a partnership with one Letha Walters, daughter of the town's prominent attorney, A. M. Walters. This partner, was by marriage contract, and has remained a long, happy one.

In the year 1905 the county electors united in drafting the services of the Blue Hill business man for County Treasurer. The family moved to Red Cloud where he took office January 1, 1906, and served the limit of the law, two terms. Returning to Blue Hill, he entered the employment of the First National Bank as assistant cashier, serving in this capacity from 1910 to 1916. At this time he entered the automobile business with the late George Corner as a Ford Agency.

In 1920 Mr. Frahm, having sold his interest to Mr. Corner, entered a partnership with Fred Schiding, in the present business building. After selling Buick cars and Case implements for a time, they changed to Chevrolet cars. In 1936, Mr. Frahm became sole owner until 1950, when he sold a one-half interest to a Malvin J. Wiest, a younger man. However in the early part of 1953 after 61 years of continued service to the community, his county and state, his health not the best, he decided to retire.

Back in 1920 the citizens of Webster County through the Republican party, casting about for a competent candidate to send to the State Legislature chose, elected and sent Will, where he served two consecutive sessions with distinction. For many years he served on the school, town, and cemetery boards, as a director in the local Telephone Co., and has taken an active and substantial part in several business enterprises for the improvement of the town and community. When we consider the many activities of this man during his 61 years in business in the county, a man among men, whom we have known as long as we can remember, rounding the 80th year of life, an exemplary husband, and father of two fine daughters, loyal to church and friends to the Nth degree, we elect him "Dean" of Webster County's useful citizens.

His example of every-day living and practicing the ideas of living, the ethics of business, loyalty to purpose and objective of living are seldom excelled. It can be well said of our friend, he has lived to make the world better more fragrant, more beautiful, by having lived in it.

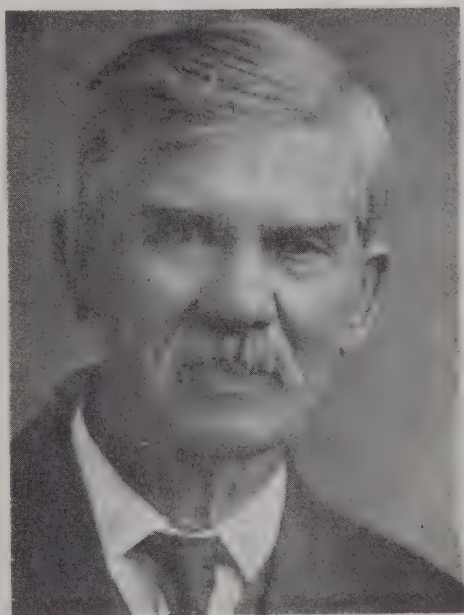
Pioneer Churches and Ministers

Rev. C. W. Wells was the first minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church to labor in Webster County. As far as we can determine this denomination was the first to organize in the county. Rev. Wells was sent from Fairbury by Rev. Maxfield presiding elder of the Beatrice District. He reached Red Cloud in August, 1871 and began his ministerial work. Rev. Wells remained on the Red Cloud circuit until the spring of 1877. He was paid \$130 per year for his work.

During my travels over Webster County the past three years, talking about early days the name most mentioned in church and business circles was a prominent farmer and minister who came to the county in June, 1872. He came from Louisa County, Iowa, where he received an education in the common schools. At his odd moments he began studying for the ministry. He had always been an earnest worker in his church, and his only thought was to be a minister. After several years of close study he was ordained as an elder. Most ministers, especially Methodists, become sort of itinerant and do not

stay long in each place. Not true in this case as he spent most of his entire life and ministry in Webster county where he served at Walnut Creek, Inavale, New Virginia, Cowles, Elm Creek, Batin, Amboy, Pleasant Hill, Ash Creek, Penny Creek, Salem, Highland, Pleasant Grove, Red School House and Mount Hope Oriole, of Kansas. He continued to serve churches in and around Webster County until his death at a ripe old age.

To do his life justice would fill a good sized book. He was our boyhood ideal as a man and Christian gentleman and was my father's most respected and closest friend. This tall, lean, and prominent-boned, Lincoln type of character, probably the best known, and best loved citizen the county ever produced or had, was the Reverend George W. Hummel. He was a staunch Republican, an energetic worker for the good of the whole community. As one enters the south door of the Webster County court house one passes a bronze plaque put there by the county citizens as a memorial for his great service to county and country. Truly a great and good man, emblematic of many of our pioneer homesteaders.



*The Honorable, Reverend
George W. Hummel.*



*The small community Church once useful,
now awaits the wrecking crew.*

Three Township Supervisors



For a time, during the eighth and ninth decade, the county was governed by Township organization, a county board of one member from each township and one each from the two Red Cloud wards, 18 in all.

These three men served for a long time on same committees and became fast friends. The one standing is George P. Cather of Catherton, the township having been named for him. For years he was distinguished as a prominent farmer and stock man. He came to the county from Virginia in the

year 1887. He was a brother of Charles Cather of Red Cloud, father of the noted author Willa Cather.

L. D. Thomas on the right of Mr. Cather, was supervisor of Elm Creek Township. Born in Ohio and came to Webster County in February, 1871. Single at the time, he married the first girl to arrive in the neighborhood, the 19th couple married in the county. They were the parents of the author.



To the left of Mr. Cather is Mr. William C. Laird of Oak Creek Township where he located in 1870. A native of Pennsylvania, a farmer and stockman, a leader in his township. He was one of the five Laird brothers, four of them homesteading a quarter section in one section. They were all affiliated with the Republican party and all lived their natural life on their homesteads and are all buried near their respective homes.

ARTICLE 94

Railroads

Railroad Building 1878 to 1883

It is indeed hard for one in this, the eightieth year in the life of Webster county, to visualize the condition of the county before the coming of the railroads and the construction period the five years, 1878 to 1883. The transportation then and now.

The pioneer railroad of Nebraska south of the Platte river was the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad that later connected Denver with Chicago. This road was constructed in 1871-1872, from Omaha to Kearney; and it was not until 1873 the question of granting financial aid to the B & M Railroad Company on their proposition to build a road from Hastings to Red Cloud and the resolutions in favor were circulated and signed. The work on the Hastings and Republican Valley Railroad was begun on July 12, 1878, by the chief contractor, John Fitzgerald. About a month later a small band of Hibernian workmen, dissatisfied with the presence of labor-competing Russians, rebelled and drove the peaceful ex-slaves of the Czar from the place. The local press was full of praise for the great contractor's methods.

The Burlington and Missouri River, or Republican Valley Railroad was completed through Webster county from Hastings on the north; south by way of Blue Hill and Cowles to Amboy in the Republican Valley by way of Red Cloud and Inavale, in the fall of 1878. About two years afterward, the road was extended down the valley, by way of Guide Rock, to Superior and other points eastward. The length of this railroad as it extends east and west through the county along the Republican River, is 24.56 miles, and the length from Amboy to the northern boundary of the county is 19.23 miles, making its entire length within the county 43.79 miles. The Nebraska and Colorado Railroad passes east and west through the county, in the northern tier of townships, by way of Blue Hill and Bladen, its length therein being 26.03 miles. The Missouri Pacific cuts across the northeast corner of the county a distance of 0.15 miles of railroad. The B & M Railroad was valued for taxation at \$5,600 per mile, or \$254,222 in the aggregate.

The total amount of tax thereon in Webster county, for the year 1889, was \$9,861.21. The Nebraska and Colorado Railroad was valued in 1889 for taxation at \$4,700 per mile, or \$122,341 in the aggregate, and a total tax charged thereon \$4,554.79. For the same year the Missouri Pacific Railroad, within the county, was valued for taxation at the rate of \$4,100 per mile, making the aggregate \$615, on which a total tax of \$22.99 was charged. This makes the combined taxation valuation of all the railroads within the county \$368,180, and a total tax charged thereon, \$14,445.99. The Pullman Palace Car

Company was also assessed in 1889, at the rate of \$77.05 per mile on the main line of the B & M Railroad through the county, and was charged \$79.32 taxes in the aggregate.

In April, 1878, the Board of County Commissioners called a special election to ascertain if the citizens were in favor of voting bonds in the amount of \$47,500 to aid in construction of the Republican Valley Railroad from Hastings to the Republican River, the bonds to bear 8 per cent annum. The election was held and votes counted showed 748 voting for to 242 against. The bonds were issued and delivered to the Republican Valley Railroad Company, and were not due until the year 1894. The railroads of the county were paying taxes to the county annually to the amount of nearly one-third of the county's indebtedness on railroad bonds.

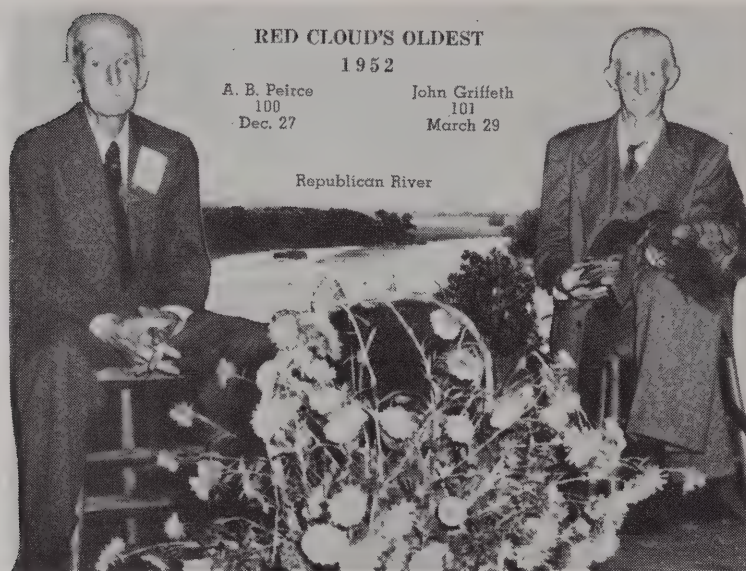
The condition on which the bonds were to be issued were as follows: The work of constructing the road should begin by the first of July, 1878; that the bonds should not be delivered until the road should be completed and the cars running thereon over the whole length; that the road should be completed and the cars running through the county of Webster by July 1st, 1879; that a station should be established at or near the northern boundary of the county, and another station between that point and the station of Red Cloud; and that the bonds should not be delivered unless this was the first railroad built from the northern boundary of the county to the Republican Valley, another station should be erected at or near range 12.

Thus it can be seen that the towns of Blue Hill, Cowles and Bladen were provided for.

Blue Hill was surveyed and platted in September, 1879, by A. B. Smith, the railroad town surveyor, for its original proprietor, Mr. S. B. Roher of Hagerstown, Maryland. Cowles was surveyed and platted by A. B. Smith, the railroad surveyor in September, 1878, and Bladen, May 29, 1886, by A. B. Smith and L. B. Thorn. Inavale was surveyed and laid out May 15, 1884 by W. H. Strohm, for W. J. Vance, the original proprietor, therefore, outside of Guide Rock and Red Cloud the railroad through the bonding issue stipulation was responsible for our two towns on the northern boundary of the county and the central but a mile and a half east of the center of Webster County. This arrangement of the towns of the county at the time of horse and buggy days was a wise one, as all were located on a railroad providing in and out shipping so necessary under the circumstances. It must be remembered our public highways as they are today did not exist and trackless motor powered vehicles had not been invented as yet.

Railroad building in those days was done with horse power and the organization required was not altogether different than that of a good sized circus. The feeding of men and animals, tents for storage, protection and sleeping, heavy wagons for transportation, for it must be remembered that the principal implements used were wheelless, heavy, large beamed plows, and slip scrapers of all kinds and sizes, and all kinds of mules and horses.

Webster County Health Resort



Travelers may speak of the beautiful fall in southern France and along the chain of Pyrenees; Californians and Floridians boast and brag about sunny climate. But it is very questionable if the sunshine is of longer duration in these localities than right here in Webster county, Nebraska. Our falls are just simply a continuation of the summers, and the sky a continuation of delightful blue. When winter spreads his mantel over the prairies he comes to stay for three full months. He is grim, of course, and treacherous; but with all, this Nebraska winter clarifies the soil, builds up the constitution of man; it carries with it health to all who come here healthy; and, in some cases, cause a disappearance of even hereditary diseases.

Our state has an average elevation above sea level of 2,312 feet. Not too high and not too low. It has no swamps or stagnant water, or humid atmosphere so vital to bacteria and its growth. On the other hand bacteria cannot thrive on fresh healthy food.

We are happy to present through the picture above two examples expressing the excellency of a healthy environment. For years they have graced the landscape in and about the valley of the rugged Republican river; evidenced by strong physical and mental personalities, facing the world for the past 100 years they now face the future without fear, examples of exemplary living, character and citizenship.



The city drinking fountain for horses at intersection of Webster & Fourth st.

A busy day for the horse drawn street car in Red Cloud Neb. A double header.

Threshing



The sweep power for threshing and corn shelling was popular before the coming of the steam engine. This ingenious invention furnished opportunity to use as many horses as needed for power.

The cradle and flail of the Nineteenth Century, differed little from the sickle and flail of Biblical days. The tread mill of one or two horse power of the 1850's, to

sweep power, to steam power and now the harvester and thresher combine, the husker and sheller corn harvester, what next?

One of the disadvantages of steam power was getting over the unimproved roads, its massive structure, and the danger of fire.



Early Pioneers



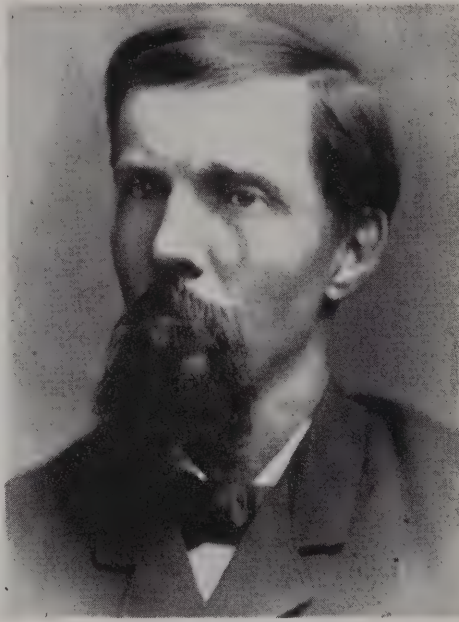
Edward Kellogg
The County's first Superintendent of
Schools



Jessie M. Kellogg
Daughter of Edward Kellogg and long time
County Educator.

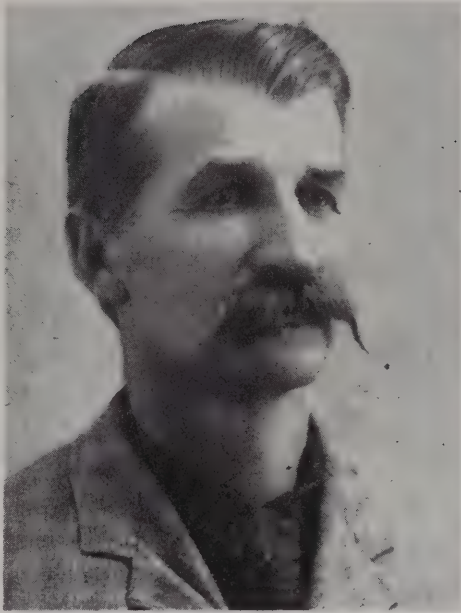


James S. Gillham
The County's most brilliant Attorney and
Citizen.

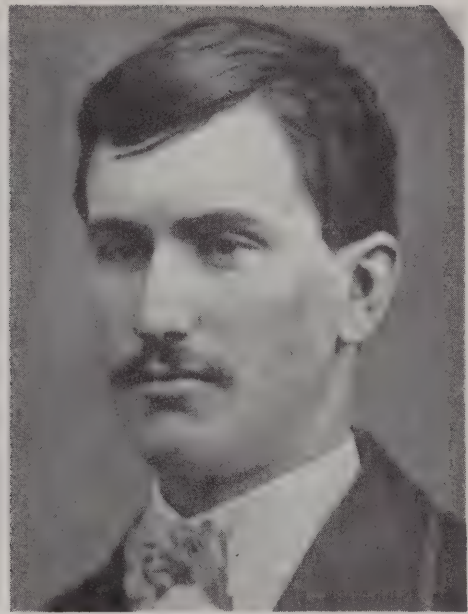


Alexander H. Crary
Landed the fall of 1871, a long time leading
Citizen of Guide Rock.

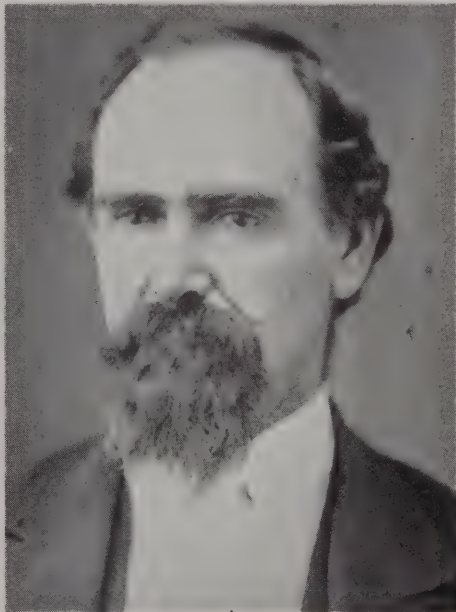
Early Pioneers



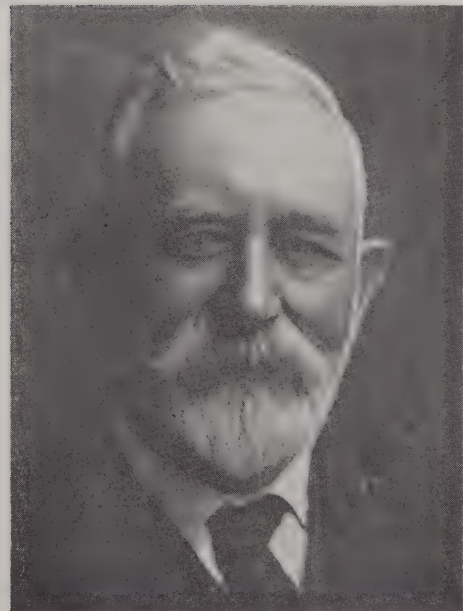
Augustus Roats
One of the first 45 Voters.



David Heffelbower
Too young to vote at first election.



I. W. Tulleys, M.D.
One of the first homesteading Doctors.



Charles Gurney
*A boyhood Sailor who made good as a
Farmer and Stockman.*

Webster County Court House and Jail



The first county officers were confronted with an empty treasury, make-shift equipment and housing. Through enterprising citizens and their civic pride the county business has kept pace with the county growth. The county board during the last decade of the last century saw the need of building for the future as evidenced by the county jail, now well over fifty years old. The present court house came into existence during the second decade of the present century.





John Waller (Ren.) L.D. Thomas Ed. Keeney M.L. Thomas
and Ed. Edsen (Diseased)
Builders of the Elm Creek Stockade on upper Elm Creek
just south of the town of Cowles on Ed. Keeney homestead.
January and February 1871.

Below is a picture of their house within the stockade



The log house within the stockade, completed and occupied in the early spring of 1871 by the families of E. H. Keeney and E. W. Edson brothers-in-law. A daughter was born to the Edsons on May 10th, and three days later a son was born to the Keeneys; they were named Edna and Henry. These happy events took place in 1872. In February 1876, Adda Edson was born in this same house.

This log house has survived its builders, its first families, and has been moved to take a prominent place in the Warp Pioneer Village at Minden, Nebraska.



Adda Edson



Edna Edson



Henry Keeney

Webster's Oldest Store



MRS. NEWHOUSE

has just received a large stock of 1886

FALL and WINTER

Goods, consisting of

Dress Goods, Dress Flannels, White Goods,
White Flannels, Jerseys, Hosiery, Yarns, etc.

We have more goods this year than we ever had and can sell them cheaper
than any other store.

COME AND BE CONVINCED.

NEW FALL SELECTION OF . . .

WASHABLE DRESSES WITH CIRCULAR SKIRTS

Measure 6 Yards Around the Bottom

ALSO A NEW LOT OF WASH DRESSES IN
SIZE 12 to 52

COME IN AND LOOK THESE OVER

BARBARA PHARES

*Webster County's oldest
merchandising establishment
was founded by Mrs. F. New-
house in the latter part of the
seventh decade, has remained
in the same family, near the
same location in Red Cloud.*

*Soon after the founders
death, the business was taken
over by her daughter, Mrs.
Barbara Newhouse Phares
whose age is not far from
that of the county. Her
beaming countenance among
her wares is indicative of the
founder, the mother.*



*Ads taken from Red Cloud Chief published in
1886, and the Red Cloud Commercial Advertiser in
1953.*

